

SUBJ: Interim Report on Trip to SCAMP

8 Aug 1952

To: AFSA-02

From: AFSA-206

Comment No. 2

Via: AFSA-02T

Noted, with interest.

F. A. Raven

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 Via: AFSA-206  
 AFSA-02T

Interim Report on Trip to SCAMP  
 Daniel M. Dribin 7 Aug 1952  
 AFSA-206B

During the period 1-25 July the undersigned, together with Mr. L. K. Frazer of the Office of Operations, attended a mathematical seminar, hereinafter referred to as SCAMP, at the University of California at Los Angeles and the Institute for Numerical Analysis

The purpose of SCAMP was, indirectly at least, to furnish aid to the Agency in the solution of some of its problems that were amenable to a mathematical formulation. At the very outset, let it be said that the lack of complete clearance for the group at Los Angeles rendered it difficult, if not impossible, to discuss matters of any consequence to the Agency. Members of AFSA attempted to overcome this difficulty by presenting material of an unclassified or mildly classified nature that had a bearing on their work. The most highly classified topic was a formalized version of a wired wheel problem.

The topic most assiduously studied during the period in question was the existence and construction of finite projective planes of a given order, a problem of considerable mathematical interest but whose application to problems of this Agency is rather tenuous.

It is the opinion of the undersigned (which is concurred in, substantially, by Mr. Arthur J. Levenson, now on duty at SCAMP) that the failure to obtain the necessary clearances for the members of SCAMP well in advance of the opening date of the conference has been the major obstacle to the presentation and discussion of worthy problems; as a consequence of this failure to obtain clearances, those mathematicians who were at SCAMP were not always the best men to discuss the problems concerned. In addition to the foregoing criticism, there can be made the further one of the loose way in which SCAMP was organized and the agenda compiled. If such a conference were to be held again, enough time should be available for (a) assembling the best talent, (b) complete clearance for these people, and (c) careful compilation of an agenda and coordinating this agenda more carefully with the Office of Operations.

Daniel M. Dribin

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