

March 7, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Discussion with Congressman Paul N. McCloskey, Jr.

1. On March 6, 1975 I discussed the attached paper (Tab A) on Vietnam with Congressman McCloskey. (The paper had been written by Mr. McCloskey following his recent trip to Vietnam, and he had sent it to the Agency on March 5 requesting comments on the factual data therein.)

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2. [REDACTED] of OLC and I arrived in Mr. McCloskey's office at 3:00 p.m. to find a call from the DCI awaiting me. The Director urged me not to pass a personal memorandum to Mr. McCloskey which I had written earlier in the day (Tab B). He did not like the last paragraph of my memorandum and felt it would be better to handle the problem orally, indicating that while there were individuals within the intelligence community with many different views and biases, the community had a mechanism that worked pretty well to scrub out these biases and to come up with an objective product. I accepted this advice.

3. Mr. McCloskey was still in another meeting, and as it turned out we did not talk with him face-to-face at all. I discussed with Mr. McCloskey's assistant the specific changes on factual matters which we were suggesting in the Tab A paper. (These specific changes appear in Tab C, a copy of which I left with the assistant.) Mr. McCloskey then called in from his other meeting, and I talked with him on the telephone for about ten minutes. After discussing with him briefly several of our suggestions on the paper (specifically points #8 and #12 in Tab C), I turned to the matter of his last paragraph in Tab A. As the Director had suggested, I pointed out to him that the intelligence community, like all bureaucracies, had individuals within it with differing prejudices and points of view. I pointed out, however, that on any important subject we had a system of checks and balances and a mechanism which worked well to eliminate most of the prejudices and enabled us to produce unbiased, objective estimates and judgments.

4. Mr. McCloskey, after a minute or so of further discussion, accepted the above comments and indicated that he would make changes in the final paragraphs of his memorandum which would take my comments into account. The conversation then ended amicably.

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5. The only document I left in Mr. McCloskey's office was Tab C.


6. NOTE: Mr. McCloskey's staff assistant stated during the session that the Congressman had sent copies of the Tab A paper to State and Defense as well as to CIA for comments on the factual data therein.



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National Intelligence Officer
for South and Southeast

Attachments

- Tab A - Mr. McCloskey's paper
- Tab B -  personal memorandum
- Tab C - Suggested changes in paper

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