

## THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

Executive Registry

80-3034

National Intelligence Officers

3 January 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence  
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH : Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment *RET*

FROM : Richard Lehman  
National Intelligence Officer for Warning

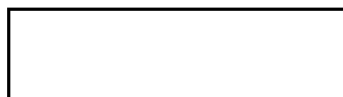
SUBJECT : Strategic Warning Staff's Performance

1. Action Requested: That you sign the attached memorandum to Director for Strategic Warning Staff.

2. Background: The Strategic Warning Staff was the prime mover, and at times the sole voice of dissent, during the period leading up to massive Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Starting in August, the Staff attended meetings, wrote memoranda to the National Intelligence Officer for Warning, requested additional collection, and generally kept the pot boiling when the conventional view of the community was one of complacency. A brief summary of the Staff's memoranda is attached.

3. As a direct result of the Staff's analysis and constant attention to the more ominous alternatives, the Intelligence Community's performance can only be termed a success: we issued Alert Memoranda on 14 September, 19 December, and 25 December. Our policymakers were well warned.

4. In view of the amount of attention devoted to "intelligence failures," it seems appropriate to recognize a resounding success. To that end, I recommend you sign the accompanying memorandum.



Richard Lehman

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## Attachments:

- A. Summary of Staff's Memoranda
- B. Letter for DCI Signature

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SUBJECT: Strategic Warning Staff's Performance (NFAC #0027/80)

Distribution:

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SUMMARY

USSR-Afghanistan Memoranda from Strategic Warning Staff

- 10 August : There is a strong likelihood that the Soviets will commit a limited amount of combat forces, and are likely to find themselves being drawn into a larger operation.  
(to NIO/W)
- 24 August : A number of events in recent days point to an impending increase in Soviet military aid--suggesting that the decision to increase support has in fact already been made.  
(to NIO/W)
- 28 August : A request that attachee tasking for Kabul be expanded to include Soviet air activity was submitted to DIA when the Strategic Warning Staff discovered that Soviet flights were not being detected by technical means.  
(to DIA)
- 6 September: We are not arguing that the Soviets have made a decision to commit combat troops (although they may have) but that they have made decisions which indicate they are prepared to introduce forces if that is what it takes to preserve their position.  
(to NIO/W)
- 14 September: On balance, taking into account the evidence available to us, we believe there is a better than even chance that the report of Soviet troop movement to Afghanistan is accurate.  
(to NIO/W)
- 21 September: Following is a chronology of Soviet military activities in the week which we view as indications of possible Soviet intentions to introduce combat forces into Afghanistan.  
(to NIO/W)
- 26 October : We are concerned that in the month that has been elapsed since the USSR-Afghanistan Alert Memorandum (14 September), the Soviets appear to have put themselves in position to move a larger ground combat force into Afghanistan in less time with less advance warning.  
(to NIO/W, readdressed to Warning Working Group on 29 October)

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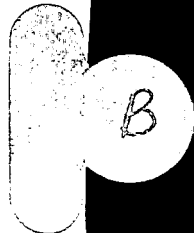
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- 12 December: Continuing analysis leads me to believe we should immediately produce a follow-up to the 14 September Alert Memorandum. The Soviets appear to be preparing to introduce sizeable combat forces into Afghanistan.  
(to NIO/W)
- 13 December: I left the meeting yesterday with the feeling that we had not accomplished much. Most of those present seemed to continue to hold the view that the Soviets are moving tentatively. By their actions, the Soviets have indicated they are willing to take the large political step of putting their own combat units into a foreign country.  
(to NIO/W)
- 14 December: We believe the additional indications we have detected in recent days are particularly significant in that they suggest that the forces to be committed come from units other than just the 105th Guards Airborne Division.  
(to NIO/W)

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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D. C. 20505

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Strategic Warning Staff

SUBJECT : USSR-Afghanistan

The performance of your Staff during the period preceding massive Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was exemplary. Through your attendance at various meetings and your memoranda to the National Intelligence Officer for Warning, you caused the Intelligence Community to consider alternate, more ominous, hypotheses. As a result, our policymakers were warned as early as 14 September of the possibility that Soviet troops would be employed in Afghanistan. It is encouraging to witness such a resounding intelligence success, for which you deserve a large share of the credit. Well done.

STANSFIELD TURNER

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