



Central Intelligence Agency
Office of the Deputy Director for Intelligence

Bill - 27 MAR 1984

The package on the training course "Intelligence Successes + Failures" you asked for.

[redacted] is really doing an excellent job with it, and even better, in ways supportive of what you + I think need to be done to improve analysis.

I think [redacted] has finally found his niche.

Rg. P2175

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Approved For Release 2008/11/25 : CIA-RDP86M00886R002500090001-8

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: INTELLIGENCE SUCCESSES AND FAILURES

I have been engaged in the following activities, in response to the DCI's request that analysts be exposed to the lessons from the CIA record regarding intelligence successes and failures.

I have been teaching a two-hour unit on the subject to a large number of analysts -- mostly new hires. I have presented the unit to the New Analysts Course and to the Analysis Training Course. I have also been presenting it to all DO Career Trainees. The unit was also presented to the Military Analysis Course and I will soon present it to new branch chiefs (Introduction to Supervision).

This effort, in my view, has worked well in sensitizing the students to the challenge of intelligence analysis, the pitfalls, and the need to take seriously the recommendations of the DCI and the DDI for improved analysis (such as challenging assumptions and projecting multiple outcomes).

I am also prepared to present a short version of the course to interested special groups. For example, I will present a three-hour version to the staff of the Operations Center at their [] Conference.

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The first running of the 6-day course for analysts is now at its midpoint. The syllabus and the annotated reading lists are attached.

The first course has 18 students: 15 from the DI, 1 from NIC/AG, 1 from DDST/ORD, and 1 from O/DCI (Historical Staff).

The student response so far -- as I judge it and as judged by OTE colleagues who have sat in on individual sessions -- has been quite positive. After two days of discussion on the general causes of failure (including a presentation by [] based on the recent SRP study for the DCI), the students presented their case studies on failure. Task groups of 3 students each presented to the class what they think caused the failure in Cuba in 1962, the Middle East War of 1973, and Iran, 1978-79.

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Their presentations were based on readings for the course, including selections from post mortems, and on interviews with participants in the failure. On Iran, for example, the students interviewed [redacted] the responsible OPA Division Chief at the time, [redacted] Chief of the Iran Analytical Center, and John Helgerson, then the Assistant NIO.

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The student presentations generally confirmed the previous class discussions on the causes of failure. Nonetheless, the students engaged in the case studies reported that they had gained a sharper appreciation of the problems facing the analysts than they could have gotten from my lectures and class discussion on problems in general.

The students now understand that failure does not happen only to the other analyst. And I think they now are ready to take seriously the second half of the course -- a cost-benefit analysis of DCI and DDI recommendations for improved analysis.

To supplement this discussion, selected students will present their findings on "successes" in the work of their own Offices, or from the general record. Among the topics chosen are the Andropov succession and Nicaraguan export of revolution.

Though it is too early to reach a judgment on the course overall (do the students change enough to justify six days away from their desk?), the remark from several of them that their Branch and Division Chiefs should take the course is a promising sign.

[redacted]

20 March 1984

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INTELLIGENCE SUCCESSES AND FAILURES

Presented by
Analysis Training Branch
Intelligence Training
Office of Training and Education

Course Director

Analysis Training Branch

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OTE Course Instructor

Analysis Training Branch

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INTELLIGENCE SUCCESSES AND FAILURES

COURSE SCHEDULE

DAY	UNIT	TIME
1.	1. Introduction	0900-1030
	2. CIA Record	1040-1200
	3. Interpretations of Intelligence Failure	1300-1415
	4. Barriers in the International Environment	1425-1550
	5. Case Study Assignments	1600-1650
2.	6. Political and Organizational Barriers	0900-1030
	7. Analyst-Generated Barriers I	1040-1200
	8. Analyst-Generated Barriers II	1315-1450
	9. Senior Review Panel: Causes of Failure	1500-1630
3.	10. Case Studies of Failure I	0900-1150
	11. Case Studies of Failure II	1300-1450
	12. Summary on Causes of Failure	1500-1630
4.	13. Coping with International Barriers	0900-1015
	14. Analytical Techniques for Dealing with Complexity	1020-1200
	15. Coping with Deception	1315-1450
	16. Product Evaluation Staff: Requirements for Success	1500-1630
5.	17. Coping with Political & Organizational Barriers	0900-1030
	18. The Analyst's Responsibility: Lateral Growth	1040-1200
	19. The Analyst's Responsibility: Openmindedness	1300-1430
	20. The Analyst's Responsibility: Relationships	1440-1630
6.	21. Case Studies of Success I	0900-1150
	22. Case Studies of Success II	1300-1430
	23. Conclusions & Student Evaluations	1440-1630

INTELLIGENCE SUCCESSES AND FAILURES

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To increase analysts' understanding of the causes of intelligence failure, with emphasis on why and how barriers to timely forecasting of critical developments have contributed to past failures (e.g., international complexity, deception, bias, overconfidence).

2. To assist analysts in critically examining recommendations by veteran intelligence practitioners and outside critics for improved analysis -- including devil's advocacy, multiple projections, and stronger ties with policymakers and nongovernmental experts.

3. To relate the course's findings on the causes of failure and requirements for success to the students' current analytical assignments.

INTELLIGENCE SUCCESSES AND FAILURES (ISF)

INSTRUCTIONAL UNITS

1. Introduction. DCI, DDI, and ATB purposes in sponsoring ISF. Review of course objectives. Student introductions and objectives in taking the course. Ground rules. Definition of terms frequently used in course.

2. The CIA Record: Perils of Estimating. Where CIA has generally done well, and where poorly. Why we have had most failures in anticipating military threats, third world revolutions, and sharp policy shifts. The perils of estimating: being wise is not always sufficient for being right. Comparison of the overall CIA record with that of other intelligence services, and the performance of other groups in the US (economists, Wall Street and sports "handicappers," academic, and journalists).

3. Interpretations of Intelligence Failure. Critical explanations from the reading material. Student views. Concept of multiple barriers to correct interpretation of "signals" of an on-coming crisis or important event (See chart next page).

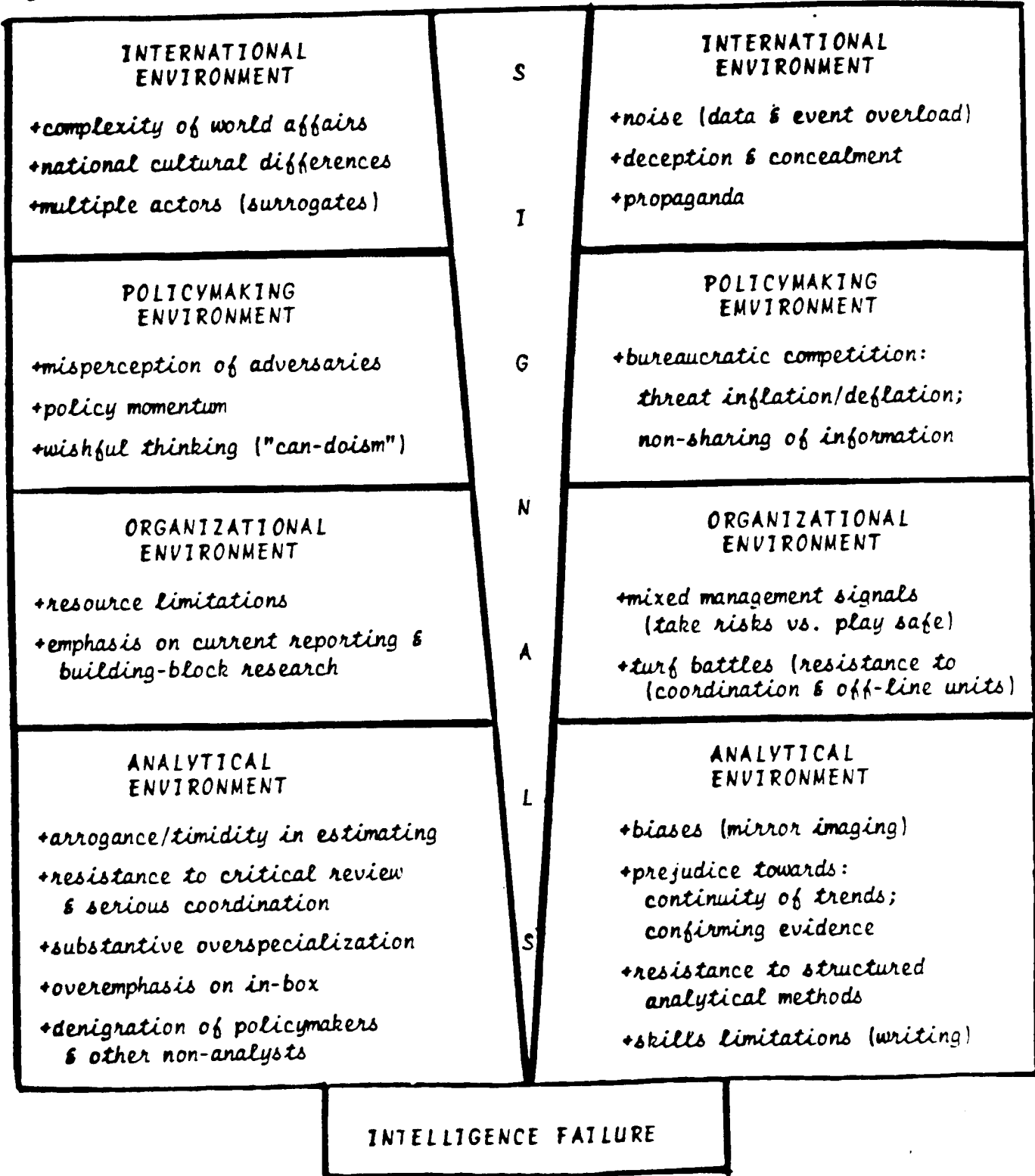
4. Barriers in the International Environment. "Noise" (event and data overload). Complexity (the difficulty of estimating an adversary's moves before he closes his options). Paradox of Warning (Japan would not have attacked on 7 December 1941 if it had perceived US alert). Cultural Differences (thinking like the Politburo). Paradox of Risk (the more outrageous a risk, the less likely it will be anticipated, the less risky it becomes -- as in the missile crisis of 1962). Deception (the key to surprise attack). Student examples from their current analytical assignments.

5. Case Study Assignments. The students will select prominent cases of intelligence success or failure (e.g., the Iran Revolution) to study (readings and interviews) and explain to the class (see Instructional Units 10-11, 21-22).

BARRIERS TO INTELLIGENCE

Signal Barriers Generated By:

Signal Barriers Generated By:



Barriers are defined as obstacles to correct interpretation of signals of developments of importance to US interests (threats and opportunities).

6. Political and Organizational Barriers. Explanations from the reading material. Historical examples. Student explanations and examples. Political and organizational barriers in perspective: To what extent do the problems for intelligence analysts (e.g. partisan and bureaucratic competition, unclear management signals) flow from the inherent character and strength of the US political system and of large organizations?

7. Analyst-generated Barriers I. DCI and DDI views. Explanations from the reading material. Arrogance and Timidity (some analysts are too quick to reach judgments; some, too slow). Biases (we cannot operate without analytical frameworks to simplify reality, but even the best frameworks do not represent reality). Paradox of Expertise (in general, the expert on nuances of a foreign country is handicapped in anticipating "uncharacteristic" behavior and therefore "sharp" changes). The "Lone Ranger" syndrome (negative analyst attitudes toward critical review, meaningful coordination, and alternative views of non-analysts). Skill limitations (especially writing, as an obstacle to integrating useful criticism and handling less likely alternatives). Student responses.

8. Analyst-generated Barriers II. Above discussion continued.

9. Senior Review Panel Group Views on Causes of Intelligence Failure. SRP, guest lecturer.

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10. Case Studies on Failure I. Students will discuss ways in which case studies validate or require redefinition of prior class discussion on general causes of failure.

11. Case Studies on Failure II. Procedure same as in number 10.

12. Summary on Causes of Failure. Students to relate their current views on the causes of failure to their present and prospective DI assignments: What are the most important barriers they face? Does intelligence failure happen only to the other analyst? Who has responsibility to overcome obstacles? General discussion on how.

13. Coping with Barriers in the International System. Understanding and adjusting to the limitations to intelligence analysis: projection of multiple outcomes; using the system (collectors, methodologists, warning specialists).

14. Analytical techniques for Dealing with Complexity. [redacted] ATB). Distinguishing types of problems. Survey of analytical techniques. 25X1
15. Coping with Deception. [redacted] ATB). Why and how deception succeeds. What the country analyst can contribute to the efforts of the warning specialists, to improve the record of countering deception. Political and military dimensions. 25X1
16. Product Evaluation Staff views on the Requirements for Intelligence Success. [redacted] Chief PES, guest lecturer. 25X1
17. Coping with Political and Organizational Barriers.
(A) Understanding the policymakers' modus operandi (empathy, role playing, contact). (B) The need for and the special challenge of "customized" analysis. (C) Brief history of intelligence organizations: Does structure matter? (D) Recent CIA changes (regional organization, Alert Memoranda, NIO warning Meetings). (E) Possible lessons from the corporate world (In Search of Excellence).
18. The Analyst's Responsibility: Lateral Growth. The cognitive and analytical processes. "Quotations" (analytical building blocks). The importance of writing and briefing skills.
19. The Analyst's Responsibility: Openmindedness. What does it mean, and how can it be implemented? Cost-benefit analysis of techniques such as "devil's advocacy," "role playing the adversary," and emphasis on disproving rather than confirming judgments. Projecting alternative outcomes. Communicating levels of confidence. Drawing policy implications.
20. The Analyst's Responsibility: Strengthening Relationships. With substantive peers throughout the Agency and Community, with policymakers, with outside experts. Cost-benefit analysis of taking seriously divergent points of view, including those of "worst casers" and "best casers". The art of making reviewers, coordinators, and critics work for you. Why the consumer is "king."
21. Case Studies of Success I. Student task groups will work to refine class discussion on requirements for success.

22. Case Studies of Success II. Procedures the same as in no. 21.

23. Conclusion and Student Evaluations. What have we learned? Where and why do students agree (disagree) with critics? With instructor? What should be done; what can be done: by the analyst, by DI management, through training and education. Student evaluation of the course.

INTELLIGENCE SUCCESSES & FAILURES:
READING SELECTIONS: VOLUME I

A NOTE ON THE READING SELECTIONS

The number of readings in this volume and in the companion classified volume will place a large, and probably unrealistic, demand on the students. Nonetheless, each selection either represents a point of view or contains insights of value in coming to grips with the demanding subject of intelligence successes and failures.

Please use the annotated Table of Contents to select the articles you believe will be of most value in strengthening your understanding of the subject and its component issues and problems. Please pay particular attention to Tabs F and G in preparation for the first day of the course.

Selection of an article for the course does not necessarily represent an endorsement of the accuracy of its facts or the soundness of its judgments. At times, one article contradicts another on the issue or problem under discussion.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TAB A. COURSE SYLLABUS, OBJECTIVES, AND INSTRUCTIONAL UNITS.
DEFINITION OF FREQUENTLY-USED TERMS.
STUDENT EVALUATION FORM.

TAB B. BRIEFS ON THE PROBLEMS AND PERILS OF ANALYSTS
Hans Morgenthau, Ron Spiers, Walter Lippmann,
Michael Getler).

TAB C. BRIEFS ON THE CIA RECORD
(William J. Casey, Thomas Powers).

TAB D. THE RECORD ACCORDING TO THE PIKE COMMITTEE (1976).
A convenient and informative, if not always balanced,
review of a series of failures.

TAB E. W.D. HOWELLS, "INTELLIGENCE CRISES" (1983)
A defense of intelligence analysts and of some frequently-
criticized practices by an INR veteran practitioner.

TAB F. EXPLANATIONS OF FAILURE: PROBLEMS OF COGNITION,
PERCEPTION, AND BIAS:

[redacted] "COGNITIVE FACTORS IN DECEPTION
AND COUNTERDECEPTION" (1982)

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ROBERT JERVIS, "HYPOTHESES ON MISPERCEPTION" (1968)

PATRICK MORGAN, "THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A STRATEGIC
SURPRISE" (1983).

The three selections will enable any interested reader to
construct his own general explanation of intelligence
failure.

[redacted] a former CIA analyst, presents a clear and compelling
assessment of the cognitive limitations to analyst
understanding of complex events. The article discusses the
implications of these limitations for coping with deception
(Instructional Unit 15).

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Jervis' article represents a synopsis of his groundbreaking
work on misperception, which strongly influenced academic
specialists on the subject.

Morgan has written perhaps the single most comprehensive
review of academic explanations of intelligence failure.
This excerpt complements and at times challenges the above
selections.

TAB G. ATTEMPTS AT GENERAL EXPLANATIONS OF FAILURE:

DANIEL GRAHAM, "ANALYSIS AND ESTIMATES" (1980).

PHIL WILLIAMS, "INTELLIGENCE FAILURES IN NATIONAL SECURITY
POLICY" (1973).

RICHARD BETTS, "ANALYSIS, WAR, AND DECISION: WHY
INTELLIGENCE FAILURES ARE INEVITABLE" (1978).

MICHAEL HANDEL, "THE YOM KIPPUR WAR AND THE INEVITABILITY OF
SURPRISE" (1977).

General explanations of failure range in character from
simple to overly elegant.

General Graham, former Director, DIA, articulates the view,
held by many critics of the Agency, that systematic bias is a
major cause of failure.

Williams presents a short and simple framework.

Betts' insightful explanation is probably the one most widely read by CIA managers and, because of his many briefings, most widely known in Congress.

Handel's explanation, at times a bit too complex, is sprinkled with valuable insights and eye-catching turns of phrase.

TAB H. "WARNING CYCLES" (1983) 25X1

A plea for help from analysts by a DIA specialist on warning intelligence. To be discussed in Unit 15, on Coping with Deception.

TAB I. CASE STUDY ON THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS, 1962.

Volume II contains related classified articles. Graham Allison's Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis (1971) is available for interested students.

RICHARD LEIGHTON, THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS OF 1962 (1978).

Excerpts from the text and chronology provide a useful framework for understanding the case.

ALEXANDER GEORGE & RICHARD SMOKE, "THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS, 1962" (1974)

Explains the crisis as a failure in deterrence. Insightful examination of CIA's miscalculations of Soviet intentions and considerations of risk.

KLAUS KNORR, "FAILURES IN NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES: THE CASE OF THE CUBAN MISSILES" (1964).

In one of the earliest explanations of the difficulties in anticipating an "unusual" event, Knorr -- a CIA consultant at the time -- responds to Congressional criticisms of CIA's performance.

FRITZ ERMARTH, "REFLECTIONS ON THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS" (1974).

Thoughtful comments on the continuing debate about Soviet behavior and the meaning for analysis.

TAB J. CASE STUDY ON THE 1973 MIDDLE EAST WAR.

The Pike Report (Tab D.) contains a section on this case. Volume II contains a related observation. Additional articles on the case, that address the Israeli rather than the US failure, are available for interested students.

UNCLASSIFIED EXCERPTS FROM THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY STAFF
POSTMORTEM ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY
PRIOR TO THE OCTOBER 1973 ARAB-ISRAELI WAR.

[REDACTED] COMMENTS ON THE POSTMORTEM (1977)

25X1

RICHARD BETTS, "OCTOBER 6, 1973: THE OCTOBER WAR" (1982)

Places the failure into the context of his general
explanation of intelligence failures.

RAY CLINE, "POLICY WITHOUT INTELLIGENCE" (1974)

An indictment of Secretary of State Kissinger by former
Director of INR.

JANICE GROSS STEIN, "THE 1973 INTELLIGENCE FAILURE: A
RECONSIDERATION" (1982)

Perhaps the most illuminating explanation of the Israeli
failure. Many valuable insights on the causes of
intelligence failure in general.

TAB K. CASE STUDY ON IRANIAN REVOLUTION, 1978-79.

Volume II contains related selection. Additional articles by
US policy participants and critics are available for
interested students.

HPSCI STAFF REPORT, IRAN: EVALUATION OF US INTELLIGENCE
PERFORMANCE PRIOR TO NOVEMBER 1978 (1979).

MARVIN ZONIS, "IRAN: A THEORY OF REVOLUTION" (1983)

Stresses the continuing lack of understanding about the
dynamics of 1978-79.

GARY SICK, "WASHINGTON'S ENCOUNTER WITH THE IRANIAN
REVOLUTION" (1982).

Former NSC staff member points to "policy momentum" as a
barrier to analysis, and indicates that academic experts did
no better than the analysts.

NICHOLAS WADE, "IRAN AND AMERICA: THE FAILURE OF
UNDERSTANDING: (1979).

More on the record of academics.

ABUL KASIM MANSUR, "THE CRISIS IN IRAN: WHY THE US IGNORED A
QUARTER CENTURY OF WARNING" (1979)

Former State Department official (using a pen name) defends
the wisdom of the experts, and states that Khoemeini has
almost no chance of gaining power.

TAB L. DEALING WITH POLITICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL BARRIERS.

Volume II contains related selections. Thomas Hughes' perceptive short book on the relationship between intelligence and policy (The Fate of Facts in a World of Men) is available for interested students.

RICHARD BETTS, "INTELLIGENCE FOR POLICYMAKING" (1980).

Observations on the responsibilities of both communities.

ANGELO CODEVILLA, "COMPARATIVE HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE OF DOCTRINE AND ORGANIZATION" (1980).

Survey of foreign intelligence services and a call for organizational change in the US.

IN SEARCH OF EXCELLENCE: LESSONS FROM AMERICA'S BEST RUN COMPANIES.

An excerpt from the DCI's speech of January 1984.

TAB M. THE ANALYST'S RESPONSIBILITY

Volume II contains related selections.

RICHARD BETTS, "WARNING DILEMMAS: NORMAL VS. EXCEPTIONAL THEORY" (1983).

A thoughtful explanation of the need for openmindedness.

ROBERTA WOHLSTETTER, PEARL HARBOR: WARNING AND DECISION (1962).

This book was available for analysts responsible for the Cuban Missile and Arab-Israeli assessments. The excerpt on Japanese calculations of risk in the attack on Pearl Harbor could have served as a caution to "mirror imaging."

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INTELLIGENCE SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
READING SELECTIONS: VOLUME II

A Note on Security

Those students who do not plan to return to their offices after each class day should bring this classified volume to class only when they anticipate a specific need for it: e.g., in connection with a case study exercise. In those instances, the Course Director will be able to provide temporary secure storage.

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TAB N. REFLECTIONS ON THE CIA RECORD

[REDACTED] "HOW THREE ESTIMATES WENT WRONG," ---
STUDIES IN INTELLIGENCE, 12:1 (WINTER 1968).

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[REDACTED] ON ESTIMATING THE SOVIET STRATEGIC THREAT
(1982).

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HOWARD STOERTZ, ON THE SOVIET STRATEGIC THREAT (1982).

The [REDACTED] and Stoertz articles are indirect responses to
the Graham article in Volume I, Tab G.

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TAB O CASE STUDY ON THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS, 1962.

SNIE 85-3-62: THE MILITARY BUILDUP IN CUBA.

SHERMAN KENT, "A CRUCIAL ESTIMATE RELIVED" (1964).

A defense of the analytical process that underlay the
estimate.

THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS: TWO VIEWS OF THE EVIDENCE
(1964).

TAB P. CASE STUDY ON THE 1973 MIDDLE EAST WAR

RICHARD KERR, INFORMAL NOTE ON THE 1973 MIDDLE EAST WAR.

A participant on the problem of conflicting evidence.

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TAB Q. CASE STUDY ON IRANIAN REVOLUTION, 1978-79

EXCERPTS FROM THE OFFICIAL POSTMORTEM.

Robert Jervis, academic specialist on misperception (Volume I, Tab F), was the principal author. Probably the most authoritative postmortem, with insights into the difficulty of anticipating and monitoring a revolution.

TAB R. DEALING WITH POLITICAL BARRIERS

ROBERT GATES, "AN OPPORTUNITY UNFULFILLED: THE USE AND PERCEPTIONS OF INTELLIGENCE ANALYSIS IN THE WHITE HOUSE (1980).

On overcoming isolation (ours) and suspicion (theirs).

 , "ON ESTIMATING REACTIONS" (1965).

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An old artform that reduces the barrier between intelligence and policymaking after a given policy course has been determined. Used frequently during the Vietnam War.

TAB S. ROBERT GATES ON THE ANALYST'S RESPONSIBILITY

"THE PREDICTION OF SOVIET INTENTIONS" (1973).

On lateral growth, openmindedness, and other requirements for improved analysis

EXCERPTS FROM DDI REMARKS 13 JANUARY 1983.

On multiple projections and other correctives.

EXCERPTS FROM DDI NEWSLETTER, 28 JULY 1983 & 12 JANUARY 1984.

On relations with the policymaker, multiple projections, and lateral growth.

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83-4650

DDI-7433/83/1

OTE 83-6825

24 October 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
Executive Director
Deputy Director for Intelligence
Deputy Director for Administration
Director of Training and Education

FROM:

[Redacted]

Analysis Training Branch, Office of
Training and Education

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SUBJECT: Intelligence Successes and Failures (ISF):
Status Report on Syllabus & Reading List

REFERENCE: Your Memorandum to the D/OTE, dated
7 April 1982, Subject: Training in
Intelligence Analysis

1. This memorandum is in response to your request for a status report on plans for a course for analysts on the lessons of intelligence successes and failures. I welcome the opportunity to solicit your suggestions for shaping the syllabus and reading list to support the objectives you had in mind in your memorandum to Director of Training and Education of 7 April 1982 recommending such a course. I have already discussed goals and general approaches with the Deputy Director for Intelligence, the Senior Review Panel, and the Product Evaluation Staff, as well as with other interested parties in the DI and in the Office of Training and Education (OTE).

2. The primary objective of the course, as I read your memorandum, is to use the CIA record to illuminate the causes of failure and the requirements for success--in a way that motivates analysts to improve their on-the-job performance. In other words, the course will elicit from the record (e.g., from "bad estimates and good estimates") the changes in attitudes and practices that will prepare analysts to deal more effectively with tough intelligence problems, especially anticipation of military attack, revolutionary overthrow of key regimes, and sharp shifts in policy by present and potential adversaries.

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**SUBJECT: Intelligence Successes and Failures (ISF):
Status Report on Syllabus & Reading List**

3. The Tentative Syllabus for Intelligence Successes and Failures (ISF) contains a list of specific course objectives and sketches out 36 hours of seminars, exercises, and guest speakers to illustrate the planned thrust of the course (Attachment A).

4. The selection of reading materials for ISF is still in an early stage. The annotated preliminary list of case studies and commentaries by veteran practitioners and outside critics provides a general view of the range of materials under consideration for the course (Attachment B).

5. Subject to final approval, I plan to offer the course in January and April 1984--to test its effectiveness in achieving your objectives. In response to the DDI's recommendation, I am also incorporating the essence of ISF, as a two-hour unit, in other OTE courses. This already has been done for the current running of the Analysis Training Course (DI Career Trainees), the New Analyst Course (recently-hired DI analysts), and Introduction to the DI (DO Career Trainees). Additionally, I will, in May 1984, prepare a memorandum for you and the DDI on the implications for management and training of my research findings and instructional experience regarding intelligence successes and failures. The final goal is to fine tune the ISF course and the two-hour unit for regular presentation by OTE starting in July 1984.



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Attachments:
As Stated

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DDI- 7433/83/1

OTE 83-6825

24 October 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
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