

MEMORANDUM FOR: DD/I

This is the blow by blow summary of ONE participation in the Iran task force paper which I mentioned to you yesterday.



Lou Marengo

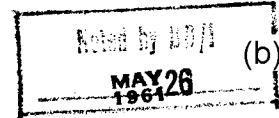
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24 May 1961
(DATE)

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Mr. Sherman Kent

23 May 1961



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Our Role in Preparation of the Intelligence Paper for the Iran Task Force

1. In your absence, an agreed CIA-State "Estimate of the Iranian Situation" was produced for an Iran Task Force which was set up by the NSC to recommend new policy. The intelligence paper which finally went to the Iran Task Force is not a bad job. Certainly, there is nothing in it which is not acceptable to ONE. However, the manner in which the paper was produced could hardly have been more confused or less calculated to bring available talent within CIA to bear on the problem. On the assumption that there are some lessons to be learned from this exercise, I am setting down a chronology of developments as I saw them and a few comments on the whole procedure.

2. Chronology:

- Monday, 8 May : [] DD/P Iran Branch Chief, informed [] (b)(3)⁽⁴⁾(3) in afternoon that NSC had set up Task Force previous Friday and that his office will want some help from [] (OCI) in preparing an "intelligence estimate," responsibility for which had been assigned by the Task Force to Hilsman and [] (b)(3)
- Tuesday, 9 May : [] commented on outline for estimate prepared by [] and colleagues; at same time outline was being separately coordinated with State by DD/P. (b)(3)⁽⁵⁾(3)

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~~SECRET~~Wednesday, 10 May:

About noon [] commented on draft of CIA's part of Estimate written by [] and [] of DD/P. [] informed [] he had major problems with draft; discussion lasted only about 15 minutes because [] had to get paper to Task Force meeting that afternoon.

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About 1:30, [] discussed exercise with Mr. Amory, who said decision had been made that drafting and coordination with State would be done by DD/I side with Board panel of ONE going over paper and [] representing ONE in drafting and coordination with State.

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About 6:30 PM, Critchfield (CIA representative on Task Force) called [] to say exercise was about over. He had presented CIA portion of estimate to Task Force in afternoon telling them it was not coordinated and they had accepted happily. All that remained was to file "corrected copy" for Task Force records.

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[] told him ONE had problems with paper; Board panel was meeting Thursday morning; would probably have to issue note taking exception to paper on several counts.

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Thursday, 11 May:

Critchfield informed [] he would like to have ONE work over his draft in collaboration with [] and [] to produce new agreed draft for 2:30 meeting of Task Force.

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Board Panel met from 10:00 to 2:00 to produce new draft of CIA portion of estimate.

[] accompanied [] to State and at Critchfield's direction undertook to help coordinate CIA portion and State portion in separate meeting with representatives of INR (Elwood and Libesney) so as to produce completely agreed paper for Task Force by 7:00 PM.

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State accepted CIA portion with minor changes.

[] then received instructions from Critchfield in Task Force meeting that we were not to accept State portion, insisting instead on covering foreign affairs section of paper by

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repeating pertinent paragraphs from NIE 34-61. State categorically rejected but offered to make any reference CIA desired to NIE 34-61 at beginning of Foreign Affairs section. After four hours of acrimonious debate in which Critchfield and [redacted] participated after break-up of Task Force meeting, question was settled in Roger Hillsman's office with Critchfield agreeing to accept a footnote that the pertinent section of NIE 34-61 remained valid.

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3. Comment: There are, I think, a few things that can be said about this saga:

(A) The Task Force apparently decided it preferred a State-CIA intelligence paper to a formal fully-coordinated SNIE in order to save time. If it had asked for a SNIE at the beginning, it could have had it just about as promptly. (SNIE 34-2-61 was produced in less than a week immediately afterwards.)

(B) The DD/P representatives on the Task Force undertook to write the intelligence paper themselves with some advice from staff level of DD/I. They simply don't know how to do this kind of thing. ONE finally had either to dissent from the paper or to rewrite it in committee in a three hour period. This is hardly the best way to prepare a CIA draft.

(C) The DD/P representatives' assumption of responsibility for directing the coordination process with INR of State resulted in an unnecessary and time-consuming hassle, partly because they are simply unused to doing business with INR, and partly because they chose to stand much more strongly on principal than the occasion required.

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(D) In discussing the whole exercise with Mr. Critchfield after it was over, I found that we both agreed on one thing. A much better way to handle a similar problem in the future would be for the CIA representative on a Task Force (whether he be DD/P or DD/I and presumably much of the time, he is going to be DD/P) to turn over to DD/I at the very beginning any requirement he gets for finished intelligence. DD/I would then carry primary responsibility for drafting the paper and coordinating it with State. This would have the added advantage of leaving DD/P free to concentrate on the policy problems of the Task Force, though, of course, it would also have the opportunity to affect the intelligence paper being produced by DD/I.

(E) If indeed this is the best way to handle this aspect of the problem presented by the increasing use of Task Forces, some kind of agency-wide directive might usefully be issued so that various individual DD/P division chiefs and others who serve on Task Forces will not have to go through the same unsatisfactory process we did on Iran.

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