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THE DCI MISCELLANEOUS STUDIES

MS-12

THE LAW AND CUSTOM OF THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

by

Sherman Kent

February 1976

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An Introductory Note

This essay's present form owes much to the accidents of its life.

It was begun in the summer of 1965 to serve the purposes of a momentary crisis. As I started to dictate a hasty first draft I had in mind a paper of a dozen pages. The very act of composition revealed a much more complicated subject matter than I had originally contemplated and even in dictating, the short draft grew to more than twenty pages. Clearly the crisis would have to be served by some less cumbersome method. It was. But with the crisis now met, what to do about the now fairly substantial but still far from complete memo. I hesitated to junk the whole enterprise, so I took a familiar tack--I passed copies to two revered colleagues, Abbot Smith and Ludwell Montague, who were well-established aficionados of the constitutional law and custom of the NIEs, and asked for their comments.

In due course from them and others I received enough comment to indicate that I had taken on a much bigger job than I could accomplish while carrying my regular duties. So I put the manuscript, my notes, my

critics' suggestions into the deep-freeze for the duration of my active duty in the Agency and for several years of my retirement.

Last year (1974) I resuscitated the project. One of the things which moved me, beyond the natural desire to wind up a piece of unfinished business, was the realization that the Agency's very considerable history program was drawing to a close with comparatively little written about either the Office of National Estimates or the NIEs which had absorbed its attention. Perhaps by slightly changing the tight legalistic frame of reference of my original plan I could give my essay a bit more of the juice of discursive and analytical history. This is what I have tried to do.*

In terms of chronology the essay deals most fully with the years which coincide with my association with the Office of National Estimates (November 1950 to 31 December 1967). I have made no systematic effort to cover developments that occurred between the time of

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* I have consigned to the historical document file a folder of papers which will serve the purposes of someone in search of some of my primary sources. It bears the designation HS/HC #884.

my departure and the end of the office six years later (1 November 1973).

In all enterprises of this sort one collects a very large burden of indebtedness to old friends and associates. To [redacted] Paul Borel, Keith Clark, James Cooley, Charles Cremeans, Harold Ford, John Huizenga, Lawrence Houston, Wayne Jackson, Ludwell Montague, Abbot Smith and Karl Weber my heartfelt thanks for reading, criticising, and amending some or all of the manuscript, or making written contributions to it sight unseen. (b)(3)

To Bernard Drell and Walter Elder, successive chiefs of the History Staff and [redacted] their editor-in-chief, all thanks for their careful reading of earlier drafts. The present text owes much to their editorial talent and their own ability to recall the past. (b)(3)

Working here (in the Key Building) as a consultant to the Agency's history project I have had access to the magnificently filed and indexed collection put together by the genius of [redacted] and his successor, [redacted]. With this sort of research tool at hand, difficult jobs have been easy and even impossible ones, manageable. To them and to [redacted] the now-retired Agency archivist, my admiration and thanks. (b)(3) (b)(3) (b)(3)

Thanks too to [redacted] who transformed my long-hand into the first typescript and to [redacted] who typed this, the final, from what had become a tortured script. To her my special gratitude for undertaking the chore of putting the footnotes and reference notes at the bottom of the page where they belong; not at the end of the manuscript where few readers would bother to look. (b)(3) (b)(3)

Sherman Kent
25 April 1975

Contents

THE LAW AND CUSTOM OF THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE[1/]

An Examination of the Theory and Some Recollections Concerning the Practice of the Art

I. The Institutional Framework

A. The Director of Central Intelligence and the NIE

The National Intelligence Estimate--spelled thus

Footnotes:

1. The following general histories contain the essential background and a wealth of elaborating detail of the subject of this essay.

Arthur B. Darling, *The Central Intelligence Agency: An Instrument of Government, to 1950* (12 vols) 1953. (HS-1)

George S. Jackson and Martin P. Claussen, *Organizational History of the Central Intelligence Agency, 1950-53* (10 vols) 1957. (HS-2)

Ludwell L. Montague, *General Walter Bedell Smith as Director of Central Intelligence, October 1950-February 1953* (5 vols) 1971. (DCI-1)

Wayne G. Jackson, *Allen Welsh Dulles as Director of Central Intelligence, 26 February 1953-29 November 1961* (5 vols) 1973. (DCI-2).

George S. Jackson, *Office of Reports and Estimates, 1946-51* (5 vols) 1954. (MS-3)

Hereafter I will cite the first four of these works as Darling, *The CIA*; Jackson and Claussen, *History*; Montague, *Smith*; Wayne Jackson, *Dulles*.

with capital initial letters--was one of the major innovations of General Walter Bedell Smith, the fourth Director of Central Intelligence, whose incumbency bridged the period 7 October 1950-24 January 1953.[2/]

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2. There can be no question that the NIE, spelled with capital initials, was a Smith innovation. This is not to say that the CIA, and the CIG before it, had not produced finished intelligence utterances which contained estimates and which met most or all of the criteria of the word national as used in the context. The unit of the Agency which produced such papers was the Office of Reports and Estimates. It was a large office which engaged in a number of intelligence research and analysis tasks. It published, inter alia, a current intelligence daily and current intelligence briefs, straightaway intelligence research studies on a wide range of subjects--world wide--, situation reports, and an otherwise undesignated series known as "OREs". As a general rule, "OREs" were designed for consumption by policy makers at the national level and hence narrowly focused on problems of prime import to the national security. Further they represented not only the best effort of the originating office, but also were coordinated within the community. They constitute the nearest thing to the pre-Smith national intelligence estimate.

They did however differ considerably with the successor institution (the NIE): 1) they contained much more narrative and descriptive data and probably less estimative material; 2) the coordinating process which attended their completion was quite different from and almost certainly less effective than the one which became possible under General Smith's leadership. That the DCI did not personally "submit" them to the NSC and that the IAC members did not personally, and in solemn conclave, approve them (with or without dissent) robbed them of a certain cachet enjoyed by the NIE. Furthermore and perhaps more importantly, the absence of this high level review permitted a certain amount of captious (analyst's) dissent and an undue (analyst's) discursiveness.

The title itself proclaims at least two important messages. First, the use of the word "estimate"--as distinct from "report" or "study"--shows the Director's concern to emphasize this particular form of intelligence utterance and its importance in his thinking. In this General Smith reflected a similar bent of his deputy, William Harding Jackson, who as an intelligence officer during World War II had had a first-hand experience with estimates, had made a deep study of the institution as practiced at high levels of British intelligence, and had himself written a section on national estimating in the Dulles-Jackson-Correa report.[3/]

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3. The full title of this report, usually cited as *The Dulles Report* is: Allen W. Dulles, William H. Jackson, and Mathias Correa, *Report to the National Security Council on the Central Intelligence Agency and National Organization for Intelligence* (1 January 1949).

Upon receipt of *The Dulles Report*, two principal officers of the NSC (the Secretaries of State and Defense) solicited comment from all parts of the intelligence community and in the light of the: *Report* and comment wrote and submitted to the NSC *A Report to the National Security Council by the Secretaries of State and Defense on the Central Intelligence Agency and National Organization of Intelligence*, 1 July 1949. The President accepted this report and issued it as NSC #50. One of its principal recipients was General Smith who always referred to its group of recommendations as his marching orders from the President.

The importance of what I am calling the NIE in this essay received its due (though not in (continued)

The second, the use of the word "national" was employed with equal purpose. It not only designated a type of subject matter suitable for purposes of national security policy formulation, and a hoped-for quality appropriate for use at highest levels of government, but more especially an intelligence production effort which would engage the knowledge and talent of the national intelligence community over which the DCI was the presiding officer. Indeed that thing often referred to as "national intelligence" had been declared to be one of the three principal charges on the DCI.[4/] He and he alone was under obligation to produce it. Terming the estimates-to-be national would put them clearly within the larger canopy of "national intelligence" and as such within the personal jurisdiction of the DCI.[5/]

(continued) these exact words) in both *The Dulles Report* and NSC #50. The latter clearly ascribed to the DCI the personal responsibility for the issuance of national intelligence.

4. The other two (in shorthand) were the coordination of the intelligence community and the undertaking of certain services of common concern.

5. Readers of this essay will not miss the distinction between national intelligence on the one hand and departmental intelligence on the other. The early texts are signally emphatic in identifying departmental intelligence as something gathered, evaluated, and issued in support of departmental missions and functions and not to be trifled with by a supra departmental intelligence authority such as the DCI and his Agency.

Thus the first, and by all odds most important, legal and constitutional aspect of the National Intelligence Estimate is that it was and is the Director's estimate, and its findings are his. Although many experts from perhaps all intelligence components of the community participated in the production of the papers in the NIE series, and although the intelligence chiefs themselves formally passed on the final text, they could not bend its findings to suit their own judgments contrary to the will of the DCI. They could try to win him to their sides by full and free discussion, but they could not outvote him and force him to join them, nor could they make him dissent from them, even though they constituted a clear majority of the Intelligency Advisory Board, Intelligence Advisory Committee, or the United States Intelligence Board as it was successively known. By the same token, the DCI could not oblige them to join him in a matter at dispute. They could of their own accord concur with his findings, or, not being able to, they could dissent and make their alternative views known in footnotes to his text.

In his very first full dress meeting with his IAC on 20 October 1950 General Smith tactfully but forcefully made the matter clear.

The minutes for that historic meeting are gratifyingly full; they contain a verbatim rendering of a memorandum which General Smith read to his colleagues.[6/] He began with the title: The Responsibility of the Central Intelligence Agency for National Intelligence Estimates and went on to read: "One of the principal duties assigned to the CIA--is to 'correlate and evaluate intelligence relating to the national security and provide for its proper dissemination'." The memo elaborates the intended significance of this phrase from the National Security Act of 1947, and continues: "The CIA is thus given the responsibility of seeing to it that the United States has adequate central machinery for the examination and interpretation of intelligence, so that the national security will not be jeopardized by failure to coordinate the best intelligence opinion in

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6. IAC-M-1, 20 October 1950.

The memo in question had been composed a few weeks earlier by the DDCI, William H. Jackson, who had had Walter Lippmann in mind as a chief recipient. At some time before 20 October Mr. Jackson had shown a copy to Lawrence Houston, General Counsel of the CIA. Mr. Houston pointed out to Mr. Jackson that the memo erred in its attribution to the community of the "responsibility" for the NIEs. Mr. Houston emphasized the all-important point that this was a "responsibility" of the DCI alone. One document shows where exactly this correction was made in Mr. Jackson's typescript. Note: passages in single quotation marks are from the National Security Act of 1947.

the country, based on all available information."

The logical construction goes on abuilding: Although the National Security Act provided that the departments and agencies of the government shall continue to collect, evaluate, correlate, and disseminate departmental intelligence, it does not limit the duties of the CIA vis-a-vis its intelligence mission except by the standard of national security. In fact, "the Act apparently gives the CIA the independent right of producing national intelligence. As a practical matter [such national intelligence emanating in the form of] estimates can be written only with the collaboration of experts in many fields of intelligence and with the cooperation of several departments and agencies of the Government. A national intelligence. . . estimate as assembled and produced by the CIA should reflect the coordination of the best intelligence opinion based on all available information."

The memo went on: The concept of national intelligence estimates underlying the statute is that of an authoritative interpretation and appraisal that will serve as a firm guide to policy-makers and planners. A national intelligence estimate. . . should be compiled and assembled centrally by an agency whose objectivity

and disinterestedness are not open to question. "Its ultimate approval should rest upon the collective judgment[7] of the highest officials in the various intelligence agencies." Finally, it should command recognition and respect throughout the Government as the best available and presumably the most authoritative estimate. Although the task is made more difficult by a lack of general acceptance of the concept of national intelligence estimates in the Government, it is, nevertheless, the clear duty and responsibility[8] of the Central Intelligence Agency under the statute to assemble and produce such coordinated and authoritative estimates.

The "statute" to which General Smith had referred was, of course, The National Security Act of 1947,[9] notably its section 102, subsection (d) 3, which reads:

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7. In Mr. Jackson's text this word "judgment" had been "responsibility."

8. General Smith (or Mr. Houston) added this "and responsibility" to the Jackson text.

9. The effective date of the Act was 18 September 1947. Though the Act was signed into law on 26 July 1947, section 310 states that it would not be fully in effect until the day after the day upon which the Secretary of Defense, first appointed, takes office or the sixtieth day after the date of the enactment, whichever is the earlier. Mr. Forrestal was sworn in on 17 September 1947.

(d) For the purpose of coordinating the intelligence activities of the several Government departments and agencies in the interest of national security, it shall be the duty of the Agency, 10/ under the direction of the National Security Council--

(3) to correlate and evaluate intelligence relating to the national security, and provide for the appropriate dissemination of such intelligence within the Government using where

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10. Back in 1965 when I began putting down my thoughts on this subject I sent a memo to the General Counsel asking him inter alia how was it the Congress had used the word "Agency" in this context rather than the "DCI" as had appeared in all prior texts. Mr. Houston answered me at length:

> The most important thing about the Act itself is the congressional intent behind it, and no matter how ambiguous the wording of the Act, it is crystal clear that what the Congress wanted to do was place the responsibility at one single point for the coordination of intelligence and intelligence support to the policymakers. Also, it became clear that by one point the Congress meant one person. They were strongly influenced by the lessons brought out by the congressional investigation of Pearl Harbor, and while they were not too interested in organization or techniques, they had seen that the information by and large which would have warned of the Japanese attack was available and in the hands of various components of the executive branch and no one brought the pieces together and made an adequate evaluation to warn the President. They had received some testimony that such evaluation should be arrived at through board or committee action, but it is quite clear that they discounted any such dispersing of responsibility and were thinking of (continued)

appropriate existing agencies and facilities . . .".

Had General Smith desired, he could have given the background to those cryptic and not wholly satisfactory words of section 102 (d), (3). The fact is that President Truman used almost these exact phrases in his letter of 22 January 1946 addressed to the Secretaries of State, War, and Navy and in which he designated them the so-called National Intelligence Authority and directed them (and a fourth officer to be named by him) to plan, develop, and coordinate "all Federal foreign intelligence activities so as to assure the most effective accomplishment of the intelligence mission related to the national security." His letter went on to say that the addressees would assign persons and facilities from their departments,

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(continued) responsibility placed in one man. This led, among other things, to their designation of this man as Director of Central Intelligence, rather than as Director of the [Central Intelligence] Agency, to connote his over-all responsibility. Thus, when you look at the Act you have behind it a pretty clear expression of the intent of the Congress, which has for the most part been consistent with the organizational concepts of the various Presidents.

I have studiously avoided getting into a legal hassle on the question you raise that in the Act the duties are given to the Agency yet responsibilities in the NSCID's are put on the Director. Since the Director is the head of the Agency and the Agency responds to his direction and control, I could see nothing inconsistent with the Act giving the responsibility to the Agency, particularly when (continued)

"which persons shall collectively form a Central Intelligence Group" under a Director of Central Intelligence, "who shall be designated by me."

The immediately following text says that the new DCI shall:

> Accomplish the correlation and evaluation[11/] of intelligence relating to the national security, and the appropriate dissemination within the Government of the resulting strategic and national policy intelligence. In so doing, full use shall be made of the staff and facilities of the intelligence agencies of your [i.e. State, War, and Navy Departments.

(continued) you knew the legislative history.

11. These unfortunate words, "correlation and evaluation," themselves have an interesting history. The word "synthesize" would have done the trick and indeed was used in an early draft which Admiral Sidney Souers (the principal draftsman of the President's letter) had submitted to Mr. Truman. Souers had relied heavily upon the thought and language of a document relating to a future central intelligence service which the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS 1181/5, 19 Sept 1945) had forwarded to the President. From their text, Souers had borrowed the phrase that the director of the service "shall accomplish the synthesis of departmental intelligence relating to the national security...." Mr. Truman didn't like "synthesis" or "synthesize." Souers told Ludwell Montague that he thought Mr. Truman did not know the intended meaning of the word. Souers guessed that he thought it sounded derogatory (cf. synthetic). (Memo to SK from Ludwell Montague, 26 November 1965.)

A few paragraphs later on the President ordained an Intelligence Advisory Board[12] --the first name given to the body which in General Smith's time was known as the Intelligence Advisory Committee. The letter did not describe the right of Board members to register dissents to decisions of the DCI, but that came soon in the very first directive which the National Intelligence Authority issued.[13]

The President's letter and the NIA directive were given additional strength (perhaps) and precision (certainly) in the first intelligence directive issued by the National Security Council a few months after the passage of the Act which called it into being. Paragraphs 4 and 5 of NSCID #1 (12 December 1947) read thus:

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12. "The Director of Central Intelligence shall be advised by an Intelligence Advisory Board consisting of the heads (or their representatives) of the principal military and civilian intelligence agencies of the Government having functions related to national security, as determined by the National Intelligence Authority."

13. National Intelligence Authority, Directive #1 (8 February 1946). Paragraph 6.

> The Central Intelligence Group will utilize all available intelligence in producing strategic and national policy intelligence. All intelligence reports prepared by the Central Intelligence Group will note any substantial dissent by a participating intelligence agency. (emphasis added)

4. The Director of Central Intelligence shall produce[14/] intelligence relating to the national security, hereafter referred to as national intelligence. In so far as practicable, he shall not duplicate the intelligence activities and research of the various departments and agencies but shall make use of existing intelligence facilities and shall utilize departmental intelligence for such production purposes. For definitions see NSCID #3.

5. The Director of Central Intelligence shall disseminate National Intelligence to the President, to members of the National Security Council, to the intelligence chiefs of the IAC agencies,[15/] and to such governmental departments and agencies as the National Security Council

14. Some hero finally bit the bullet and substituted the word "produce" for "correlate and evaluate." By this time the CIA was very much of a going concern with a significant capability to collect a good deal of raw information through its own efforts. Hence it did not need to confine itself to simply synthesizing what it learned from other intelligence organizations of the community.

15. The Act failed to mention an Intelligence Advisory Board or Committee, although it had had an important place in the President's letter and in the history of national intelligence from January 1946 on. The first (continued)

from time to time may designate. Intelligence so disseminated shall be officially concurred in by the intelligence agencies or shall carry an agreed statement of substantial dissent.

(Emphasis added)

Fast on the heels of this document came NSCD #3. (13 January 1948) which reiterated the DCI's duty to produce and disseminate national intelligence,[16] and two of the early DCIDs which set forth the Standard Operating

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(continued) paragraph of NSCID #1 rectifies matters with a note on the composition and advisory functions of the (now) IAC:

> 1. To maintain the relationship essential to coordination between the Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations, an Intelligence Advisory Committee consisting of the respective intelligence chiefs from the Departments of State, Army, Navy, and Air Force, and from the Joint Staff (JCS), and the Atomic Energy Commission, or their representatives, shall be established to advise the Director of Central Intelligence. The Director of Central Intelligence will invite the chief, or his representative, of any other intelligence agency having functions related to the national security to sit with the Intelligence Advisory Committee whenever matters within the purview of his agency are to be discussed.

A revised edition of this NSCID (7 July 1949) directs that the DCI shall be the IAC chairman and that the Director of the FBI will be on the Committee. (He was always represented by one of his officers, a matter officially recognized some nine years later - NSCID #1 of 25 April 1958).

16. See esp. paragraph 1 (e) National Intelligence.

Procedures for Departmental Participation in the Production and Coordination of National Intelligence[17] and Policy Governing Departmental Concurrences [and Dissents] in National Intelligence Reports and Estimates.[18]

In other words, when General Smith told his colleagues of the IAC how he construed his powers under the National Security Act, he could have invoked a number of other forceful and explicit texts (which antedated the Act and followed it) to bolster his position. Of course, he did not need them, nor did he need them to support three other decisions which were essential parts of his new deal for national estimates.

First was his announcement of his formation of a new office, the Office of National Estimates, whose only concern would be the production of national estimates and closely related matters. General Smith set great store by this office and indicated that "in his opinion it would become the heart of the CIA and of the national intelligence machinery."[19]

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17. DCID 3/1, 8 July 1948.

18. DCID 3/2, 13 September 1948.

19. IAC-M-1, 20 October 1950, para 7. In the context of the chairman's remarks, Mr. Jackson indicated (continued)

Not revealed in the official minutes, but in a memo for the record drafted by Col. Hamilton Howze, USA, an aide to the G-2 who was present at the meeting, was General Smith's mention of the future Board of National Estimates.[20] Col. Howze's memo reads:

> 9. Within the new Estimates Division of ORE [sic] there will be a panel of five or six individuals constituting the top brains. General Smith is looking hard for a retired General or Admiral to head. He tried to get Admiral [Leslie] Stevens (recent Naval Attaché, Moscow) and asked Admiral Johnson [Felix Johnson, the DNI] to talk once more to Stevens in an effort to persuade him. General Smith also said he was anxious to get General [Clarence

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> "that the fact that the [former] Office of Reports and Estimates has in the past produced both national estimates and miscellaneous reports in various fields, which could not possibly be construed as national estimates, had blurred and confused both the product and function of the Office of Reports and Estimates. There has been insufficient differentiation between the form and the coordination procedure in connection with the two products and in their methods of production."

20. A copy of the Howze memo is on file in HS/HC 266.

Ralph] Huebner to be a member of the panel, and possibly to head the Division.

(Be it said that General Smith did not get the services of Leslie Stevens, nor did he put General Huebner in charge of the new office. Huebner did accept a place on the Board, and the distinguished Harvard historian, William L. Langer, became its first chairman.) With this sort of official announcement, the ONE with its own administrative machinery was off to an auspicious start.

Second, the National Intelligence Estimate would be known as just that, not an "ORE" with a number, nor yet an "ONE," nor a "CIA" for that matter. It "would be published under a cover showing plainly that the estimate was a collective effort, the result of which would be labeled as a national intelligence estimate."[21/]

Third, General Smith indicated his intention of holding IAC meetings "more often and for longer periods,

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21. Quoted from para 8 of IAC-M-1 above, note 9.

In actual fact the cover of NIE 1 (3 November 1950) did not plainly show that it was the result of a collective effort. The lay-out of the cover was National Intelligence Estimate/The title/The CIA Seal/NIE-1/Published 3 November 1950/Central Intelligence Agency. The first page immediately after the cover contained the dissemination and distribution notices. (continued)

although as chairman he would make every effort to keep the meetings as brief as possible. He stated that the IAC must be geared for rapid cooperative work."[22/] In this he was true to his promise; the IAC began meeting regularly (and once a week) with the DCI seldom absent from the chair. As the NIEs moved into production, NIE business--whether the laying on, the clearing of scope notes, or pronouncing upon a finished product--became a staple of IAC fare. This was of course in marked contrast to the Hillenkoetter regime, where IAC meetings were rarely called and when called, never to participate in any phase of the pre-Smith brand of national estimates.

At this first IAC meeting, there was another piece of NIE business which was not exactly an innovation. It was in large measure a reminder of the production procedures which had first appeared two years earlier in DCID 3/1 and DCID 3/2. General Smith's

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(continued) The next page was the proper title page: NIE-1/National Intelligence Estimate/The title/followed by "The intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, Army, Navy, and the Air Force participated in the preparation of this estimate and concur in it."

Perhaps a year passed before this latter bit of text appeared on the front cover.

22/ Quoted from para 5 of IAC-M-1.

restatement of these procedures was official notice of his desire to have things done according to the book.[23/]

23. As reported in IAC-M-1:

> 9. After discussion the following procedural steps were agreed upon in the production of national estimates:
>
> a. The Intelligence Advisory Committee will adopt an intelligence plan, or more specifically, a list of required national estimates in an order of priority.
>
> b. In the case of a particular estimate, a frame of reference and the assumptions on which the estimate is based will be discussed and approved by the Intelligence Advisory Committee.
>
> c. Work on the estimate will be referred in the first instance to the Office of Reports and Estimates, or to the Office of National Estimates when it is established in the Central Intelligence Agency, and the several intelligence agencies will be consulted and a time-table fixed for contributions to the national estimate within the fields of their respective interests.
>
> d. On the basis of these contributions, the Central Intelligence Agency will produce a first draft of the proposed national estimate.
>
> e. This draft will be sent back to the agencies for comment and modification and for further discussion if required. On the basis of such comments and discussion, the Central Intelligence Agency will produce a second draft of the estimate.
>
> f. This second, or later drafts if required, will be submitted to the Intelligence Advisory Committee for final discussion, resolution of differences and approval. (continued)

Perhaps to maintain the momentum which he had already given to the NIE, General Smith ended by calling for another meeting in five days to discuss "national estimates priorities and the frame of references and assumptions to form the basis of an intelligence estimate of the situation in Indo-China."[24/]

In his rendering of the established procedures for doing NIE's General Smith added something new and important to the law as it was then understood. It was the content of his first sentence (paragraph "8 a" in the Minutes): "The Intelligence Advisory Committee will adopt an intelligence plan, or more specifically, a list of required national estimates in an order of priority."

(continued)

g. If differences cannot be resolved and approval obtained, the estimate will be published with notation of substantial dissent and reasons therefore.

It was made clear by General Smith that this procedure would not and could not be followed in the case of so-called "crisis estimates." In the event of need arising for a quick or crisis estimate, a procedure similar to that used in the recent instance when the President called for a series of estimates prior to his departure for the meeting with General MacArthur would be followed. That is, a special meeting of the Intelligence Advisory Committee will be called and representatives of the various intelligence agencies assigned at once to the production of a draft of the required estimate for immediate submission to the Intelligence Advisory Committee for discussion, revision and approval.

24. IAC-M-1, para 10.

With this came into being two significant developments. The first had to do with the initiation of the NIEs.

Henceforward NIEs would be formally initiated by IAC action. Requests could come in from many quarters and did: a few times from the President himself, often from the members of the NSC (especially from the Secretary of Defense in Mr. McNamara's time) or from the NSC Staff's chairman,[25] often from the second echelon in the Departments of State and Defense, from the DCI, IAC members, from the Board of National Estimates, and others. Such requests were usually referred to the BNE in the first instance, which would put the item on the agenda of the next IAC meeting or get an IAC authorization by telephone if time pressed. Upon occasion, when a request came in which was clearly not a suitable topic for the NIE treatment (something more akin to a

25. In the Eisenhower years, the staff work for the NSC was conducted along military lines and with military precision. Mr. Cutler, who was the President's man in charge of NSC business, took the chairmanship of what was called the NSC Senior Staff. One of his activities was a continuing tour of the horizon of US foreign relations and security policy and the identification of situations which called for policy adjustment. Another was seeing to the preparation of coordinated policy papers (with recommendations) relating to all of the likely trouble spots. Mr. Cutler planned his papers for months in advance and relied upon the intelligence community to produce an NIE on each upcoming subject. (continued)

National Intelligence Survey or a research study) the chairman of the BNE would try to deflect it to another component of the CIA. Failing this, the chairman of the BNE was bound to take the request to the IAC and try to make his case there for declining the honor. The point is, of course, the actual initiation of an NIE which would engage the talents of scores of people throughout the community

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(continued) Deadlines for the NIE were set so that it would be ready when the Senior Staff began its policy deliberations. The Staff's finished paper often quoted liberally from the NIE. During Mr. Cutler's time and that of Mr. Dillon Anderson who succeeded him, upwards of perhaps 80 percent of NIEs were produced for this particular account.

This is not to say, however, that Mr. Cutler and the NSC, or the NIEs for that matter, had an important role in all major foreign policy decisions of the Eisenhower administration. There were those situations of particular concern to Secretary of State Dulles. These he watched over personally and made his recommendations to the President without reference to Mr. Cutler's complicated staff machinery and its equally complicated intelligence support.

The Kennedy administration changed matters very considerably. Nevertheless with McGeorge Bundy as the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, many NIEs were produced at his request for the consideration of the President and members of the Council, and as well for Mr. Bundy's own NSC staff.

The sort of relationship between Mr. Bundy and the ONE continued with Mr. Rostow who served in the Johnson years. Mr. Kissinger, President Nixon's man in the same job, seems to have had considerably less interest in the NIE.

was the decision for the community's highest body.

The second institution General Smith set in motion was that of planning the program of NIEs to come.[26] At the next meeting of the IAC, that of 26 October 1950, a program of 11 estimates was adopted in the following order of priority: the Philippines, Indochina, Soviet Capabilities and Intentions, Germany, Chinese Communist Capabilities and Intentions, Yugoslavia, Iran, Greece, Turkey, India, and Austria. At this moment there was not yet an ONE nor a BNE. General Smith turned to Ludwell Montague, who had handled the burden of the estimating in ORE, and announced that pending the establishment of an ONE, Montague would be in charge.[27]

In the next four weeks, while the ONE was in its formative stage, Montague placed six coordinated estimates before the IAC for final clearance. Three of them were from the original program, and three others were crash estimates related to the Chinese Communist intervention into Korea. By the end of November the ONE was well established and Montague handed over the charge to

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26. See pp. 37-42 about the scheduling of the estimates.

27. See Montague, *Smith History*, II, 36 and ff.

Mr. Langer, who had the twin titles of Assistant Director for National Estimates (and as such was in charge of the new ONE) and Chairman of the Board of National Estimates.

My own appearance dated from about this time, and I well remember Montague turning to his new colleagues on the Board and suggesting pointedly that they begin to share the burden.

B. The Office of National Estimates[28/]

From this time forward until 1 November 1973, the Office of National Estimates acted as the Director's executive agent for the acquital of his responsibility for the production and dissemination of national intelligence estimates. One may date the Office's formal legal beginnings from the appointment of its chief, William L. Langer (13 November 1950). In these days before the creation of the Office of the Deputy Director/Intelligence, the AD/NE (along with five other AD's of the so-called

28. For a discussion of the formative period of the ONE, see Jackson and Claussen, *History*, IX, 32-51. I succeeded Mr. Langer on 3 January 1952 as the AD/NE and held the position until 31 December 1967. Abbot E. Smith was my successor (1 January 1968-17 April 1971). John Huizenga followed him (17 April-June 1973). For the last months of ONE's existence (June-November 1973) Ramsey Forbush was the acting chairman of the Board of National Estimates.

overt offices) reported to the Director through his deputy (the DDCI). Mr. Langer's mission and functions were spelled out in "CIA Regulation No. 70" of 1 December 1950. With the exception of one of its paragraphs, this document described the duties which he, his successors, and the office they presided over followed in guiding the procreation of more than 1,500 National Intelligence Estimates over 23 years. The paragraph which became inapplicable was #6, which had assigned to the AD/NE the current intelligence task and the issuance of the Daily Summary. In a matter of a few weeks, Mr. Langer had disengaged from this responsibility to concentrate his resources on the main task of the estimates.

The Office of National Estimates[29/] took shape speedily. It should be viewed as consisting of three components: The Board of National Estimates, the professional staff, and the support staff.

The Board was the principal departure from what had gone before. In the thinking of General Smith and Mr. Jackson, the Board was to consist of an indeterminate number of senior officers (say, more than five and

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29. See Attachment A for the official description of the organization and mission and functions of the ONE.

less than twelve), who came from a variety of professional backgrounds, and who, paid handsomely in the supergrade categories, had, (contrary to normal civil service practice) no administrative duties whatever. Their task was wholly substantive. Their days were spent in individual and more often collective efforts on every aspect of the estimates. They met first thing in the morning to hear the day's news and perhaps discuss it in terms of NIEs in the works or to come; they met again often with the ONE staff, often with representatives of the IAC agencies to talk about the schedule, to produce terms of reference, to review drafts, and to arrive at duly coordinated texts suitable to present to the Director and the IAC. They invited and listened to ambassadors, officers of the foreign aid program, attachés, members of the numerous military assistance groups (MAG, later MAAG), CIA officers in from the field, and many others. Above all they studied the new intelligence. Each day their reading room received a wide spectrum of the daily take which ranged from routine items like the FBIS reports, CIA, attaché, and State Department cables to the most sensitive materials that lay in the arcane codeword areas on the far side of Top Secret. This was the daily

grist for thought and discussion. Indeed, almost as much as the labor on the draft estimates, the reading of the highly privileged news made its contribution to the collegial nature of the Board. And it was this very group effort that so often resulted in the posing of the right questions and the struggling for the best answers. As one Board member has pointed out, the collegial spirit also made its contribution to a finished product of high quality. There were always, he remarks, one or two colleagues who had not been so immersed in a paper as to be bored with it and willing to let it go forward irrespective of flaws. Seemingly there was almost always one of these fresh brethren who stepped in as a potent "no" man.

At the start, the Board consisted of Mr. Langer, myself who was named his deputy early in 1951, General Clarence Ralph Huebner and Admiral Bernard Bieri (General Smith here deferred to his own background and the important role of the military in the intelligence community), Maxwell Foster (a Boston lawyer nominated by Mr. Jackson), Raymond J. Sontag and Calvin B. Hoover (Mr. Langer's choices: two outstanding professors of modern history and economics respectively), and DeForest

Van Slyck and Ludwell Montague (senior officers of CIA's Office of Reports and Estimates [ORE]). The latter two, who had had many years of intelligence experience including three or four as estimators in ORE, brought with them a high competence for the task, and a rich first hand knowledge of the grandeurs and miseries of coordinating speculative intelligence at the national level.[30/]

Along with Van Slyck and Montague, ONE inherited a much broader legacy from ORE. Most obviously, we recruited our full staff, both the professional and support components, from ORE. Let me speak of the professionals first.

In the beginning there were about 25 of them, two decades later, a few more than 30. Most if not all of them had had graduate school work in history or the social

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30. See Attachment B for two charts relating to the Board of National Estimates. The first shows the changing membership of the Board between 1950 and 1963 with a graphic indication of each member's professional background.

There were a number of members of the Board who do not show up on either of these documents. Among them were Admiral Jerauld Wright whose last active service in the Navy had been as CINCLANT, Livingston Merchant, who had held many important positions in the Department of State including Undersecretary for Political Affairs and Ambassador to Canada, and Llewellyn Thompson, one of the nation's leading Sovietologists and twice our Ambassador to the USSR.

sciences, and most if not all had served in wartime intelligence work (with one of the military intelligence organizations or OSS). They had improved their regional or functional competences in their duties with CIA. They also, like Van Slyck and Montague, knew a lot about the post-war intelligence community, its strengths and weaknesses, and how to do business with it. They set a pace for a quality of workmanship that we were able to maintain during the lifetime of the Office. For 20 years they were the best staff in town and so proclaimed by a good number of very knowledgeable outsiders.[31]

The support staff, also recruited from ORE, was made up of about the same number of skillful women (growing eventually to about 35) who controlled the distributing in ONE of the daily flood of incoming intelligence

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31. Almost from the beginning, the organization of the staff followed regional lines: Western Europe, Middle East, East Europe (which included the USSR), and Far East. As the demand grew for NIEs concerning Latin America and Africa small staffs were formed to handle these accounts. Later still when the number of NIEs devoted to Soviet military and technical matters (e.g. atomic energy, space exploration) grew, we formed a special Soviet Military/Technical Staff.

materials, ran the ONE library, did the general secretarial work for the Board and the professional staffs, and attended to the reproduction in multiple copies of the endless stream of NIEs in every stage of their creation, first, second, third, and nth draft right up to the final manuscript for dispatch to the printer. The capabilities of our little reproduction staff were a nine-days' wonder throughout the community's band of estimators.

Thus the ONE at the beginning owed much to what had gone before. If all of us in the office had been newcomers like the members of the Board, and if all of us had had to learn the complicated trade from scratch, our fast start and speedy accomplishment would not have been.

With time there were great changes in the manning of both Board and Staff. We were careful about replacements and maintained the standards of excellence. One thing greatly in our favor was a refusal to try to build an empire and stretch our table of organization to imperial dimensions. In the beginning our T/O was set at 85, a figure we never reached. For 1951 we had fewer than 60 people aboard. Ten years later, with a considerably larger work load, we reached a total of something

under 70, perhaps a dozen of whom were on the Board. Some of the latter were new recruits from outside and some were former members of our staff or other CIA staffs whom the Director raised to Board status.

The original concept was that Board members should be "generalists" without specialized expertise in, or estimative responsibility for, particular geographic or functional areas. Over the years, certain specialization began to emerge informally. A Board member by virtue of being assigned to chair a succession of papers on a particular area, or by reason of his own growing interest and study, would become more knowledgeable than his colleagues about a particular problem or part of the world.

Furthermore, as members of the staff, which was organized on a regional basis, began to become members of the Board, they of course brought with them the more profound knowledge of the areas to which they had been assigned. Papers on "their" areas were more often than not given to them to shepherd through the trials of examination by the Board and coordination with the Reps. Thus, without any very conscious plan, a sort of specialization developed within the Board. This had the notable

advantage of enabling the Board member so qualified to be more useful in the various stages of drafting and coordination.

Some anomalies developed, for example, Middle East specialists from the staff were appointed to the Board in numbers out of proportion to the other area experts so that, to the extent Board members were admitted to have specialties, we were over-endowed with Middle Easterners. But the unsystematic system worked pretty well. The chairman of a paper would see to it that a couple of his colleagues would follow its development closely enough to be able to lend a hand if trouble developed in a Reps' meeting, and most of the other Board members would have had their say before then.

Later, when Abbot Smith took over as head of the ONE with John Huizenga as his deputy, a more formal effort at specialization was launched. Board panels were established, each responsible for a particular area, and each with a Board member in charge, with two of his colleagues also assigned. This was well enough, but there was a corollary: Board members were at least tacitly discouraged from concerning themselves with the doings of a panel to which they were not assigned. Doubtless

this saved time in the Board consideration of an estimate, but it also narrowed the range of inspection to which an estimate was subjected. In this situation, the views of a panel chairman sometimes came to have inordinate weight.

C. The Representatives of the Other Intelligence Agencies

With the beginning of the ONE came a marked change in the manner of coordinating estimates with the other members of the intelligence community. In the days of ONE's predecessor (CIA's Office of Reports and Estimates) man-to-man contact between ORE analysts and their opposite numbers in the community had been irregular. A good deal of the coordination of estimates had been achieved via a challenge and response ballet conducted in writing. ORE would initiate an estimate and request contributions. Not receiving adequate help, ORE would draft the paper on whatever resources available and send it out for comment. When the comment came in it was often given in written form. ORE would attempt to conform its text to well-founded exceptions and forget the rest. It would circulate the paper once more--this time for concurrence or dissent. Throughout,

the bulk of the transaction was conducted by memo.

When General Smith asked Ludwell Montague to serve as the CIA officer to coordinate a number of NIEs, and in a great hurry, he insisted upon a man-to-man contact with his opposite numbers in the IAC agencies. Thus Montague was able to get a far higher degree of helpful compliance than heretofore. The six papers which he shepherded were thrashed out around a table with living representatives of the four principal intelligence services (State and the three military services).

By the time I had entered on duty in late November, the meeting of representatives (the Reps) to coordinate a text was a going institution. Throughout the history of the NIE, between 1950 and 1973, the Reps were one of the elements which made the whole enterprise a success.

A word about the Reps: IAC members, perceiving that the NIE was a deadly serious undertaking by General Smith, and cheerful at the way the account was being handled, gave ready support. Of their officers, they continued to designate one who would be their principal staff operative for the NIE account. We, as ORE before

us, recognized these officers as the IAC Senior Representatives. They were the ONE's first point of contact within the IAC agencies for all business affecting the NIE.

Below each of these Senior Reps was a pool of intelligence officers most of whose duties included the area of the NIE. They were usually experienced men and women with a regional or functional specialty and an ability to discuss the substance and the rhetoric of draft estimates. They attended the meetings where text was coordinated and where agreement was achieved when possible. They were the people who when agreement was not possible, were the articulators of tentative dissent.

The institution of the Reps, which had had its informal beginnings in the ORE days, flourished with the coming of the ONE and its heavy schedule of NIEs. Its existence rested solidly upon the stuff of the customary law. I can so assert because there is no reference to "Representatives" in DCID 3/2 (8 July 1946) devoted to the standard procedures of national intelligence production nor, of course, in DCID 3/2 of 13 September 1948 devoted to concurrences in national intelligence. In General Smith's rough outline of procedures,

there are references to "discussion" between "ORE, or . . . the ONE when it is established" . . . and the several intelligence agencies," but no word of "Representatives." However all NIE's produced from that point on involved the Reps in one way or another. It was not until the issuance of DCID 3/5 of 1 Sept 1953 (which superseded DCID 3/1 cited above) that the word "Representatives" (and the institution) passed from the customary to the statute law. Paragraph 3 (c) reads:

> Consideration by Representatives of the IAC Agencies. -- Representatives of the IAC Agencies will meet with the Board to review, comment on and revise the draft as necessary. 32/

Of the scores or even hundreds of Reps that we encountered, two things may be said: (1) They were indispensable to the production of NIE's, and (2) there was no other uniformity. Some were skilled intelligence professionals; others were unhappy time-servers; most fell between these poles. I will have more to say about them in a later section.

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32. This identical language is repeated in para 3c of DCID 1/1 of 21 April 1958 which superseded DCID 3/5, and in para 3c of DCID 1/1 of 5 Aug 1959 which superseded the version of 21 April 1958.

II. The Making of an NIE

Now for the rules that governed the process of producing an NIE: The first dealt with the advance planning and scheduling of the estimate.

A. Scheduling

The minutes of General Smith's first full-dress meeting with the IAC show that there was general agreement to a proposal to adopt "an intelligence plan, or more specifically, a list of required national estimates in an order of priority."[33/] When the committee met six days later, it considered and approved a list of 11 estimates which had been prepared in the ORE, almost certainly by Ludwell Montague and his colleagues. During the first half of November the list was twice expanded to embrace a total of 20 NIEs.[34/]

By this time the Office of National Estimates had come to life and took as an early chore working out of a program for calendar year 1951. For basic guidance

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33. IAC-M-1 (20 October 1950), para 9a.

34. IAC-M-2 and 3. See also IAC-D-1 (1 November 1950) and 1/1 (15 November 1950).

the Office relied heavily upon a range of policy papers which the so-called Senior Staff of the NSC had blocked out for consideration by the Council. This guidance continued during the Truman and Eisenhower years when the President used the Council as a principal source for policy formulation. The orderly procedures developed under Admiral Souers (whom Mr. Truman had recalled to Government service to be executive secretary of the new NSC), and under Robert Cutler (to whom Mr. Eisenhower had entrusted the same task with the title: Special Assistant for National Security Affairs) greatly facilitated the programming of estimates. As a general rule we prepared an NIE as the intelligence back-up for each NSC policy paper.

During 1951 our program was of course disrupted time and again by emergencies, and their calls for estimates to be done on unforeseen topics and often to be done in a rush. But we did service the NSC's requirements as a matter of high priority.

For 1952 we followed the same method, that is, the Board of National Estimates took what guidance it could from Admiral Souers and the Senior Staff. The liaison was of course closer than this suggests, for General Smith was present at meetings of the Council.

Loftus E. Becker, the first DDI, was a member of the NSC Senior Staff, and one or more officers of the ONE served with the junior NSC group known as the Staff Assistants. The Board also received requests from the State and Defense Departments and from the military services. It also had some good ideas of its own. In meetings with representatives of the IAC agencies, the Board put together another year's schedule of undertakings which it presented to the IAC.[35/]

So frequently were these long-range plans upset that the IAC ruled early in 1953 that we should plan firmly for the proximate quarter and only tentatively for the next three quarters--a process which was to be repeated as each new quarter came around.[36/] Before the year's end the IAC changed its mind and went back to attempting a firm schedule for the entire next year with a list of tentative estimates tagging along at the end.[37/] Over the next few years, there was more

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35. Jackson and Claussen, *History*, Chap IX, pp. 68-93 contains some important insights into the relationship between the NSC apparatus and the NIEs.

36. IAC-M-94 and IAC-D-1/2.

37. IAC-M-134 and IAC-D-1/6.

changing of signals; in 1956 the IAC ruled that we should plan for the next two quarters, but skip on ahead to perhaps the last quarter in the exceptional case of the annual estimates on Soviet military matters which we all knew would have to be completed in November or December to conform to the budget cycle.[38] After 1956 there were other changes, none of them of sufficient moment to alter the basic principle that one should always try to plan the NIEs as far ahead as was feasible.

To do so in the Eisenhower years had been easier than in the years that followed. This was because of the routine of the NSC with its own elaborate staff planning. When President Kennedy dismantled the old apparatus (one might even include the formal NSC itself) the Board and the USIB had to look elsewhere for the same sort of high-level guidance. They found it, of course, very close by. They found it in McGeorge Bundy, the new Special Assistant, and in his own NSC Staff which picked up where the inderdepartmental Senior Staff of the Eisenhower days left off. NSC business was conducted quite differently, but conducted nevertheless.

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38. IAC-D-1/17.

There was, for example, a considerable decline in the number of NIEs specifically requested for NSC use, but no falling off in a willingness on the part of Mr. Bundy and his successors and their staffs to give close attention and essential guidance to the program of NIEs.

From the Kennedy years on there were no dramatic changes in the scheduling procedures. As each new quarter rolled around the Board of National Estimates would meet with the ONE Staff and later with the Reps to program ahead for the next half year. The Chairman of the Board always presided over these meetings. Often the agencies would be represented by their own Senior Reps.

One overriding problem beset the matter of scheduling and that was how to keep the quantity of worthwhile undertakings within the limits of feasibility. Years of experience indicated that the estimating machinery could handle about one full-dress NIE a week or about 50 a year. In some years of crisis we produced upwards of 70, a number of which were short papers which had been rushed through via crash procedures. Prudence clearly indicated that to program deliberately for this sort of load was sheer madness. Even if we working stiffs could grind out the papers, the USIB members could not find the time to clear them. So the Chairman's principal problem at

these meetings was to say "No" to a good many suggestions and say it convincingly. If he could not prevail, he could only make his negative a tentative one and urge the Rep in question to get his principal to reopen the matter at the USIB meeting. A decision there, of course, was final. If the resultant load was clearly beyond our capacity, we would evoke some of the emergency procedures for certain of the papers and hope to satisfy the customer with short estimates in which the argumentation and factual backup was reduced to a bare minimum.

Scheduling was an important first step; now for the succeeding ones in NIE production.

B. Terms of Reference

After an estimate had been requested and after its production had been authorized by the USIB, the Office of National Estimates took charge. Its first duty was the preparation of a document which soon came to be called "The Terms of Reference" (TR).[39/]

39. See IAC-M-1, para 9b. In setting forth the production procedures General Smith phrased it ". . . a frame of reference and the assumptions on which the estimate is based will be discussed. . . ."

DCID 3/1 (8 July 1948) in para 3(a)2 says (continued)

The object of this paper was at least two-fold: it aimed to define the subject matter of the estimate, its scope, and time frame; it aimed to focus the forthcoming estimate on the few major points which were discerned as the principal concern of the requester; it aimed to ask those questions (irrespective of anyone's ability to supply factual answers) which would direct research and cogitation to the general area of these major points. In a word it was a statement of precisely what was wanted and a polite message to the community's expert research analysts, telling what was wanted of them.

Oftentimes the overriding concern of the requester was unclear; sometimes he did not really know what it was he wanted from the NIE. In these cases, some senior officer--usually a Board member or the Chairman of the Board--was free to go back to the requester with a draft TR to see whether or not the project was on course.

In the early 1950's when the NIEs were new, and

(continued) the CIA will notify each departmental intelligence organization of: (2) "The nature and scope of the report or estimate involved."

The formal adoption of the phrase "Terms of Reference" occurs first in DCID 3/5 (1 Sept 1953), para 3(a).

when--in spite of General Smith's amiable concord with the IAC members--IAC Reps down the line still harbored suspicion and disapproval of the CIA and its ONE, the clearing of the TRs had its problems. Many of the Reps of this era came from the research components of their agencies and bore the researchman's contempt for estimating, which they regarded as no more than feckless speculation about unknowns and unknowables. To these individuals the establishment of a whole new office in CIA to engage in such idle wool-gathering was something to be met without approval, let alone joy.

Akin to these Reps were those who refused to perceive any real difference between the NIE and the NIS. To them the NIE in hand would be a sort of baby NIS. They fought the TRs of, say, the NIE on Prospects [for France] in Indochina on the ground that it did not call for studies of the Indochina ports, or railroads, or telecommunications. This particular problem did not go away. It persisted for months in meeting after meeting on a sequence of TRs, until finally Mr. Langer conveyed the message to General Smith, who brought the matter up at an IAC meeting. From then on things got straightened

out, but not all at once.[40/]

The TRs, especially in the beginning, did more than highlight the principal questions that the NIE should seek to answer. They came also to be looked on in many cases as an injunction to intelligence collectors to spur their efforts. Often times the ONE would indicate to appropriate components of the DD/P (DD/O), the Contacts Branch of O/O (later the Domestic Collection Division) and/or to the FBIS the desirability of certain specific collection chores. Reps from INR in the State Department might see that the right embassies were alerted; Reps from the military might go to the field and lay some new requisitions on their attachés. The short of this is that when an NIE was scheduled for an important subject with an adequate lead time to completion, the TRs served as special guides for collectors at home and abroad.

Furthermore, as each of the agencies had its own

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40. Ironically, it was the BNE which a year or so later itself asked to have the agencies prepare arrays of certain factual materials appropriate to be included in appendixes or "Tabs" to the NIEs. Although such were reminiscent of parts of an NIS, this time the Reps wanted no part of such appendixes. Once again the matter was settled at the IAC and in the Board's favor.

area of primary concern, the TRs would bundle together all requisitions on, say, political matters with the aim of making clear what was expected from INR in State, all requisitions on ground force matters for the benefit of G-2, etc.

No matter how we tried to compartmentalize, we seldom prevented, say, Air Force Intelligence from including in its contribution sections relating to matters far removed from its primary concern. Early in the game we even stopped trying, and at a meeting on a given TR, after getting agreement from the Reps as to which part of the document was devoted to the special interests of each component and would be coverd by that component, we would end up with a willingness to accept any agency's contribution to any part of the TRs upon which it wished to volunteer its views--expert or not.

The frictions associated with coordinating these early TRs gradually--almost imperceptibly--eased. By the end of the 1950's clearance of the TRs became for the most part a perfunctory business, sometimes accomplished in a few minutes.

Upon many an occasion a highly placed policy officer or group would call upon the community and its

estimating brotherhood for their best judgment as to the probable consequences of certain possible courses of action being contemplated by the US Government.[41/] The unwritten law from the date of the first of such papers established that the "courses of action" at issue must be stipulated by the policy echelons; they must not be possible courses of action dreamed up by intelligence.[42/] The obvious reason for intelligence to deny itself a role was its reluctance to enter the policy arena--at least in this particular phase of intelligence work.

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41. See the excellent article by John T. Whitman, "On Estimating Reactions", *Studies in Intelligence*, (Vol. 9, No. 3, Summer 1965) pp. 1-4.

42. Upon one occasion (July 1965) the DCI (Admiral Raborn) undertook to initiate one of these contingency estimates, himself furnishing the contemplated U.S. courses of action. The TRs tabled at a USIB meeting raised two sorts of objections: one having to do with substantive issues and the other, by far the more important, to the impropriety of self-originated courses of action in such estimates. More than one USIB member expressed serious misgivings. As a result the Director agreed to submit the courses of action to McGeorge Bundy (the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs) for approval. When seized of the problem, Mr. Bundy indicated that the Secretary of State was the proper official for such clearance. So the TR went to Mr. Rusk who reviewed the courses of action and changed them in several important respects. In the end the subject itself was overtaken by events and the estimate was killed. In the ONE development file it is (continued)

The TRs of a contingency estimate offer a number of special problems. More, perhaps than any other species of NIE, would these TRs have to be taken back to the requester for further elaboration. Had he indeed meant to include such and such within this or that possible course of action? Had he deliberately neglected to mention another course of action (or two or three) which suggested itself? What time frame had he had in mind, when would he propose to initiate his first course?--soon? Had he clearly in mind the situation in the country at issue against which the courses would be brought to play? If so what was it?

Once these and other questions had been treated by the requester there would be others when the TRs came before the Reps. In these cases difficulties with the TRs persisted, and legitimately so.

C. Contributions

As already indicated, one function of the Trs was to instruct the research specialists within each of the

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(continued) known as SNIE 10-8-65. (See footnote 43 following.)

Parenthetically it was this particular incident which stirred me to drafting a first version of this essay. I had in mind an audience which I hoped would include our Director.

IAC agencies to begin the preparation of their written contributions to the forthcoming NIE. The formal texts dealing with this matter probably begin (somewhat murkily) with the first Directive of the NIA (8 February 1946) whose paragraph 9 reads:

> You [the DCI] are authorized to request of other Federal departments and agencies any information or assistance required by you in the performance of your authorized mission. [i.e. the production of national intelligence]

DCIC 3/1 of 8 July 1948 gives a deal more precision to the matter. Paragraph 3(a)(4) states:

> 3. National Intelligence Reports and Estimates:
>
> a. Upon initiation of a report or estimate, other than under exceptional circumstances as described in paragraph (e) below, the Central Intelligence Agency will notify each departmental intelligence organization of: . . .
>
> (4) The requirements for departmental contributions in each case, in accordance with departmental responsibilities and capabilities, taking into consideration departmental material

already in the hands of the Central Intelligence Agency. (emphasis added)

And 3(c)(1) goes on to give a bit of confirmation:

> c. Under Normal Procedures:
>
> (1) The Central Intelligence Agency will prepare an initial draft of the report or estimate, utilizing available departmental contributions. During this period departmental personnel will be available for consultation with CIA analysts with due regard to internal Agency demands and commitments under existing liaison arrangements. (emphasis added)

This wording reflected two significant concepts. First, the contribution to an estimate might take the form of departmental intelligence already published as part of an IAC agency's own production program, or of a written piece specially prepared in response to the Terms of Reference, or of an informal oral communication. Second, failure on the part of an agency to contribute would not prevent CIA from going ahead with the production of an estimate. Thus these old texts sufficed to validate the new demand for contributions for all NIEs, SEs, and SIEs,[43/]

43. SEs (Special Estimates) and SIEs (Special Intelligence Estimates) had the standing of the NIEs. (continued)

except a few produced under circumstances of varying degrees of urgency.

The DCID (3/5 of 1 September 1953) which superseded the old 3/1 did add some precision and bite to the former text. Its relevant passage is:

> Normal Preparation
>
> Estimates will normally be prepared in four stages:
>
> a. Terms of Reference and Contributions--[The Board of National Estimates], after consultation with the IAC agencies, will circulate Terms of Reference indicating the scope of the estimate and the intelligence material needed. The agencies will then prepare contributions and submit them to the Board. (emphasis added)

But in actual fact the new language changed nothing in either attitudes or institutions. The written contribution had been so well established in the customary law under the Smith rule that the new DCID was not really necessary except as a precaution against future backsliding.

(continued) As subsequently explained in Chapter K (Numbering of Estimates), ultimately the designation Special National Intelligence Estimate (SNIE) replaced the SEs and SIEs, embracing everything which for one reason or another varied from the normal dissemination of the NIEs.

For the first decade of the National Intelligence Estimates (1950-1960) the written contributions which the IAC agencies made to the institution were a highly important ingredient. They were the product of intelligence research organizations which had experienced staffs and rich files. Often they were solid, scholarly pieces of work well beyond what could have been produced in the CIA. This was particularly the case with respect to the contributions of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence Research. The contributions not only lent a solid factual underpinning to the estimates, but were as well a tangible sign of a collaborator's participation in a community enterprise. Analysts in every IAC agency began to talk about "our estimate on Taiwan . . ." and "what we said in the last NIE on Egypt."

With the passage of time some changes occurred. Two resulted from bureaucratic shake-ups in the first years of the Kennedy administration. The first of these was the establishment of the DIA, which brought a withering away of the research staffs in the service intelligence organizations, and this well before the DIA could compensate for the loss. The other was a drastic reduction in the strength of the Bureau of Intelligence Research in the State Department which had been the principal contributor to the non-military sections of

all of the estimates. During the fifties it had enjoyed something close to an exclusive in political and social intelligence matters worldwide and in all economic intelligence matters outside the Sino-Soviet Bloc. With its decline its main effort had to go to the fulfillment of its strictly departmental obligations. Contributions to the NIEs received a much lower order of priority.

Both INR and the service intelligence organizations, which had already become a bit weary of composing long contributions only to have small fragments of the work show up in the finished NIE, were happy as we began to put greater stress upon the use of oral contributions. This device substituted an afternoon's discussion (with the Board and the ONE Staff) for days or weeks of research and writing.

There was another factor in the decline of outside contributions. As intelligence research and analysis capabilities of the State and military departments declined (and DIA was slow to fill the void), analytical components of the CIA gathered strength principally to service the needs of the Agency in general and the DCI in particular. We in ONE became a beneficiary. We were well pleased when ORR expanded its economic expertise to

embrace the non-Communist world and got more heavily involved than heretofore in Soviet military matters. With these changes the importance of written contributions to the NIEs as made by sister agencies waned considerably in the last half of our second decade--and that irrespective of what the DCIDs had ordained.

The written contribution did not of course disappear. It still remained the essential ingredient in a few categories of the NIEs: the military estimates (especially those centering on Soviet and Chinese military hardware), the estimates dealing principally with scientific and technical matters (the series on space exploration, nuclear energy, etc.), the estimates with important economic aspects.

As the DIA gained strength its written contributions to the military estimates grew in importance. But meanwhile in CIA, early successes by ORR in costing the Soviet military establishment had led ORR to broaden its interest. With a growing expertise it branched out into a number of aspects of the Soviet military including military manpower, order of battle, and the production and deployment of advanced weapons. In the mid 60s, ORR's team of military analysts became the nucleus

of a new office, the Office of Strategic Research. The OSR's support of the NIE program and its excellent written contributions to the military estimates were of continuing importance.

The purely economic functions of ORR which in the beginning had been largely confined to matters relating to the economics of Bloc (Communist China included) countries expanded in time to cover the non-Communist world as well. As the State Department's capability for economic research and analysis in this area declined, ORR and its successor, the OER, moved in. It made an increasingly authoritative contribution to virtually every NIE [44/]

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44. With ORR's founding in the early days of General Smith, it assumed a primary responsibility for this function and fulfilled it for four years without benefit of a formal directive. This finally came with DCID 15/1 (14 September 1954) whose relevant parts are:

> Pursuant to the provisions of NSCID Nos. 1, 3, and 15, and for the purpose of strengthening the over-all governmental intelligence structure for the production and coordination of foreign economic intelligence relating to the national security, the following policies and operating procedures are hereby established:
>
> 2. Allocation of Primary Production Responsibilities.
>
> c. Production of all economic intelligence of the Soviet Bloc is the responsibility of the Central Intelligence Agency (continued)

which had an economic dimension.[45/]

Contributions on scientific and technical subjects continued an essential ingredient in a number of the NIEs. These were furnished by the analytical offices of CIA's Directorate of Science and Technology, and by some of the USIB committees.

Less formally, the CIA Clandestine Services were also contributors. In Mr. Dulles's day and at his order, the then DD/P was often requested to cable its appropriate foreign stations for a substantive input to a given NIE.

(continued) except as indicated herein. In addition, it will supplement the intelligence produced by other agencies by conducting such independent analyses and studies as may be necessary to produce integrated economic intelligence on the Bloc.

A footnote added: "As used herein, Soviet Bloc includes the USSR, Communist China, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania, Soviet-occupied portions of Germany and Austria, and Communist-dominated portions of Korea and Indo-China."

45. NSCID #3 of 17 February 1972 stated flatly, "The [CIA] shall produce economic, scientific and technical intelligence." Period. No qualifying phrase, no geographical or ideological limitation. Earlier versions of NSCID #3, however, all the way back to 13 January 1948, came equipped with loopholes providing the necessary authority, e.g., that any of the IAC agencies could produce economic intelligence "in accordance with its respective needs," or that the CIA could produce as wide a range of intelligence "as may be necessary to discharge the statutory responsibilities of the [DCI]."

Conducted with even less formality was ONE's relationship with the CIA Office of Current Intelligence. I recall no formal written contributions from OCI, but the fruitful man-to-man relationship between staffers in the two offices, the active role played by OCI experts in many coordination meetings, plus the full range of OCI's publications was in more than one sense an important contribution to the NIEs.

Contributions to NIEs by USIB Subcommittees[46]

Joint Atomic Energy Intelligence Committee

The role of the most senior of the IAC subcommittees, the JAEIC,[47] in the production of NIEs was for long a special one. In a very important yearly

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46. See Wayne Jackson, *History*, II part I (esp pp. 64-69, re JAEIC; and pp. 34-58, re GMIC/GMAIC) for an excellent treatment of coordinated national intelligence in the areas being discussed in the next pages of this essay.

47. The germ of the JAEIC was the "Intelligence Unit" of the wartime Manhattan Engineer District. It moved to the CIG in the early days and led in a community-wide intelligence effort on foreign atomic energy matters. By the end of 1947 there was a Joint Nuclear Energy Intelligence Committee which two years later (21 November 1949) became the Joint Atomic Energy Intelligence Committee under the canopy of the community's Scientific Intelligence Committee (see DCID 3/3 - 28 October 1949). In 1952 it emerged from the SIC canopy. (continued)

estimate relating to all phases of the Soviet nuclear energy program, the JAEIC was far more than a contributor. It was the drafter, both before and after General Smith's arrival. Before 1953, JAEIC supervised interdepartmental research on Soviet atomic energy matters, drafted the estimate, and presented the finished document directly to the DCI and through him to the IAC without reference to the Board of National Estimates.

In 1953 Mr. Dulles as DCI nominally altered these procedures. He ruled that henceforth the Chairman of the JAEIC would complete action on the Soviet atomic energy estimate and pass it to the Board of National Estimates for presentation to the IAC. There were several reasons for this decision, the most important of which was essentially editorial. For the JAEIC, with all its expertise in the mysterious reaches of atomic energy and in its talent for wringing sense out of the difficult and fragmentary evidence relating to the Soviet program, was in the habit of writing highly technical papers comprehensible mainly to a highly sophisticated audience of scientists. Since the NIE audience

(continued) Paragraph 2,c,1 of DCID 3/4 (14 August 1952) reads: "The Joint Atomic Energy Intelligence Committee is hereby reconstituted as a permanent interdepartmental committee with the same structure and functions as before."

was anything but that, the Board of National Estimates felt that the JAEIC should write the body of the paper in any way it pleased and permit the Board to preside over the drafting (with JAEIC's approval) of the summary and conclusions which would probably be the only part of the estimate that its important lay audience would have time to read.

Needless to say, such a decision was poison to the Chairman of JAEIC, and in cavalier insubordination he refused to take it. The JAEIC estimate of 1953 went to the IAC in time for its deadline, but without benefit of the ONE's editorial skills. The next year evasion was more skillfully arranged--the JAEIC draft was, to be sure, sent to the Board of National Estimates, but without enough time for the Board to do more than read it before it was due at the IAC. The next year, under a new Chairman of JAEIC, the Board was able to fulfill the DCI's intent of two years back. And in 1956, the whole procedure was given legal standing in a new Annex ("C"-24 January 1956) to a long-standing DCID (3/4 - 14 August 1952).[48/] Henceforth the JAEIC went on

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48. Relevant paragraphs of the DCID read:

1. The mission of the Joint Atomic Energy Intelligence Committee (JAEIC) is to maintain the (continued)

producing its draft paper on nuclear energy matters in the USSR, which stayed in draft status until the Board and the Reps cleared it for transmission to the DCI and the IAC/USIB.

[redacted] (b)(1) (b)(3)

The Guided Missile and Astronautics Committee

An interdepartmental committee comparable to JAEIC was set up in 1956 to deal with intelligence related to guided missiles. Its creation had not been easy. The DCI's motion to establish such an entity led to a long controversy between the military intelligence

(continued) community approach to problems in the field of atomic energy intelligence and to give added impetus to individual efforts. To this end, the responsibilities of the JAEIC include the following: . . .

> f. Preparing coordinated drafts of national estimates on atomic energy intelligence and producing appropriate scientific contributions in this field of intelligence for other national intelligence estimates as requested. (emphasis added)

organizations and the rest of the community and was finally settled in the Director's favor by the Secretary of Defense. The functions assigned to GMIC (which later added the study of astronautics to its charter and changed its acronym to GMAIC) appear in an annex to that long-standing DCID 3/4 (14 August 1952). This is Annex D and dates from 31 January 1956.[49] Unlike the charter of JAEIC, that of GMIC/GMAIC directs that the organization, inter alia, make "coordinated contributions to [NIEs]." It has done so.

The Economic Intelligence Committee

During the first years of ONE's existence (1950-1952) the Economic Intelligence Committee of the IAC made coordinated contributions to five NIEs.[50] This

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49. The relevant text is:

> 1. The mission of the Guided Missile Intelligence Committee (GMIC) is to strengthen the community approach to problems in the field of guided missile intelligence and to give added impetus to individual efforts. To this end, the responsibilities of the GMIC include the following:
>
> c. Preparing coordinated contributions in the field of guided missile intelligence for national intelligence estimates. (emphasis added)

50. These were:

SE 27, Probable Effects of Various Courses (continued)

work presented formidable problems of coordination: that relating to NIE #40, for example, involved tasking more than 20 departments and agencies of the government and required a year to complete. Participants soon tired of the bureaucratic complexities. The ONI refused to make its contribution to NIE #56 through the EIC channel and submitted it directly to the ONE instead. There were other defections in the case of NIE #59. With this the EIC pretty well withdrew as a collective contributor to the NIEs.[51/]

(continued)

of Action with Respect to Communist China; SE 37, Probable Effects on the Soviet Bloc of Certain Courses of Action Directed at the Internal and External Commerce of Communist China; NIE #40, Relative Strategic Importance of East-West Trade to the Soviet Orbit and to the Rest of the World; NIE #56, Potential Insecurity of Foreign Areas of Strategic Importance to the US; NIE #59, Relative Effects of a Complete Severance of East-West Trade on the Economic Capabilities of the Sino-Soviet Bloc and the West.

51. The EIC made three more appearances in the NIE effort in 1956 and 1957.

It made contributions to two NIEs:

11-6-56, Capabilities and Trends of Soviet Science and Technology, and 30-2-57, Near East Developments Affecting US Interests. The EIC also coordinated a footnote to SNIE 11-10-56, Soviet Actions in the Middle East, and coordinated ORR's contribution to NIE 11-1-57, Sino-Soviet Bloc Air Defense Capabilities through Mid-1962.

The Scientific Intelligence Committee

The Scientific Intelligence Committee, on the other hand, was an important contributor to the NIEs almost from the beginning. What follows is from a memo from Karl Weber, the director of CIA's OSI and for many years chairman of the SIC which was established by DCID 3/3 on 28 October 1949. The charter at this time called only for the "preparation of coordinated reports, showing IAC concurrence or non-concurrence, which present the best available intelligence." Few, if any, national-level reports appeared under this provision. On 14 August 1952 DCID 3/3 was superseded by DCID 3/4 which renamed the Committee the Scientific Estimates Committee (SEC) and gave it the function of integrating "scientific and technical intelligence, as and when required for the production of national intelligence. . ." This directive also handed over responsibility for atomic energy intelligence to the JAEIC which was established by the same directive. Again, except for support to the NIS, little national-level intelligence resulted from this charter responsibility.

In February 1959 DCID 3/4 was replaced by DCID 3/5 (and the name "SEC" changed back to "SIC") which removed

from the SIC the responsibility for guided missiles and astronautical intelligence and directed the SIC "to produce: (1) drafts of National Intelligence Estimates, (2) contributions to National Intelligence Estimates, and (3) other interdepartmental intelligence as circumstances required." This is the first direct reference to a role for the SIC in the NIE process.

The principal fields in which SIC contributions to National Intelligence Estimates are made are in the characteristics and performance of aircraft and naval systems, radars and other electronic devices, and in biological and chemical warfare, biomedicine, R&D decision-making, and scientific resources. Contributions in these areas were made to NIEs 11-3, 11-8, 11-14, 11-1, 13-3 and 13-8 routinely. (These were the NIEs devoted to highly important aspects of the Soviet and Chinese military establishments. Most of them were issued annually.) Contributions covering other technical and geographical areas were made when requested, (including Soviet military research and development).

The Scientific Intelligence Committee (then being called the Scientific Estimates Committee) undertook its first national-level study on Soviet science and technology in 1956. The Terms of Reference were prepared

in cooperation with ONE; no separate SEC issuance was planned. JAEIC and others shared in the product which was published as NIE 11-6-56, Capabilities and Trends in Soviet Science and Technology. Updatings of this NIE were prepared in 1959 and 1962.

D. Drafting in the ONE

In the pre-Smith days the CIA's responsibility for doing a first draft of the National Intelligence (Report or) Estimate was clearly established in DCID 3/1 of 8 July 1948.[52/] So it continued in the Smith regime.

Although the formal directive was not altered for three years, there were changes with the early NIEs of General Smith's time. Most obviously, since CIA's

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52. Relevant paragraphs of the 1948 DCID read:

> 3. National Intelligence Reports and Estimates: . . .
>
> c. Under Normal Procedures:
>
> (1) The Central Intelligence Agency will prepare an initial draft of the report or estimate, utilizing available departmental contributions. During this period departmental personnel will be available for consultation with CIA analysts with due regard to internal agency demands and commitments under existing liaison arrangements. (emphasis added)

Office of Reports and Estimates which had done the drafting in the Hillenkoetter days no longer existed, the new Office of National Estimates took up the function. Less obviously, the tentativeness in the DCID about the drafters "utilizing available departmental contributions" disappeared. With General Smith making clear his desire for full community cooperation he got it. There was no question of contributions not being available. The language of the new DCID (3/5 of 1 September 1953)[53/] reflected what had become the invariable rule for all estimates except those composed under conditions of great urgency.

As to the drafting itself, there were no rules except the unwritten rules to keep the paper as short as possible, focus on the principal concerns of the policymaker, and forgo excursions into any factual data except those necessary to sustain an important agrument. Perhaps the most important unwritten rule was that which

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53. The relevant paragraph of the 1953 DCID, entitled Production of National Intelligence Estimates, reads:

> b. Drafting and Board Consideration--After considering the contributions, and such consultation with any contributing agency which may be appropriate, the Board [of National Estimates] will prepare a draft. (emphasis added)

ordained that any paper longer than just a few paragraphs be led off by a set of very short conclusions.[54]

Within the ONE, there were other conventions which attended the writing of this draft. After some experimentation with the Office's organization we adopted a regional breakdown of the staff. One of these staffs would undertake the drafting of papers appropriate to its area. A member of the Board of National Estimates was designated as the officer in charge. He discussed the TRs with the staff, presided over a meeting of his colleagues on the Board and later over a meeting with the Reps for their clearance. He now stayed in touch with the staff as it wrote the draft and presided once again over a session with the Board to perfect the draft prior to its dispatch to the USIB agencies. In sessions devoted to estimates of special interest to the DD/P (DD/O) and to which it had made important contributions, officers of the Clandestine Services were present. As a

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54. In the early years of the NIE we almost always did draft conclusions as a part of the draft estimate. In time we found that this was often a complete waste of time, for as the paper was altered in the coordination session, a new set of conclusions was necessary. Accordingly we would frequently omit doing the conclusions until the paper was in final form, and then do them as a last piece of business with the Reps.

general rule they felt freer to discuss the paper within the family than at subsequent sessions with the Reps in attendance. Often, such family gatherings would be attended by the knowledgeable specialists from the overt analytical offices who might themselves have composed a written contribution.

Drafting - the Estimative Vocabulary

There was a convention for which I personally struggled: this was in behalf of a consistent usage of words of estimative probability. What for example did we mean by "possible," what by "probable," "doubtful," "almost certain," "almost impossible" and so on? Any piece of writing devoted to something imperfectly known, not known, or even unknowable--which after all is the very matrix materna of an intelligence estimate (whether spelled with a small "e" or capital "E" as in National Intelligence Estimate)--is certain to draw upon the lexicon of probability. Early in the game (in March 1951 to be exact, and in the context of the twenty-ninth NIE in the series - NIE 29), a colleague on the Board (Maxwell Foster) and I began to worry as to whether or not the language of the NIEs was actually conveying to our readership the kind of odds (or chances) for and against that

we intended. Our concern had been galvanized when we realized that an expression we had used in NIE #29: "that an attack on Yugoslavia . . . should be considered a serious possibility," had meant many different things to the ONE staff and the Board and perhaps as well to the IAC Reps and their Principals. A poll of the Board of National Estimates revealed that one member thought that the odds were about 80-20 for an attack, another member 20-80, and the rest put the odds scattered between these extremes.

Foster and I set about trying to compose a table of numerical odds such as would be permissible within the inexact intelligence data we used and a list of words which would correspond to five gradations or bands of odds.[55] Our most important determination was to define

55. See my article "Words of Estimative Probability," *Studies in Intelligence*, (Vol. 8, No. 4, Fall 1964) pp. 49-65. It contains the following table:

	100% - Certainty	
The General Area of Possibility	93%, give or take about 6%	Almost certain
	75%, give or take about 12%	Probable
	50%, give or take about 10%	Chances about even
	30%, give or take about 10%	Probably not
	7%, give or take about 5%	Almost certainly not
	0% - Impossibility	

the "possible" as the large area between "certainty" and "impossibility;" that is, the area of the whole spectrum of odds between 99-1 and 1-99. We decided that our greatest disfavor was to slip into common usage and make "possible" do duty for some statement of odds by giving it a modifier and writing such expressions as "a serious possibility," "barely or remotely possible," "a good possibility." "Possible" should never be so used; it should stand naked of modifiers and convey that the thing we had in mind could happen (it was neither certain nor impossible) but that we were unable to cite odds on its likelihood of happening.

Varying degrees of likelihood or probability should be conveyed by a use of the words in the table or by one of the synonyms in everyday usage.[56/]

Needless to say my endeavors to standardize the vocabulary of estimative words did not meet with universal approval. My principal adversaries were those

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56. Ibid. pp. 58-59. For example "conceivable" can do duty for possible, as can "perhaps" and such verb forms as "could," "may," "might." "Virtually certain," "highly likely," or "overwhelming odds (or) chances" can legitimately serve for "almost certain." I will go no further with these synonyms. Interested readers should see pp. 58-59 of my article.

to whom I have referred as poets: "Their attitude toward the problem of communication seems to be fundamentally defeatist. They appear to believe the most a writer can achieve when working in a speculative area of human affairs is communication in only the broadest general sense. If he gets the wrong message across or no message at all--well, that is life."[57/] In opposition, I have ranged my supporters whom I have called the mathematicians. These are people who realize the difficulties of conveying intended meaning and are determined to overcome these difficulties by rigorously holding to a limited vocabulary of odds even at some sacrifice of artistic elegance. As one of the leaders of the mathematicians I did gain some adherents, however, and gradually, during years of guerrilla war both within the ONE and in our dealings with the Reps, the NIEs showed that whereas no ironclad rules had been established, convention had taken root.[58/]

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57. Ibid. p. 57.

58. The most willing followers of my recommended vocabulary were our military colleagues. Years later when the DIA reorganized its estimates work under General Daniel Graham, my table of values was printed on the inside cover of DIA estimates and the vocabulary rigorously used in the substance of the document.

Throughout the coordinating proceedings the Board was acting in behalf of the Director. It was mindful of its responsibility to formulate judgments and estimates which it not only felt duty-bound to recommend to the Director but which it could also sustain in evidence--as far as it went. Usually the Board would cheerfully carry the burden of making such judgments in the Director's name up to the eve of the USIB meeting or until the DCI could study the finished coordinated text. If at such a moment the DCI was not convinced and desired to alter things, it was the Board's job to make the necessary amendments to the text.

On some occasions, however, the Board hesitated to commit itself--let alone the Director--without alerting him to the issue at hand and getting his guidance. Needless to say this sort of issue had to be a blockbuster: e.g., was the USSR probably or probably not competing with the US for the first manned lunar landing? Was the USSR's so-called Tallin system probably being designed primarily as a defense against ballistic missiles or against air breathing vehicles? Clearly on such matters the boss should be briefed into the problem from the beginning, and just as clearly the Board ought

to have his preliminary thoughts before it began its meetings with the Reps.

Our endeavors in this twin objective were often frustrated by circumstances beyond normal human control. From the point of view of the Board, a Director ought to see the importance of a decision he would have to make in, say, two months. He ought, accordingly to find the time to be briefed on the substance of the subject, the evidence, the favored conclusion, plus the most obvious alternative conclusions. For Directors--always short on time--to spend two hours with a team of briefers, and many more than that with hundreds of pages of recommended reading--from the text books all the way to the highly classified intelligence studies--was silly, if not downright impossible. All the more so when such Directors knew: a) that the final decision was a long way off, and b) that in the interim new evidence, new hypotheses, and even new conclusions were highly probable. Why invest this amount of time so early in the game? The Board's reply (had it ever been given) would have denied none of these distressing probabilities, but would have tried to make a point more acceptable to scholars than to busy executives: namely, that topics as

complicated as this one are not usually mastered in a single sitting and that time supposedly wasted in preliminary briefings and open discussion was time invested in the best sense of the word. What we on the Board really wanted was for the Director to drop everything else and sit with us during the critical phases of the preparation of the paper. What the Director for his part really wanted was a Board which could master the subject and just before the deadline fill him with instant widsom. It is not surprising that neither party got its druthers.

In matters of less importance we put our draft before the Reps pretty much as if it had the Director's blessing. We played it that way to the end, and if the Director, at the climactic session of the USIB, decided it was not to his taste--that was life. In actual fact, matters were not quite so brutal as this. I will deal with the softener, that is, our pre-USIB briefing of the DCI a little later in the essay.

E. Coordination of the Draft with the Reps

The important moments in the life of all NIEs came sometime after the Board draft had been perfected

and sent to the agencies. Upon receipt of the draft, their experts went over it and readied their comments. These the Reps would bring with them to the first coordinating session.

Up to this point the draft was a CIA Board of National Estimates draft, though resting in some way or another upon contributions from the agencies. From now on, it started to become a community draft. The object of both the Board and the Reps was the same: to produce a new draft to which, without hedges or fudges or ambiguities, all parties could subscribe as containing the best agreed judgments on the substantive imponderables to which the paper was addressed.[59/] Should success crown this objective, the paper could go on to the USIB Principals and win their concurrence. But in

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59. Keith Clark, who served on the Staff and Board of ONE for 20 years, read an early draft of this manuscript and offered the following as a useful commentary on my use of the word "agreed" in this sentence.

> --There was another trend in the 1960s which I have always considered a very healthy and important one which is not mentioned here. I refer to the idea of stating various sides of a question rather than coming out with a single most probable judgment. I always thought that Allen Dulles, for all his great qualities, did a certain amount of lasting damage with his dictum that national estimates had necessarily (continued)

the event that any of the Reps found bits of the estimate in which he could not concur, he was free to plead his case before the Board of National Estimates and his colleagues and, if he failed to sway them, to take a dissent or a reservation.

Dissenting views of the Reps can be put into three classes. First, there were minor differences between what the Rep believed and the text of the paper under consideration. These differences were argued

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(continued) to give a single best answer to every question addressed on the grounds that we were paid to estimate, and if we did not do it, someone else would. I well remember a feeling that we had made a breakthrough when estimates began, some time in the mid-60's, to use the device of offering a judgment, giving the reasons for it, and then proceeding to acknowledge that it might prove wrong and going ahead to explore what appeared to be the short end of the odds. I feel it was often more useful to treat the variable factors in discussing the future than to offer a prophecy about the outcome. This trend came to a head in the Helms philosophy that he was responsible for producing and circulating these estimates but that he need not take a position on every substantive question addressed in them. This approach, whatever its bureaucratic merits, was realistic and intellectually honest. It showed a decent awareness of the uncertainties and "unanswerabilities" of many of the problems we wrestled with. After all, it is hard to square the fiction that the DCI personally believed every judgment written in the text of an NIE with the fact (alluded to later in this manuscript) that General Smith had often not read the text prior to the USIB meeting.

out at length and in many cases were amicably resolved by textual changes which were not too fuzzy and yet satisfied all parties.

Second, there were differences which came from the opinions of some important component of the Rep's organization, for example from one of the political desks in State. The Rep might or might not share the view he put forward, but felt bound to make a good try. In such a case, when the Board member in charge of the paper felt that the subject had been discussed long enough, he would terminate it, offering to the Rep the right to register a dissent. In such cases, the Rep might be offered a Tiger Medal or the Order of the Lion, a symbol of his having put up a good fight for a colleague's viewpoint with which he himself may have had little personal sympathy.

Third, there were differences which came up in our meetings with the Reps which were not minor at all. The Rep might content himself with a so-called reservation, but the nature of the subject and the forcefulness of his defense indicated that here was an irreconcilable conflict of view that was destined to mature into a full-blown dissent at the level of the USIB.

Anyone wanting to discuss such conflicts without being preachy must insist that his reader understand a few fairly self-evident truths:

1. The cause of the disagreement was rarely, if ever, a matter of one party knowing more than the other, or being privy to convincing evidence denied to the other. There is no case in my remembrance when all parties to the dispute did not have full access to all of the relevant available information.

2. The disagreements, in short, arose not in the area of the knowable and known, but invariably in the zone of the knowable and still unknown, and in that ultimate zone of the literally unknowable. In other words, they were disagreements in judgment; judgment as to the relevance and reliability of the evidence; judgment as to what conclusions the evidence seemed to support; judgment as to which of several possible conclusions seemed soundest and best.

3. The matter of judgment was not necessarily a function of the relative IQs of the disputants. Both sides were frequently represented by people of high ability.

4. To claim that one side had a corner on Jovian

objectivity while the other was consumed by an ignoble subjectivism is downright silly in its unprovability. At best it can only lead to another intractable difference of opinion and at worst, a fist fight.

Having said all this, some of what follows will nevertheless sound preachy, nay offensive to the one-time dissenters. Bear in mind that they were speaking for their USIB Principals, and that the we, in this case, were the members of the DCI's Board of National Estimates. They were dissenting from us, which is not the same thing as saying that they were dissenting from some awesome universal truth comparable to the speed of light or the force of gravity. We ourselves would acknowledge fallibility, while always holding that we had the better case.

Of several kinds of irreconcilable differences, one might begin with those which a man from Mars would have settled with a flip of a coin.

In these cases, neither party could sustain his position with anything more substantial than an attenuated argument from analogy or a feeling in his own personal viscera. For example, one of the NIEs endeavored to answer a silly hypothetical question provided by the

requester: How would country X (an important member of the Third World) behave in the event of an armed conflict between the US and the USSR? The Board of National Estimates first tried to duck the question; failing that, the Board and later the DCI gave a carefully hedged judgment that country X almost certainly would not voluntarily align itself with the Soviet side. One USIB member, surely with no more to go on than we had had, took the contrary view: "Yes, country X would probably support the Soviets," he felt. There was no readily identifiable ulterior purpose behind the dissenter's position. He just didn't believe the estimate in the text and, in conscience, had to say as much.

There was, however, a much more serious range of dissents which to us seemed to spring full-blown from that year's budget of the dissenting service. If it was a time in which the USAF hoped for an appropriation for, say, R&D funds for a nuclear-powered aircraft, any comment on Soviet coolness towards such a Soviet project would draw an Air Force dissent. The obvious, though perhaps unfair, inference was that the USAF felt it was likely to get funds for its own project if it were estimated that the Soviets were on a comparable track.

Similarly, in the late 1950's the NIEs carry some important dissents relating to probable Soviet intentions with respect to the future strength of their jet heavy bomber force (the Bison force). There were those, led by the Board and staff of the ONE, who thought the Soviets would probably augment the force in future years but augment it very modestly. To this view the USAF dissented, holding that the Soviets would continue to give a high priority to the Bison force and enlarge it very considerably. It was difficult at the time to dissociate this estimate completely from our Air Force's own policy which favored a large inventory of B-52s.

Still another range of dissents seemed to derive from an understandable desire to defend the mission of the dissenter's service. Consider the attitude of Naval Intelligence in cases when the absence of a Navy dissent might be considered as the Navy's admission of a failure in one of its missions. This had to do with the DRV's (North Vietnam's) capability to resupply its own and associated forces in South Vietnam. A statement in an NIE intimating that the DRV was capable of running supplies south via shore-hugging junks would bring a dissent from the USN. One of our Navy's very

important missions in the Vietnam war was the interdiction of exactly this sort of traffic. Naval observers in the theatre kept a scrupulous account of their service's inshore operations (Market Time). According to their own figures, nothing, repeat nothing, got through their blockade. Yet the very large quantitites of material turning up in the south and in areas near the sea did invite a presumption that the blockade was not perhaps absolutely watertight. No such intimation--however lightly and tentatively worded--could be made without provoking a dissent from the ONI.

Often dissents arose not so much in defense of a service's good name but in defense of some piece of firmly held service doctrine. For example, the USAF would for a period of time have dissented to an estimate that the Soviets might be considering a mobile ICBM system. Our airmen would have taken this stand because the highest policy echelons of their own Air Force had decided that a rail-mobile system was impractical for the SAC missile force.

Along a somewhat similar line, an estimate that the Soviets probably would not fight an indecisive conventional war without invoking the use of nuclear weapons

in the early 1960s brought a dissent from Army Intelligence. For some time, it was the view in certain high quarters of the Army that all-out conventional war between NATO and Warsaw Pact forces need not escalate to a nuclear war. Indeed, the consequences of being the first to use nuclear weapons would be so horrendous that Army Intelligence, knowing that the US would not do it, was willing to estimate that the Soviets would likewise refrain. Hence, an estimate allowing for the contrary invited an Army objection. To draw a permissible inference is to point out the obvious. If postulated armed conflict, say, in Europe could lead to the sort of large-scale fighting of World War II and with conventional weapons, the Army had a very good reason (budgetary, doctrinal, pride of service) to keep pressing for a full strength ground force. Per contra, an estimate that held that small, conventional wars between the nuclear powers would inevitably and perhaps speedily escalate to all-out nuclear conflict (largely the mission of the USAF) would be virtually to estimate the US Army out of business.

But pause here and reflect. Is this sort of defense of Army doctrine to be handled with pejoratives?

In this case, as in others, the Army Rep and his colleagues and his chief and his chief's chief had for years equated the capabilities of the US Army with nothing less than the national security. This was a tradition all of them had grown up in; it was the air they breathed from infancy. In their scale of values, first came the country, and second, the force necessary to protect and preserve it. They could not question the necessity of the latter, given their high-minded patriotism. Hence, to speak of all of their dissents as born of a narrow parochialism is not to tell the full story. But unfortunately from where I sat not every one of their dissents seemed to grow out of a selfless love of country. Some, as I have indicated, were pretty hard to swallow in this coating.

There was still another range of dissents--and nonmilitary ones--which were seemingly straight policy-oriented in the usual sense of the word. In the State Department, INR was under instruction to "coordinate" draft NIEs with the relevant policy desks and take the desks' views into consideration. Since the latter commanded the department's heavy artillery--far heavier than that of the intelligence arm--INR Reps upon occasion came to interagency meetings as apologists for

a policy that the department was championing. If the NIE swerved in a direction which seemed to disfavor the policy, the Rep would take a reservation and his Principal a dissent.

In the first year or two of the Smith incumbency, the matter of reservations and tentative dissent was an institution not light-heartedly accepted by the Reps. Many of them were long in understanding that the paper being coordinated was the DCI's, and that the Board of National Estimates was his collective spokesman. Upon occasion when the Reps from, say, three IAC agencies would agree upon a position at variance from that held by the BNE, they would engage the chairman, claiming that since theirs was the majority view it should take its place in the text and that of the Board drop to the role of a footnote of dissent. However reasonable such a procedure might sound, the Board would not, indeed legally could not, yield to the pressure of majority rule.

Those of us who engaged in the coordination of the NIEs throughout the years recognized the dissent as the indispensable corollary to the DCI's primacy. If controversial NIEs had had to be coordinated by negotiating out a generally acceptable compromise, they

would have emerged as meaningless platitudes. If they had had to be forced bodily down the throats of the disapproving Reps and their Principals, they would have led to open rebellion soon followed by a disintegration of the idea of national intelligence and its organizational apparatus. It was the dissent which made possible the safe navigation of these twin perils. It was the dissent which permitted the issuance of a paper whose main thrust was reasonably clear (though unfortunately not invariably correct) and which could be studied in the light of conflicting views expressed in the dissenting footnotes.

No Rep who held a position at variance with the Board draft would want to acknowledge defeat without a fight. None would peacefully subside into a footnote of dissent. In fact, that footnote was the very last place he wanted to be. Finding the chairman too strong for frontal attack, he would try various flanking maneuvers. On his part, the chairman, well aware that he was in the presence of a true difference of opinion, had the duty to try to identify the difference, isolate it, and oblige its champion to state it as a dissent. As already indicated, this took some doing. In the

process it was all but inevitable that some of the crisp formulations of the draft would have been rounded to accommodate still other potential dissenters whose views were different, well-founded, and not too far from the text of the draft.

I will return to the matter of the dissent in the section of this essay devoted to the final action on a given NIE: its day before the USIB.

As for any rules for the conduct of interagency sessions devoted to the coordination of a draft NIE, there were none in the formal sense. There were, however, many conventions which the Board chairmen tried to enforce.

Meetings usually began with a solicitation of general comments; was the draft a viable document? Anyone feeling that it was not was asked to explain his objection. However laudable the attempt to get general reactions, it was not often fruitful. Almost instantly the objector-in-general was citing specific sentences in specific paragraphs to make his point. When other Reps followed this general procedure, the chairman would cease his quest for general comments and move to consider the paper paragraph by paragraph, starting at the beginning. Reps could bring up their specific differences at

the appropriate moment.

What went on from there depended largely on the chairman and his ONE staffers, Board members concerned with the paper, and the men and women around the table. Consider first the Rep.

Over the years we met with hundreds, and not surprisingly they were of many kinds. The best were old intelligence pros, who knew their subject matter, the case they wished to make, and could draft text that was spare and clear. They would know when to compromise and when to dig in and fight. They would come armed with mimeographed sheets, one sheet to a paragraph or two. The text which they bore showed the unsatisfactory Board language reproduced but crossed out, and then the substitute formulations, underscored or otherwise identified. With such preparations there was no doubt about what the Rep wanted changed and how the change could be effected. They were always able to state their case orally and defend it. If they came to the point where they saw that they would have to take a dissent, they would take it and permit the paper to move on.

There were Reps from the other end of the spectrum. Often they were unhappy time-servers in intelligence with little substantive competence and no real

feeling for what the NIE was all about. The most trying of them would object to a paragraph on such grounds as "it made him uncomfortable." Why? Well he couldn't exactly say. In addition they would be long-winded, short-tempered, and not being willing to dissent, would cheerfully settle for simple obstructionism.

Somewhere between was the Rep who was the city's greatest expert on the subject at hand and who wanted to write into the NIE everything that he knew. The bob-tailing of descriptive and expository material characteristic of the NIE was anathema to him. He never understood why a policy maker could make up his mind about some phase of Middle East oil without knowing a great deal about the tribal customs of a small clan of Saudi bedouins. An exasperated chairman once told such an expert, "See here, Harold, we aren't going to write into this paper everything that you know; we're not even going to include everything that I know."

In such terms the chairman could stop time-consuming discussion. There were however two considerations which moderated the chairman's use of his power. One was the force of good sense. The essence of the chairman's task and that of the whole of the ONE was to produce coordinated

intelligence papers. You cannot make good on such an undertaking if you are being high-handed with your collaborators. In fact, if the alternative is multi-front war, you must suffer a lot of fools. No one should be permitted to leave a meeting without having had his opportunity to plead his case. A Board of National Estimates which took too abrupt an attitude with the Reps could have wrecked the NIE on the shoals of simple bad public relations.

The other moderating force was the Rep's right to appeal his case to his boss, and the boss's right to bring it up at the USIB. Small matters which had a certain validity and which could be settled at the coordination session ought to be so settled. One of the chairman's duties was to reduce to a minimum, if not to zero, matters which would be a waste of the top echelon's time. Hence in the chairman's mind a rapid calculation took place: how important was the point at issue? if merely of marginal importance, how tenaciously was the Rep holding to it? if he lost the case, marginal or not, would he take the matter to his boss to bring it before USIB and losing, make it the subject of a formal footnote of dissent? Obviously the chairman would prefer to settle

minor matters at the meeting, and just as obviously he would not budge toward compromise on a matter of real import to the sense of the paper. This would be the point at which he would urge the Rep to table his dissent and let the task move forward.[60/]

In writing of the procedures of coordinating the NIEs, the matter of disagreement must perforce be emphasized. It was, after all, something of greatest importance. Yet at the same time, in giving it its due, one is led to neglect that other aspect of coordination--the useful amendment, the helpful amplification of something skimped, the correction of a flat-footed error, etc., all made possible by a wise and knowledgeable Rep. Simple acceptance with thanks is not so much of a procedural point to warrant a separate paragraph. But just this is a point that must be made. Many, many more NIEs were improved from having passed through the process than were not improved or were damaged.

This is, of course, not a fashionable view. There

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60. Charles D. Cremeans, who served for many years in the ONE as staffer and member of the Board of National Estimates, has written an excellent article on the lore of coordinating the NIE's. See his "Basic Psychology for Intelligence Analysts," *Studies in Intelligence* (Vol 15, No. 1, Winter 1971) pp, 109-114.

has been at least one from the ONE itself who behaved as if anything done to alter his draft damaged it. His work was a perfection, he thought, and he resented changes by his fellow staffers, members of the Board, and above all by the Reps. Needless to say, the man was as wrong as he was vain.

But suppose it resulted in a paper which was not that much better; suppose that the draft had actually lost something as a result of passing the critical obstacle race of coordination. In my view any losses suffered were many times compensated for from the fact that the finished paper was an agreed community document. Obviously this sort of essay is not the place to extol the virtues of the NIE, but in rehearsing the laborious process which attended its production, I should say that in my opinion it was manifestly worth while.[61/]

So much for the details of how a coordination session was conducted. It is far more important to emphasize the underlying value of the process taken as a whole. A good coordination meeting was not simply a

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61/ See Ray S. Cline, "Is Intelligence Over-Coordinated?", *Studies in Intelligence* (Vol. 1, No. 4, Fall 1957) pp. 11-18, and the reply in the same issue by R. J. Smith, "Coordination and Responsibility," pp. 19-26.

comparison of rival texts; it (and the study and preparation that preceded it) constituted a serious examination by informed people of issues agreed to be significant.

It was of basic importance for the ONE, as moderator of the coordination process, to have a reputation of nonpartisanship and fairmindedness. This reputation had not only to be earned in the early years; it had to continue to be deserved by succeeding members of the Board and ONE Staff, and recognized by a succession of Agency Reps. By and large, I think we managed to establish and maintain this reputation over the years, so that the basis for a cooperative venture within the intelligence community was a solid one.

Given this foundation, the process of coordinating a paper could be rewarding. The atmosphere became uncongenial to special pleading and to the urging of a parochial point of view by a particular agency. On many occasions, we saw a Rep come to a meeting prepared to advance some far-out line of argument, and watched his proposition wither and die in the cold blast of interagency debate and joint examination of the evidence. Thus, a major contribution of the NIE was its usefulness

in elimination of absurdities.

But in addition to knocking down parochial prejudices, the process had a more positive aspect. It was a forum where people from all over town could exchange views, add to the store of community knowledge, and refine and sharpen their assessments of the course of events.

F. Production of NIEs Under Conditions of Urgency

The process I have discussed above would have required six to eight weeks for the average NIE. With this sort of time allowance, no one engaged felt that he was coasting. For what we called the big papers--those devoted to various aspects of the Soviet military establishment--the time often ran to six or eight months. Was it possible to shorten things when necessary?

Starting with the earliest DCID dealing with the production of national intelligence, there was a full realization of the need for special procedures of haste. DCID 3/1 of 8 July 1948 prescribes for two degrees of urgency: what would be a normal rush job, and what we later called "crash."[62/]

62. Relevant paragraphs of the DCID read: (continued)

Later DCID's carried a very considerably shortened

(continued)

(3) d. Under Urgent Procedures:

(1) The Central Intelligence Agency will, at the earliest opportunity, notify the departments that it is undertaking an urgent project.

(2) Upon notification by the Central Intelligence Agency that an initial draft paper has been prepared, appropriate departmental or agency specialists and consultants will meet to consider the paper.

(3) The Central Intelligence Agency will prepare a final paper for concurrence or substantial dissent by the departmental agencies.

(4) After receipt of all replies, the Central Intelligence Agency will publish the statements of concurrence or substantial dissent with the final paper.

e. Under Exceptional Circumstances:

(1) The Central Intelligence Agency will prepare and disseminate most urgent reports and estimates immediately upon completion and without formal coordination within the departmental intelligence organizations.

(2) Reports and estimates so disseminated will include a statement to the effect that normal departmental coordination has not been accomplished in each case.

(3) Such reports and estimates will subsequently be subject to normal coordination procedures cited in paragraph 3c [the section on "Normal Procedures"] above, and, if (continued)

version.[63/]

As General Cabell (DDCI, 1953-1962) once put it: There are only two essentials to the production of an NIE: "it has to be written, and it has to be acted upon by the USIB." There was one case when matters were actually shortened to just these two steps. The occasion was the Middle East crisis of 1956, and the paper in question was SNIE 11-9-56, Sino-Soviet Intentions in the Suez Crisis (6 November 1956). British, French, and Israeli forces had begun a military attack upon Egypt. This was not to the taste of the Kremlin. Late in the day of 5 November, we received word that Premier Bulganin had sent a stiff, indeed a threatening, note to the Prime Ministers of Britain and France. Mr. Allen Dulles was

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(continued)

necessary, redisseminated upon completion of this process.

63. The language of DCID 3/5 (1 September 1953) and of DCID 1/1 (21 April 1958) and DCID 1/1 (5 August 1959 is:

> 4. Preparation under Exceptional Circumstances:
>
> Any of the steps listed in 3a, b, and c, above may be omitted under exceptional or unusually urgent circumstances. [3a relates to the "TRs and Contributions," 3b relates to the "drafting and Board consideration," and 3c to "consideration by IAC/USIB agencies."]

out of town, and General Cabell, as Acting DCI, summoned an IAC meeting for 9:30 p.m. The objective was a community appraisal of just how tough the Soviets were ready to get. Not until about 9 p.m. did we in ONE receive from the State Department the official translated version of the Bulganin message. Abbot Smith drafted the estimate in about 30 minutes with some minor kibitizing by knowledgeable analysts of the Agency and by his colleagues of the Staff and Board of the ONE. The paper went speedily from the typewriter to the IAC which discussed it until almost midnight and cleared it.[64/] This was our speediest paper.

In actual fact there was a whole spectrum of urgencies and a whole spectrum of procedures to fit them. The customary law governing such matters was very elastic.

If the rush was only slightly less than that of November 1956, the Board and Staff of ONE would draft the paper without benefit of TRs or contributions and

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64. Just as the IAC members had arrived at an agreed text, Mr. Dulles arrived (he had been in New York with the intention of voting the next day). He read the draft, and taking the time into account, decided to hold up issuance until all had slept on it.

coordinate it with the Reps. If a little more time was available, the Board and Staff would speedily issue TRs, and summon a meeting of the Reps to discuss the general thrust of the paper it had begun to think out; if possible, the Board Chairman and ONE Staff involved would devote an afternoon to the hearing of "oral contributions." Useful relevant information which turned up in such sessions would, of course, play its role in the Board draft. In almost every sort of crash job we would do our best to coordinate the draft with the Reps before it went to the USIB.

The penalties of rush procedures were obvious. No one ever spoke truer than he who said, "if they want it bad enough they'll get it bad enough." Without time to identify well-formulated views which clashed with others, without the time to try for the best consensus and force dissenters into clearly-stated dissents, hastily composed papers were often marred by any or all of the characteristics of sloppy writing.

G. Final Clearance of the NIEs at the USIB

Meetings of the IAC/USIB took place on a midweek morning. By well-established right the DCI, or Acting

DCI was in the chair.[65] Probably from the very beginning the chief of intelligence in the State Department

65. Not until after the passage of the National Security Act of 1947 was there any formal notation of the existence of the IAC (the Act itself makes no mention of it). The first paragraph of NSCID #1 (12 December 1947) is devoted to the membership and functions of the IAC:

> 1. To maintain the relationship essential to coordination between the Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations, an Intelligence Advisory Committee consisting of the respective intelligence chiefs from the Departments of State, Army, Navy, and Air Force, and from the Joint Staff (JCS), and the Atomic Energy Commission, or their representatives, shall be established to advise the Director of Central Intelligence. The Director of Central Intelligence will invite the chief, or his representative, of any other intelligence agency having functions related to the national security to sit with the Intelligence Advisory Committee whenever matters within the purview of his agency are to be discussed.

There were those who felt that this text neglected to state that the DCI himself should be noted as a participating member and chairman of the IAC. A revised version of NSCID #1 (7 July 1949) rectifies matters in its first paragraph:

> 1. To maintain the relationship essential to coordination between the Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations, an Intelligence Advisory Committee consisting of the Director of Central Intelligence, who shall be chairman thereof, the Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the respective intelligence chiefs from the Departments of State, Army, Navy, and Air Force, and from the Joint Staff (JCS), and the Atomic Energy Commission, or their representatives, shall be established to advise the Director of Central Intelligence. The Director of Central Intelligence (continued)

sat on his left. Then after the merger with the old US Communications Intelligence Board (USCIB) (15 Sept 1958), came the director of NSA. Then for the first few years in the new headquarters building, came the chiefs of intelligence in the three services (Army, Navy, Air Force in that order) and the director of intelligence of the Joint Staff.[66] When the DIA was formed late in 1961 its director sat at the foot of the table facing the chairman. Down the other side of the table came the representative of the OSD for intelligence,[67] an officer representing the director of the FBI, and the chief of the AEC's intelligence

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will invite the chief, or his representative, of any other intelligence agency having functions related to the national security to sit with the Intelligence Advisory Committee whenever matters within the purview of his agency are to be discussed. (emphasis added)

All subsequent versions of NSCID #1 designate the DCI in one formulation or another as chairman of the IAC/USIB.

66. In the years when the director of intelligence of the Joint Staff was a member of the IAC he sat with the other service chiefs. His job disappeared with the establishment of the DIA.

67. He, like the J-2, disappeared with the establishment of the DIA.

unit. Then came the seat or seats reserved for officers of CIA who had a role in one of the items on the Committee's agenda. When an NIE was up the chairman of the Board of National Estimates sat in one and the Board member who had presided over the NIE in the other. Last and on the chairman's (the DCI's) immediate right--starting in December 1961 and enduring till this day--sat the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence.

As with Mr. Dulles before him, Mr. McCone had been belabored by higher authority (notably the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board--the PFIAB) to lift himself above the day-to-day administration of his Agency and to concentrate his attention upon the proper "coordination of the intelligence community." I have been reliably informed that a spokesman for the PFIAB suggested to Mr. McCone at the very start of his incumbency that he should do just that. Apparently he went on to indicate that Mr. McCone should not only divorce himself from Agency activities but physically move himself to a downtown office, say, in the Executive Office Building. According to this line of reasoning, the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence would act as the principal executive officer of the Agency,

and the DCI as the effective chief of the community. Quite obviously Mr. McCone could not see his way to a literal observance of this suggestion, but by way of an earnest of his good intention, he elevated his deputy to full membership in the USIB with the duty of representing the CIA in such community matters as came before that body. He made a formal statement to this effect to his USIB colleagues at his very first meeting with them (30 November 1961). A memorandum from President Kennedy (16 January 1962) not only approved this action, but also confirmed and strengthened the DCI's authority to coordinate community activities. It is beyond the scope of this essay to comment upon any aspect of this action save one--the presumptive role of the DDCI as the Agency's spokesman for the NIEs.

As I saw things there were two sorts of business which came before the USIB: they were national intelligence, notably the NIEs on the one hand and on the other, just about <u>everything else</u>. To me it was possible for the DCI to depute his responsibility to his deputy in the area of the <u>everything else</u>. But the law, the NSCIDs, the early texts of constitutional standing, Presidential directives and executive orders made it

impossible for the DCI to waive his responsibility for the national intelligence whose highest exemplar was the NIE. The NIEs were, by definition, his papers; their issuance his responsibility. Hence to speak as if his deputy were free to dissent from the Director's own utterance in the name of the Agency seemed to me as something out of the land of Oz. The Agency in whose name the DDCI would speak had in almost every case been thoroughly canvassed by the Board of National Estimates before it put the draft NIE before the Director. To be sure not every knowledgeable officer of the Agency was wholly satisfied with every phase of the paper, but that was not because he hadn't been consulted through one medium or another.

Happily neither of the DDCIs I served under after Mr. McCone's innovation ever saw fit to quarrel with an NIE once it had reached the USIB. The DDCI was an important officer of the agency, and his views on the NIEs in progress (when he had such views) received the full attention of the BNE. I do not know how I would have handled an unexpected dissent should the DDCI have raised one at the USIB.[68/]

68. Early in 1974--and well beyond the terminal date I've set for this essay--the DDCI actually (continued)

There is another matter relating to the composition of the USIB that had its significant effect on the NIEs. This was the establishment of the Defense Intelligence Agency. It had had its conceptual beginnings in the work of the Joint Study Group and took positive legal form when President Eisenhower, as one of his last acts in office, signed the NSC document which put into effect this (and other) recommendations of the Group. The day was 18 January 1961. In theory at least, there would be a single intelligence component for the Department of Defense and a disappearance of the group assigned to the intelligence work in the Joint Staff, another much smaller group serving the Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for intelligence matters, and most importantly the intelligence organizations of the three military services. But first the new DIA had to get itself a duly authorized charter. This did not happen until 1 October 1961.

During the next two years and more, the DIA steadily expanded its functions and its table of organization. As it did so, the service intelligence organizations shrank, 69/

(continued) tabled such a dissent. The DCI accepted it, and there in the cold print of NIE 91-74 is an "Agency" footnote to a finding of the DCI himself.

69. The JIC and its staff disappeared early; so did the Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (continued)

but these latter did not give up their participation in the national estimating process, nor did their chiefs give up their membership on the USIB. The untidiness of this situation concerned a number of high officials of the government. There were conversations between Mr. McCone, Mr. McNamara, Mr. Gilpatric (the Deputy Secretary of Defense), General Carroll (the first director of the DIA), and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. From the record, one gathers that Mr. McCone favored a prompt purging of the service intelligence chiefs from the ranks of the USIB, but realized that General Carroll was having his administrative difficulties in readying the DIA to carry the full load of military intelligence. Mr. McCone was also well aware that the Joint Chiefs were not the DIA's first champions and were, moreover, firmly opposed to having the director of DIA the only military man on the USIB. What to do about the service intelligence chiefs was something that Mr. McNamara was going to have to settle within his official family.

By the end of 1963 Mr. McNamara seems to have had things sufficiently in order to take the matter to President Johnson, who issued a directive (5 January 1964) to

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(continued) for intelligence matters. The J-2 and the Special Assistant no longer attended USIB meetings.

proceed forthwith with the reorganization of intelligence work within the Defense Department. One may guess that with this the secretary could cope with the Joint Chiefs. In all events this troubled situation soon ended in an artful compromise which surfaced in an exchange of correspondence between General Carroll and Mr. McCone and takes its formal reflection in a revision of NSCID #1.[70/] The settlement resulted in the

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70. See Carroll to McCone 26 Feb 1964 (ER 64-1444); McCone to Carroll 3 March 1964 (ER 64-1444a); and Carroll to McCone 16 March 1964 (ER 64-1949).

The fruits of this arrangement appear obliquely in the revised NSCID #1 of 4 March 1964.

In the first sentence of its para 2a there is reference to a "fully coordinated intelligence community." A footnote describes the "intelligence community" as including: "The Central Intelligence Agency, the intelligence components of the Departments of State, Defense (Defense Intelligence Agency, Army, Navy, and Air Force), National Security Agency," the FBI, and the AEC. . . . (emphasis added)

Paragraph 2.b. gives the membership of the US Intelligence Board. The directors of intelligence of the three services are not included. They enter the legal domain by a side door, however. Para 4.a., devoted to national intelligence, ends with the sentence, "Intelligence so produced shall have the concurrence . . . of the members of the US Intelligence Board or shall carry a statement of any substantive differing opinion of such a member or of the Intelligence Chief of a Military Department." (emphasis added)

Apparently Mr. McNamara continued to be displeased. His annoyance broke through a (continued)

service intelligence chiefs losing their formal membership of the USIB, but retaining almost everything else. As "observers," they not only attended USIB meetings, but received the right to send Reps to the usual working level meetings attendant upon the production of the NIEs. Furthermore they retained "the right to express divergent or alternative views on USIB documents such as the National Intelligence Estimates, Special National Intelligence Estimates . . . ."

From the point of view of the ONE, this solution was a good one. With the establishment of the DIA, we feared that we would have access to the Pentagon through

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(continued) year and a half later and in the presence of Director Raborn. He had before him a recently issued NIE (one of the Soviet military papers) and he had noted some dissents from the service intelligence chiefs. As usual, their footnotes began with the formula, "The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, [e.g.] USAF . . . disagrees with . . . this paragraph." "Who is this nameless dissenter?" he asked of Admiral Raborn. From the tart way in which the question was put, Admiral Raborn decided that henceforward, titles would not be enough. He decided that he personally would sign the cover of each new NIE, and that the USIB secretary, Mr. Lay, would authenticate his signature. He did more. He directed that the names of all USIB members concurring in the issuance of the estimate would appear on the verso of the cover along with their titles, and that the names of members and observers alike would appear wherever they took a footnote of dissent.

The first estimate in the new format is NIE 1-65, The Future of the United Nations, 26 November 1965.

a single pipeline and a single source of knowledge and analytical skill. Countless times in the past the NIEs had benefited greatly from slightly differing information and greatly differing interpretations thereof from the three services. To be sure this added to our troubles and often produced footnotes of dissent. But obviously, self-serving footnotes apart, we all learned something we would not have thought of, and more importantly for the institution of the NIE as a whole, there was no intelligence chief who could say he had not had his full day in court. To me this latter aspect was of crucial importance. For if the chief had his footnote to demonstrate that he had been heard, he had the less reason to complain of unfair treatment and less reason to embark upon bootleg measures to get his views before his masters higher up the line. 71/

71/ An incident in the Eisenhower administration offers the school solution to the problem of bootleg intelligence and a President's perfect handling of a dispute which centered in an NIE.

The President was being briefed on one of the important NIEs on Soviet military capability. A high officer of the USAF interrupted at one point to tell the President that he disagreed with this particular finding of the estimate. The President asked if his dissenting view appeared in a footnote to the (continued)

H. The Dissent - Final and Formal - USIB

Dissents to a given NIE which had been discussed and tabled at the coordination sessions came up for a final review at the relevant meeting of the USIB.

Presumably each principal met with his staff on the eve of the meeting and made his decision to dissent flat-out, alter his position slightly to align himself with some other principal whose views were close but not identical to his own, or make a last try to sway the chairman (the DCI) into softening his position sufficiently to allow for a compromise.

I say "presumably" this happened because, of course, none of us in the ONE was ever present at such a conference. However, we had our own pre-USIB meetings

(continued) estimate. When the general said "No," the President turned to the DCI (Mr. Dulles) who was doing the briefing and asked "Why not." Mr. Dulles had to reply that he had been unaware of the view until that moment. The President then asked that Mr. Dulles withdraw the paper, recoordinate it taking the general's view into account, and resubmit it. This was, of course done. The general's view was discussed in ONE at working-level sessions with the Reps and at the next IAC meeting. Since it had no takers other than the Air Force intelligence chief, it found its proper place in a footnote. The cup of intelligence would indeed be full if all Presidents knew as much about intelligence as General Eisenhower and knew as well as he how to handle uncoordinated scare information.

with the Director to brief him on the NIE at issue, its major points of difficulty, and the conflict of views.

The pre-IAC briefing began in early 1952 and gathered strength in succeeding years. At least as far as the NIEs were concerned, it came about as a result of a youthful foible on my part and a roguish prank played on me by General Smith.

Our Director had not always been able to give draft NIEs a thorough reading before the IAC meeting, and on some occasions had not found time for us to brief him about impending trouble. It happened that one day, just before the IAC was to convene, I heard from a friend in the Pentagon that the Deputy G-2, who would be substituting for his chief at the day's IAC meeting, was switching from an agreed position and coming in with an unexpected dissent. Despairing of reaching General Smith, I wrote an indecorous note of warning in longhand, and laid it, folded, at his place at the table. In came the General, picked up the paper and without a pause to examine its content began reading it aloud to the gathering. Out came my uncomplimentary phrases about so and so welching on the position I thought had been firm with his service. I will not try to reconstruct what I had written,

but I know that it was not intended to be read to the Deputy G-2, John Wecherling.

From then on, we prepared proper briefing memos and saw to it that they were in General Smith's possession well in advance of the IAC meeting. Their principal message was to inform the boss of specific difficulties we had encountered in coordinating the paper and exactly which ones we had not been able to resolve. These we would signal as likely candidates for a dissent when the USIB members met to clear the paper. In the days of Mr. Dulles and his successors, such memos invariably accompanied the final coordinated text of an NIE to the DCI. Mr. Dulles and those who came after always had it in the USIB book which the secretary had readied for the pre-USIB briefings. The form and substance of these memos became in time one of the important little codicils to the customary law governing the production of the NIE.

It was not custom which governed the right of USIB members to dissent, but the law itself as written large in the formal texts. It first appeared a year or more before the CIG produced its first national intelligence report or estimate.[72/] With some verbal

72. It will be recalled that the President's letter of 22 January 1946 creating the NIA and (continued)

verbal additions and changes, this sentiment was incorporated into NSCID #1 of 12 December 1947,[73] and with some changes (to be noted later) into succeeding

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(continued) addressed to its charter members, the Secretaries of State, War, and Navy, stipulated the establishment of an Intelligence Board:

> 7. The Director of Central Intelligence shall be advised by an Intelligence Advisory Board consisting of the heads (or their representatives) of the principal military and civilian intelligence agencies of the Government having functions related to national security, as determined by the National Intelligence Authority. (emphasis added)

Within a few days, the NIA issued its Directive No. 1 (8 February 1946) whose paragraph 6 touches upon the matter of dissent. It reads:

> The Central Intelligence Group will utilize all available intelligence in producing strategic and national policy intelligence. All intelligence reports prepared by the Central Intelligence Group will note any substantial dissent by a participating intelligence agency. (emphasis added)

73. See paragraph 5:

> The Director of Central Intelligence shall disseminate National Intelligence to the President, to members of the National Security Council, to the Intelligence Chiefs of the IAC Agencies, and to such Governmental Departments and Agencies as the National Security Council from time to time may designate. Intelligence so disseminated shall be officially concurred in by the Intelligence Agencies or shall carry an agreed statement of substantial dissent. (emphasis added)

These words are repeated in para 5 of NSCID #1 (7 July 1949), para 5 of NSCID #1 (10 January (continued)

revisions of that document and various DCIDs.[74/]

As a general rule, a reservation of tentative dissent taken by a Rep during the coordination sessions was the tip-off to a possible formal dissent to be taken by his principal at the USIB meeting. One knew upon entering the conference room how many dissents were in fact being tabled by the size of the little sheaf of documents already put at the members' places by dutiful staff officers who had preceded them to the meeting. In almost all cases we had known what to expect and had briefed our director. There were occasions when we were wholly taken by surprise. The two I remember most vividly were when one of the members chose to dissent from the paper as a whole. One took place during General Smith's time and he took it with good grace.

(continued) 1950), para 5a of NSCID #1 (28 March 1952), para 6 of NSCID #1 (21 April 1958), and para 4a of NSCID #1 (15 September 1958).

74. Paragraph 3c of DCID 3/1 (8 July 1948) which deals with the formal procedures of producing national intelligence (TRs, contributions, etc.) ends with (3,c,4)". . . the Central Intelligence Agency will publish the Statements of Concurrence or substantial dissent with the final paper." (emphasis added)

A second DCID (3/2 of 12 September 1948) is devoted in its entirety to a spelling out of the "Policy Governing Departmental Concurrences [and Dissents] in National Intelligence Reports and Estimates." The first two (continued)

The other occurred some ten years later. The subject was Laos and the dissenter Roger Hilsman, the

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(continued) paragraphs quoted below are considerably elaborated in the balance of the paper.

The lead-in paragraph which cites the NSCIDs etc., ends "...the following policies are established:

> 1. Purpose. Departmental participation in the preparation of national intelligence reports and estimates is undertaken to insure that authorized recipients:
>
> a. are presented with national intelligence which comprises all the best available expert knowledge and opinion;
>
> b. are aware, in the case of disputed points, of the views of the departments on substantive matters within their special fields of responsibility and interest.
>
> 2. Basis of Comments. In consideration of any individual national intelligence report or estimate departmental agencies should take action, as promptly as possible, in one of the following ways:
>
> a. concur;
>
> b. concur with comment;
>
> c. dissent.

The text goes on with what sounds like a mild exhortation:

> These actions should be based upon consideration of the following factors:
>
> (1) factual errors;
>
> (2) validity of conclusions reached;

(continued)

State Department's Chief of Intelligence. During the preparation of the estimate Hilsman had been present at a meeting at the White House and had heard President Kennedy say something about US policy towards Laos which Hilsman construed as making the NIE not only irrelevant, but perhaps offensive to the President. A talkative fellow always and sometimes a blusterer, he suggested rather abruptly that the paper be withdrawn. When the Chairman, General Carter (in Mr. McCone's absence) would not acceed, Hilsman was brash enough to say that he would return to the White House to get a presidential order to withdraw the paper. General Carter said, "Roger, why don't you put that sword back in the scabbard?" Then he indicated that Hilsman could dissent from the whole paper if that was his choice,

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(continued)

(3) omission of relevant considerations;

(4) matters of emphasis which produce misleading implications.

See also paragraph 5 of DCID 3/5 (1 September 1953)

Dissents:

Any agency may dissent to any feature of an estimate. Such dissents identify the dissenter and will state the dissenter's position on the matter. (continued)

but the USIB business would continue. It ended with Hilsman taking the dissent and sheathing the sword.[75/]

In addition to the formal law of the right to dissent, there was a considerable customary law governing the form and substance of the actual footnotes as published in the NIEs. In very large measure a dissenter's footnote was his own. The 1947 version of NSCID #1 had required that a statement of dissent be agreed, but subsequent issuances omitted this word. Some of us believed that the purpose of a dissent was not merely to identify a difference of opinion, but to define that difference with as much precision as possible. Hence, both the main opinion and the dissent should be as lucid as they could be made, and both parties had an equal interest in the clarity of both texts.

(continued)

This identical language appears in the superseding DCIDs (1/1 of 21 April 1958, para 5, and 1/1 of 5 August 1959, para 5).

75/ The paper in question is SNIE 58-2-62, Consequences of Certain US Courses in Laos (11 April 1962). Its cover bears this rare departure from the usual inscription: "Submitted by the [DCI]/Concurred in by the/ [USIB]/with the exception of the/ Director of Intelligence and Research/ Department of State/ As indicated overleaf."

At overleaf, the problem itself is footnoted indicating that Hilsman "dissents from this entire estimate. The reasons for his dissent are set forth at the end of the estimate," (in almost one thousand words).

Accordingly, there was some regret at the latitude given to dissenters. Be that as it may, the custom came to be that, as one director said, the dissenter could say anything--even the Lord's Prayer--if that was what he wanted. And he could say it at almost any length. Practice did however impose certain curtailments.

For example, there was the case where a dissenter composed a very long footnote (several hundred words) to a passage of the text in one of the NIEs of the Soviet military series. It so happened that this very passage appeared in shortened form as one of the conclusions at the front of the paper. The dissenter wanted his entire dissent to be reproduced as a footnote to that conclusion. He wanted it where it would be sure to strike the eye of the reader whose reading might not include the body of the text. The chairman objected, saying that to run "up front" a footnote of this length--perhaps as long as the entire set of conclusions--was to give it undue prominence as well as to destroy the rhetorical symmetry. The chairman pressed the dissenter to abbreviate his footnote for purposes of the conclusions and be satisfied to cross-refer the reader to his extended argument where it appeared in the text. The chairman prevailed and set a precedent of sorts.

At least two other limitations on the rights of the dissenter became accepted. One was that he did not have the license to point out in a footnote that he had once been forced to dissent in behalf of a viewpoint which had since gained currency within the community. The "I told you so," and "if you'd only listened to me" motifs were rather strongly discouraged as footnote material.

Just as strongly discouraged were footnote formulations which impugned the sanity and morals of those who held to the text. I recall Mr. Dulles once explaining his objection with: "If you write a footnote such as you propose, I will have to write a footnote to your footnote, indicating that your allegations are wrong. You may then wish to do a footnote to my footnote, then I to yours, and so on. I suggest that we put a stop to such a piece of business before it gets started." Dissenters soon found that they could say a great many unkind things about those who supported the text if they were careful to begin all tendentious sentences with the disarming "It is the opinion of (the title of the dissenter)" or "The (title of dissenter) feels that."

Both the law and custom made it constitutionally impossible for the DCI to find himself in the dissenting role. General Smith once told colleagues on the IAC that "he would be willing to publish an estimate to which every member of the IAC dissented, and some day it might be necessary to do that in order to present a good estimate [but that he had no desire to do so]."[76/]

Several years later, Mr. Dulles encountered the sort of problem General Smith had had in mind. The estimate in question, SNIE 30-56, Critical Aspects of the Arab-Israeli Situation, (28 February 1956) was for the most part a "contingency estimate" relating to the probable response to a US decision to send arms to Israel. The staff of the ONE and the Board drafted a paper which held that any arms assistance would meet a very strong and united Arab opposition. The Reps agreed with the Board's position and so, it turned out, did their principals. But not Mr. Dulles. He agreed that the shipment of a substantial amount of arms would probably cause the reaction described in the draft, but he believed that there was an even chance that the most

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76. Quoted from Montague, *Smith*, Vol. II, p. 43.

serious consequences could be avoided if the arms were sent in moderate amount and if they were in fact largely defensive in nature. His attempt for an intermediate position found no takers among his IAC colleagues. Then rather than forcing them all into a footnote of dissent, he invited them in great good humor to put their views in paragraph 5 of the text. He himself suggested that they begin it: "The majority of the members of the IAC believe that. . . ." He then followed this with his own paragraph 6, which began: "The Director of Central Intelligence believes that . . ."[77/] In this fashion Mr. Dulles extricated himself gracefully from a dilemma, one horn of which would have involved an insensitive use of the DCI's constitutional powers, the other the legal enormity of dissenting from his own paper.

I. Post-Mortems: The Identification of Intelligence Deficiencies

In the early 1950s we initiated an exercise--

77. No one can blame the reader for a deep curiosity as to which of the two sides in this debate was proven correct. The answer here and in many another such matter is that there is no answer. For some reason--perhaps the portentous estimate of the majority--no arms were sent--at least in that particular constellation of circumstances.

collateral to the main task of the ONE--which, however laudable, became a major pain in the neck. This was the ex post facto examination of important estimates with an idea of identifying the most significant gaps in our knowledge. Almost from the start it was called a "post-mortem." The exercise consisted of going both to the researchers who had written the contributions and to the ONE Staff which had composed the estimate and requiring that they plumb the depths of their ignorance. Having done so they were asked to make a list of the important things about which they knew little or nothing. The idea was, of course, to highlight deficiencies which could be rectified either by some systematic research among intelligence materials already at hand, or by a more pointed and urgent intelligence collection effort.

I cannot say how much of this sort of thing we had done before June of 1952, but from that time on the record is official and fairly clear. It starts with a document of 3 June 1952 entitled Procedure for Reducing Intelligence Deficiencies in the NIEs. The ONE was the initiator, and the DCI and his IAC were the ultimate recipients. The document emerged from the community's not too happy struggle to complete Special Estimate (SE) 27,

Probable Effects of Various Possible Courses of Action with Respect to Communist China (5 June 1952). The posited courses of action were a series of measures aimed at cutting Communist China's access to foreign imports: embargo, blockade, and perhaps even interdiction by air power. Obviously before you estimated the effects of such measures on China itself, you had to know a great deal about what was to be affected, that is, the Chinese economy, the society, and the polity--but first and foremost the economy. Everyone who labored on the paper speedily recognized our relative innocence of this vast subject matter and the great importance of improving our store of knowledge. To this end we took stock of what we didn't know and sent up to our Director and the IAC a document entitled, Statement of Intelligence Deficiencies Revealed in SE-27 (25 July 1952). Our masters took the paper seriously, and since the bulk of the deficiencies it listed were in the area of economics, General Smith assigned the greater part of the action to Robert Amory, who was in charge of the Office of Research and Reports and chairman of the Economic Intelligence Committee.[78/] He also turned

78. See IAC-D-57 which includes Amory's and Reber's report to the IAC on the measures which they had (continued)

to James Reber, his Assistant Director for Intelligence Coordination, for overseeing other collection, research, and translation work within the community.

No question but that our post-mortem and what followed in its wake greatly advanced the community's understanding of Communist China. The post-mortem was off to a fast start.

In mid-May of 1954, the IAC ruled that there should be a semiannual post-mortem on the NIEs of the six-month period.[79/] In a year's time (26 April 1955) the IAC ruled that a formal post-mortem be undertaken on every NIE and presented to the Committee coincidentally with the finished estimate. In 1957 and 1958 we did 78 of them. As with many an institution, this began to lose its initial glamor. In the first place, the post-mortems began to repeat themselves and to highlight the existence of gaps that everyone knew about and that everyone recognized as all but unfillable. The

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(continued) instituted to improve our knowledge of Communist China.

This is the first set of documents of the D-57 series. The next is D-57/1 and so on to D-57/107 of 10 Sept 1958, where the series ends with the demise of the institution.

79. IAC-M-151

collection brotherhood had had more alerts than it needed, and besides the IAC had moved to vigorous pursuit of another institution which was in large measure a duplicator of the post-mortem--the Priority National Intelligence Objectives.

When SE-27 revealed the full scope of the community's lack of knowledge of Communist China, someone went back to NSCID #4[80/] and the succession of DCIDs which had descended from it.[81/] These latter were documents which encompassed the list of subjects which the DCI and the intelligence community should be bending every effort to find out about. Their title, as already indicated, was Priority National Intelligence Objectives. At the time of SE-27, the community was operating under DCID 4/2 of September 1950, which contained no mention of subjects beyond those relating strictly to the USSR. The

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80. Issued 12 Dec. 1947. The first of its two paragraphs told the DCI to draft and maintain a comprehensive list of intelligence objectives, and the second to maintain a similar list for intelligence matters of current concern. This NSCID has remained unchanged.

81. See DCIDs as follows: 4/1 5 Feb. 1948; 4/2 28 Sept. 1950; 4/2 (Revised) 12 Jun. 1952; 4/2 (Second Revision) 4 Aug. 1953; 4/4 12 Dec. 1954; 4/5 18 Oct. 1955; and so on.

SE-27 exercise indicated inter alia that this DCID should be changed, at least to include Communist China as a priority intelligence target. DCID 4/2 (Revised) did just that. It was followed by an annual revision whose preparation was entrusted to the Board of National Estimates which coordinated the document with the Reps--much as it had coordinated the post-mortems. To our great relief we were able to disengage from the latter, which had become a perfunctory weekly nuisance, and concentrate upon the annual revision of the PNIOs.[82/] ONE was committed to this exercise until well into the McCone days, when we were relieved of the PNIOs but not resaddled with the post-mortems.

82/ NSCID #4 of 12 December 1947 directed that the DCI "in collaboration with the other agencies concerned [a] shall prepare a comprehensive outline of national intelligence objectives. . .," and [b] "under the guidance of the NSC Staff shall select from time to time and on a current basis sections and items of such outline which have a priority interest."

The phrasing was repeated in NSCID #4(Revised) of 29 August 1956 and with slight modifications in para 3b of successive revisions of NSCID #1 (15 September 1958, 18 January 1961, 4 March 1964). The last revision of this directive (15 February 1972) contains a very short version in para 3g.

The DCI habitually acquitted his obligation for [b] above with a DCID (many issuances in the 1/3 Series) entitled Priority National Intelligence (continued)

J. Validity Studies

Few things are asked the estimator more often than "How good is your batting average?" No question could be more legitimate--and none could be harder to answer.[83] In the spring of 1956, IAC members, perhaps needled once too often by outsiders, decided to put the question to themselves. At the meeting in which they decided to require a post-mortem for each completed estimate they also "adopted a procedure. . . [which would endeavor] to determine how good an estimate was in the light of subsequent developments."[84]

(continued) Objectives (the PNIOs). During the Smith and Dulles incumbencies the identification of the PNIOs was an exercise performed about once a year. Starting during Mr. McCone's time and continuing through the time of Admiral Raborn and Mr. Helms, the full-dress findings were reviewed and up-dated each quarter.

83. See the admirable essay by a master estimator: Abbot E. Smith, "On the Accuracy of National Intelligence Estimates," *Studies in Intelligence*, Vol. 13, No. 4 (Fall 1969) pp. 25-35. Mr. Smith shows why the question should be asked and why it is almost impossible to answer.

84. See IAC-D-100, 8 December 1955. The decision in favor of the validity studies dated from the IAC meeting of 26 April 1955.

The next document of the D-100 series is D-100/1, the next 100/2 and so on to D-68 of 10 September 1958, when the institution lapsed.

The resultant document would be known as a "validity study."

What the IAC wanted was reasonable and sounded simple. Suppose that there had been an NIE relating to Probable Developments in North Africa;[85] suppose that a year or so later another similar estimate was undertaken. Completion of that second estimate would be the occasion both to review the findings of the first and to weigh these findings in the light of things that had actually come to pass. And this is what the IAC thought could be done and should be done.

We tried to obey orders for almost three years and with respect to upwards of a hundred NIEs (often more than one would be subject to review in a single validity study). We did find ourselves in a number of significant good and bad estimates, especially in those matters which involved quantifiable things like estimated growth in GNP, probable dates of initial operational capability of a new weapons system, etc. We were a lot less successful in our evaluations of our estimates of less tangible things. For example, we not only found it hard to give a crisp meaning to what

85. NIE 71-54 (31 Aug 1954).

we had written but also even harder to evaluate our performance. This was because all too often we realized that we were lacking in the single most important facet of a criticism: i.e., a clear conceptual notion of where we stood now. All too often the only objective reality we had with which to guage our past performance was just another estimate.

We in ONE were dismayed at our failure to do a more convincing job of the validity studies and much relieved when the IAC let the enterprise peter out.[86/]

K. The Numbering of Estimates

The first of the national estimates issued under the new order was National Intelligence Estimate #1, Prospects for Communist Armed Action in the Philippines During November (30 November 1950). From then on until the end of 1953 we numbered the NIEs consecutively according to the date they were laid on and irrespective of their subject matter. In the three and a fraction years we published 102 papers in this series. Certain numbers are blank, e.g., NIE #13 which was cancelled after it was

86/ Anyone interested in reviving the institution should go to the IAC-D-100 series and read through the folder. It will tell him a great deal more than I thought proper to introduce in this essay.

well under way; certain other numbers, e.g., NIE 63, are used a second time with a slant, (NIE 63/1) which indicated an updating of the earlier paper.

In these years we issued two other series; the Special Estimate (SE) and the Special Intelligence Estimate (SIE). There were 54 SEs and 4 SIEs.

Exactly why we devised these series is a story full of complexities and, I fear, illogic. After we had been in business a couple of months and after the issuance of a dozen or more consecutively numbered NIEs (each of which had had a fairly substantial circulation) we undertook a paper on a seemingly extra sensitive subject. Its title was: International Implications of Maintaining a Beachhead in South Korea. Although the title is discreetly blank as to who was maintaining the beachhead, the text made no bones about the US involvement in South Korea and the role of its armed forces there. This had gone down badly with a number of our military colleagues who had been reared on the doctrine that intelligence did not deal with "own" forces, "own" capabilities, etc., which were operational matters and none of our business. We were, however, under instructions to write the paper and the only compromise

we could make with the objectors was to assure that the paper be identified for special handling and given a limited distribution. Were it to appear in the regular NIE series, this would be difficult. We feared, for example, that those on the regular NIE distribution list who did not receive this paper would notice a gap in their file, and would be on the phone to request the missing document. To avoid this sort of situation we invented the new series and christened the "Beachhead" estimate SE-1 (11 January 1951).

Some of the later SEs were so termed because of their intimate relationship to US policy; these were the contingency estimates I have already discussed: Probable Consequences of Certain Possible US Courses of Action in. . . . One such SE which I will come back to dealt with Albania.

So far so clear. Then came the inevitable inconsistencies. Some estimates became SEs because they dealt with very sensitive subjects not necessarily US-policy-related; others because the papers were of a short half-life or because they were highly technical and of limited appeal or because they dealt with a specialized fragment of some large and important subject.

I recall [redacted] as illustrative of (b)(1)
still another rationale. This paper began as a proper NIE and as such went all the way to the IAC. When General Smith realized what was before him and his colleagues, he blew a gasket. One might paraphrase his remarks like this: "Why do we have to do this sort of paper? If I wanted to know about such things I'd call [redacted] In the embarrassment which followed, someone salvaged the paper by suggesting it be put in the SE (b)(1)
series and given a limited circulation.

The Special Intelligence Estimate (SIE) series has a less involved explanation. [redacted] By (b)(1)
no means all the normal Reps were cleared; we ourselves were closely restricted to a single room for the storage of the materials and to an adjoining conference room for their perusal. In short, security regulations ordained that these papers be rigorously compartmented from beginning to end [redacted]. The (b)(1)
usual inventories of the national estimates contain no

reference to the four we completed. Only two do I remember: [redacted] (b)(1) I am quite sure this was our last in this series.

By the end of 1953, some of the ONE Staff and Paul Borel, my deputy, perhaps moved by a change in the numbering of NSC papers being advocated by Mr. Cutler (chairman of the NSC senior staff) put forward their own new philosophy of the numbering of estimates. Their labors ended in the binomial scheme (cognate, at least, with Mr. Cutler's plan) which survives to this day. The front half--a two-digit number--stood for a geographical area; the last part of the number, another two-digit expression, stood of course, for the year of issuance. In between came a digit indicating how many estimates on that particular geographical area had been written during the calendar year.[87/]

87/ In this system the first pair of digits (10) stood for the Soviet Bloc; 11 to 19 for subareas of the Bloc (e.g., 11 for the USSR itself, 12 for the European Satellites - 12.1 Albania, 12.2 Bulgaria, etc., - 13 for Communist China - which was not strange in 1954). (continued)

The SEs disappeared as a separate series. Hereafter NIEs which had to be set apart for one reason or another were called SNIEs (the "S" of course standing for "Special") and numbered consecutively within the fabric of the NIEs. Thus, if in 1954 we had done a third estimate on some aspect of the Bloc and if it were, say, a contingency paper, it would have borne the number SNIE 10-3-54. In other words, we stopped trying to conceal from our regular NIE customers the existence of limited-distribution estimates which they did not receive. We also stopped the SIE series and published [redacted] codeword estimates as merely highly-classified NIEs and SNIEs. (b)(1)

For some reason or other, a good number of our customers got the notion that the SNIE was a designator reserved for contingency estimates. In this case the

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(continued) The 20 series stood for the states of Western Europe, the 30s for the states of the Middle East, and so on. The last pair of digits (e.g., 54 or 59) indicated the year of issuance. For the official documents see: Notice to Holders of National Intelligence Estimates - New System for Numbering NIE's, issued 1 February 1954 by the CIA. The numbers assigned to the principal geographical areas held firm, but the subareas proliferated. By 1960 the system had to be looked at afresh and given a considerable overhaul. A document issued 15 November 1960 by the ONE entitled NIE Code Designations contains the revised system.

customer was only about half right. I cannot recall a true contingency estimate which was not an SNIE of very limited distribution. But many an SNIE was not of this class. There is, for example, a considerable group of SNIEs devoted to security conditions in this, that, or the other foreign country to which the President would be visiting; another group concerned with small matters of high but passing concern to a single high-level customer; still another, which were short versions of what had been planned and set in motion as full-dress NIEs, but whose importance to the policy people had faded.

L. Dissemination Within the US Government

The dissemination of the NIEs--the determination of who should receive them and in what quantity--was clearly within the power of the DCI. I well remember an early IAC meeting when General Smith learned that a sensitive NIE (on the USSR) was due to be disseminated in something over a hundred copies. The number shocked him and he ruled peremptorily that the distribution should be substantially reduced. The IAC members were then polled as to how many copies each desired. Even then the total far exceeded General Smith's top figure, a matter which he met by a merciless pro-rated

reduction in each member's demand. Throughout the procedure there was a certain amount of good-natured griping, but that was all.

It was not often that Directors took the firm stand that General Smith took in the case just noted. In fact I recall no other similar case. But there are at least two instances in which the Director received direct orders from the President to limit dissemination. The first came about as a result of Mr. McCone's briefing of President Kennedy from the all-source version of one of the most important and highly classified NIEs relating to a phase of Soviet military strength. Mr. Kennedy at once perceived that the paper in Mr. McCone's hand contained the crown jewels of the national intelligence treasury (sources, methods, and substance) and told Mr. McCone that the dissemination should be held to an even hundred. For the next few years, the circulation of successive NIEs on the same subject, based upon the same sensitive intelligence, was held to a hundred. Then as pressure mounted the dissemination grew and towards the end of the Johnson administration it had almost doubled. At about this time some grievous leaks of highly sensitive intelligence prompted President Johnson to tell Director

Helms to make a drastic reduction in the circulation of these papers. Needless to say, the USIB agreed to a dissemination of less than a hundred copies outside of the CIA Headquarters building.[88/]

It was not often that such limitations seemed necessary, and when they were, the matter was amiably settled at the USIB, where the chairman's relationship with the members was of critical importance.

Often, the Board of National Estimates itself made recommendations with respect to limiting the distribution of other sensitive estimates such as those dealing with probable consequences of certain possible US courses of action (the contingency estimates, of which a good number were done on Vietnam). These would, for example, be circulated in very limited numbers in the city of Washington and no copies would be sent to the field.

An early estimate, SE 34, Consequences of an Attempt to Overthrow the Present Regime in Albania, (30 December 1952) had an initial "dissemination" in

88.

(b)(1)

a single copy. A few weeks later when the need for security had slackened other copies were distributed, but probably no more than a score or so.

In ONE's first decade NIEs of the "Secret" classification were distributed in the 200s. They rose to the 300s and higher. A "Secret" NIE of 1969 relating to Communist China was printed in 728 copies, the bulk of which were distributed. Fewer NIEs of the "Top Secret" classification were disseminated, and many fewer of the codeword classification.

In the case of papers like [redacted] (b)(1) which dealt with a subject of great importance, was broadly based, and not so highly classified to be a risk to the distributor and major nuisance to the recipients, simple demand was likely to set the upper limits of reproduction and dissemination. Claimants would call in for copies--usually to the ONE (or would be referred to the ONE) and the Director of ONE or his lieutenants would authorize distribution within certain broad guidelines set by custom or the DCI or USIB. If demands seemed excessive, the ONE might informally negotiate the matter or go back to the Director or USIB for guidance.

The administrative channel of action in the dissemination of the NIEs below the USIB and the ONE led to three distribution points within the CIA:[89] one unit of the Central Reference Services packaged and dispatched the normal "Secret" and "Top Secret" NIEs; another unit within the same CRS handled the NIEs of codeword classification. The control and distribution of NIEs containing "Restricted Data" lay with the Nuclear Energy Division of OSI.

These three distributors which represented the DCI would themselves send single copies to a handful of high-level recipients such as the President and the NSC members, as already noted, and upon special occasions to the Director of the USIA, when sanctioned by the USIB, even to the secretaries of Commerce, Agriculture, or Treasury. They would also release copies to addressees within the CIA itself. They forwarded the bulk of the edition to the USIB members who operated their own collateral dissemination services for the benefit of their

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89. A few very sensitive contingency estimates which were issued in great haste were reproduced not by the normal printers but by the Special Center Reproduction Unit in OCI and distributed from OCI.

departmental customers at home and abroad.[90]

M. Dissemination to Foreign Governments

One may recall that certain sentences of the early texts directed the DCI to produce intelligence relating to the national security and to disseminate such intelligence within the US Government.[91] Nothing was said of the Director's power to disseminate to foreign governments. General Smith seems to have assumed this power.

(b)(1)

90. Consider a "Top Secret" SNIE of about 1960: 332 copies were disseminated. Of these about 25 went to the NSC members, White House Staff, and the NSC Planning Board, about 60 to various components of the CIA. The balance were sent to USIB members as follows: 35 to the Department of State, 65 to Army, 32 to Navy, 50 to Air Force, 25 to the JCS, 4 to the AEC, 2 to the FBI. A few copies went to addressees elsewhere in the Government who would not normally be on the mailing list of any USIB member.

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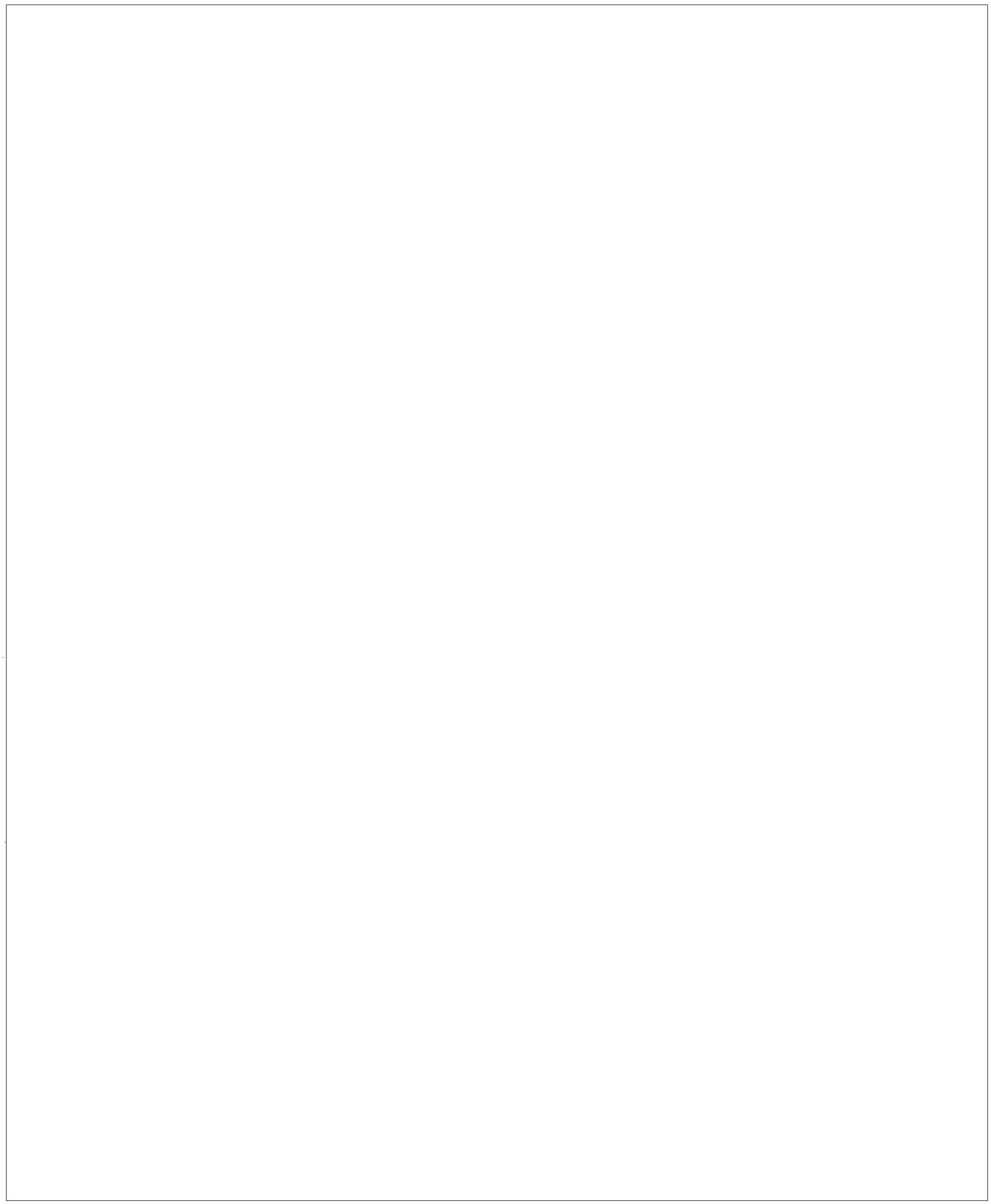
(b)(1)



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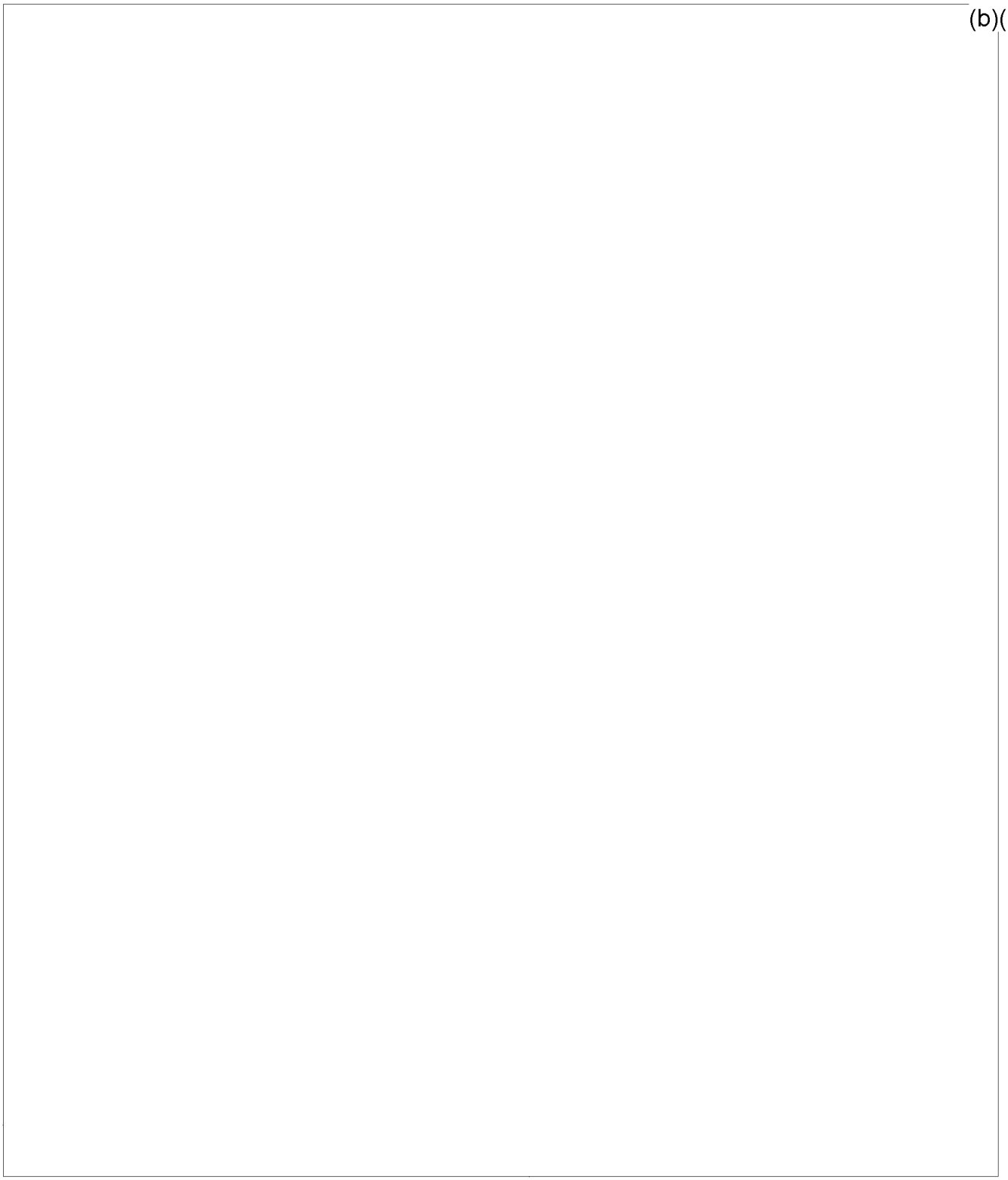

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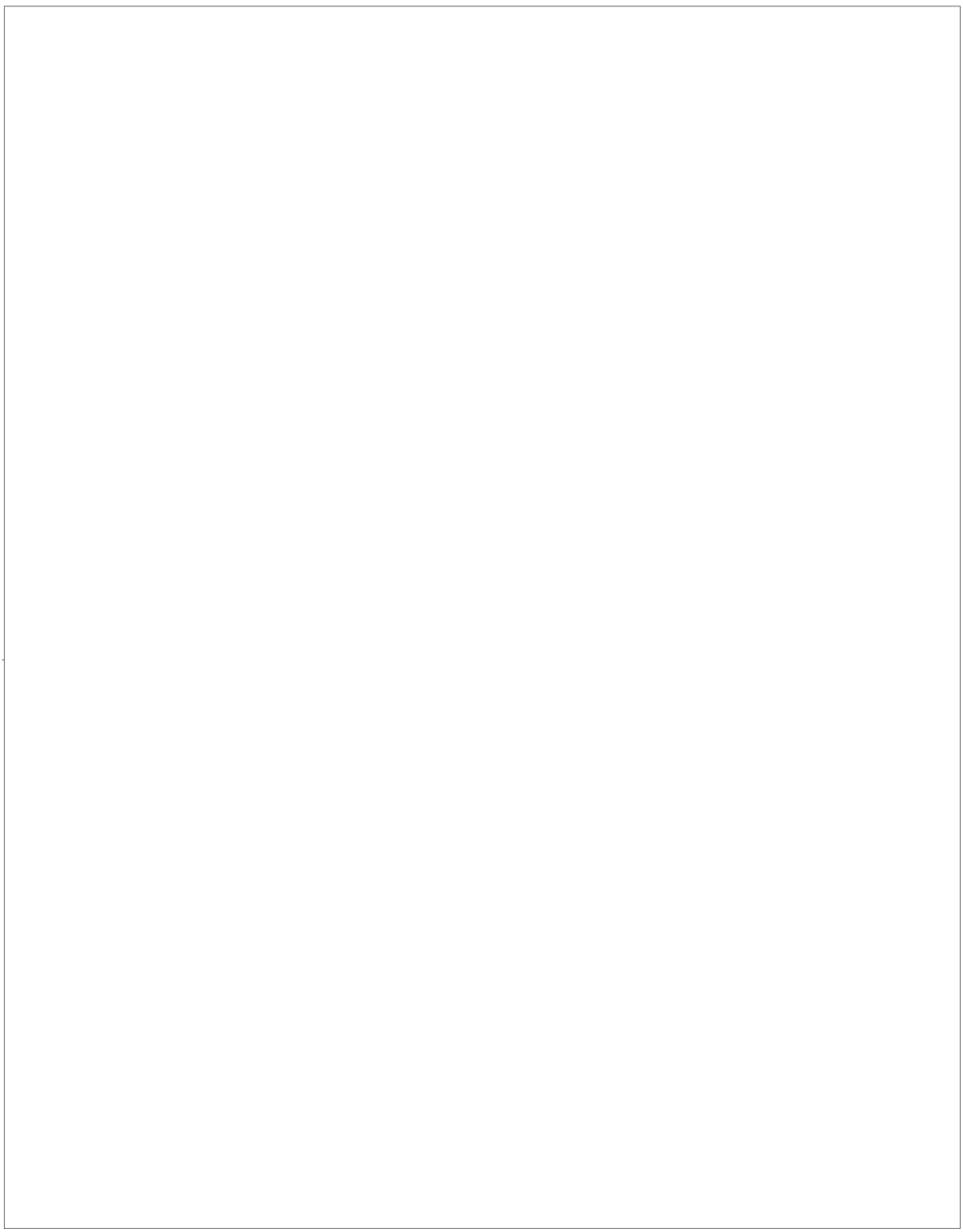

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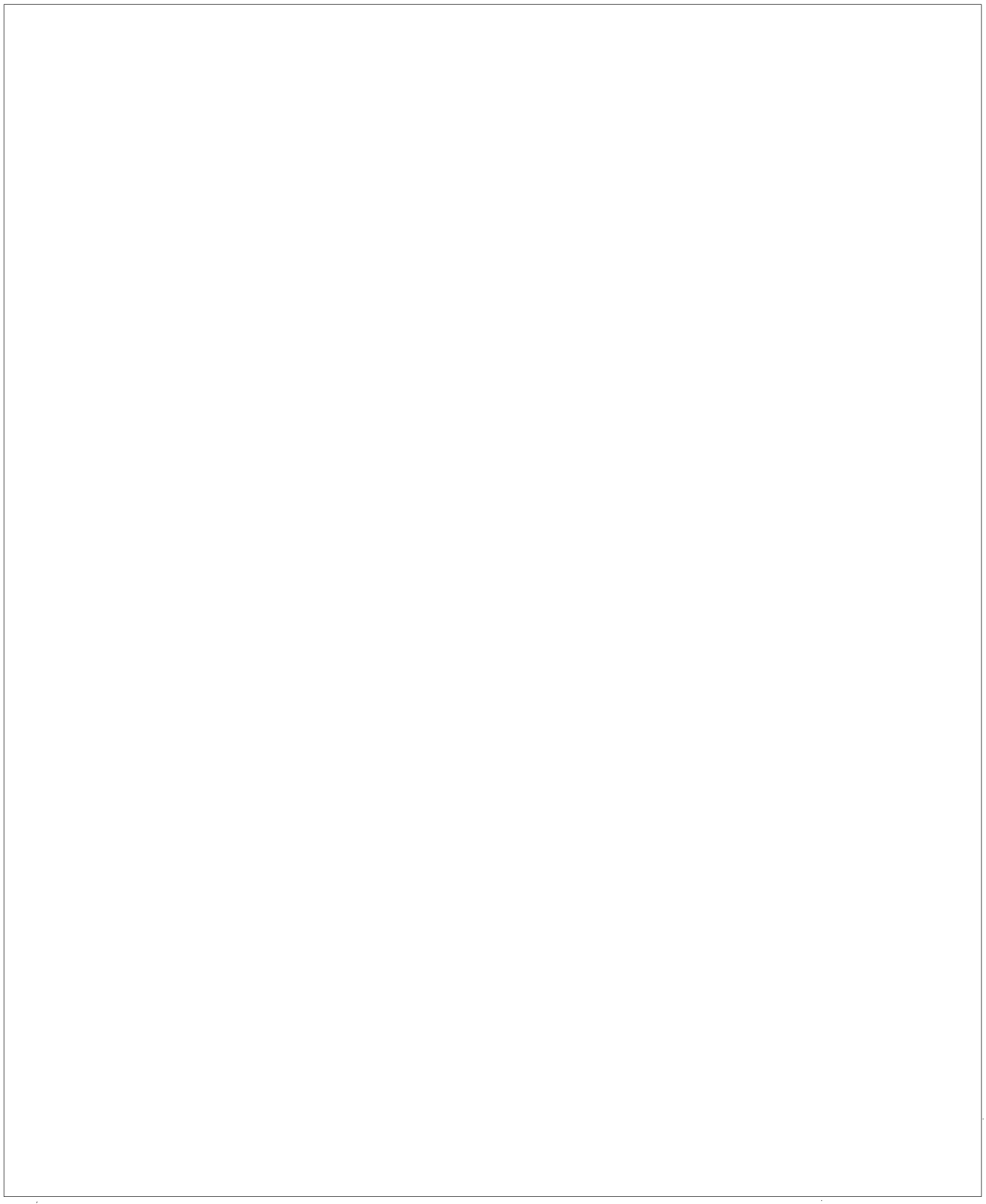

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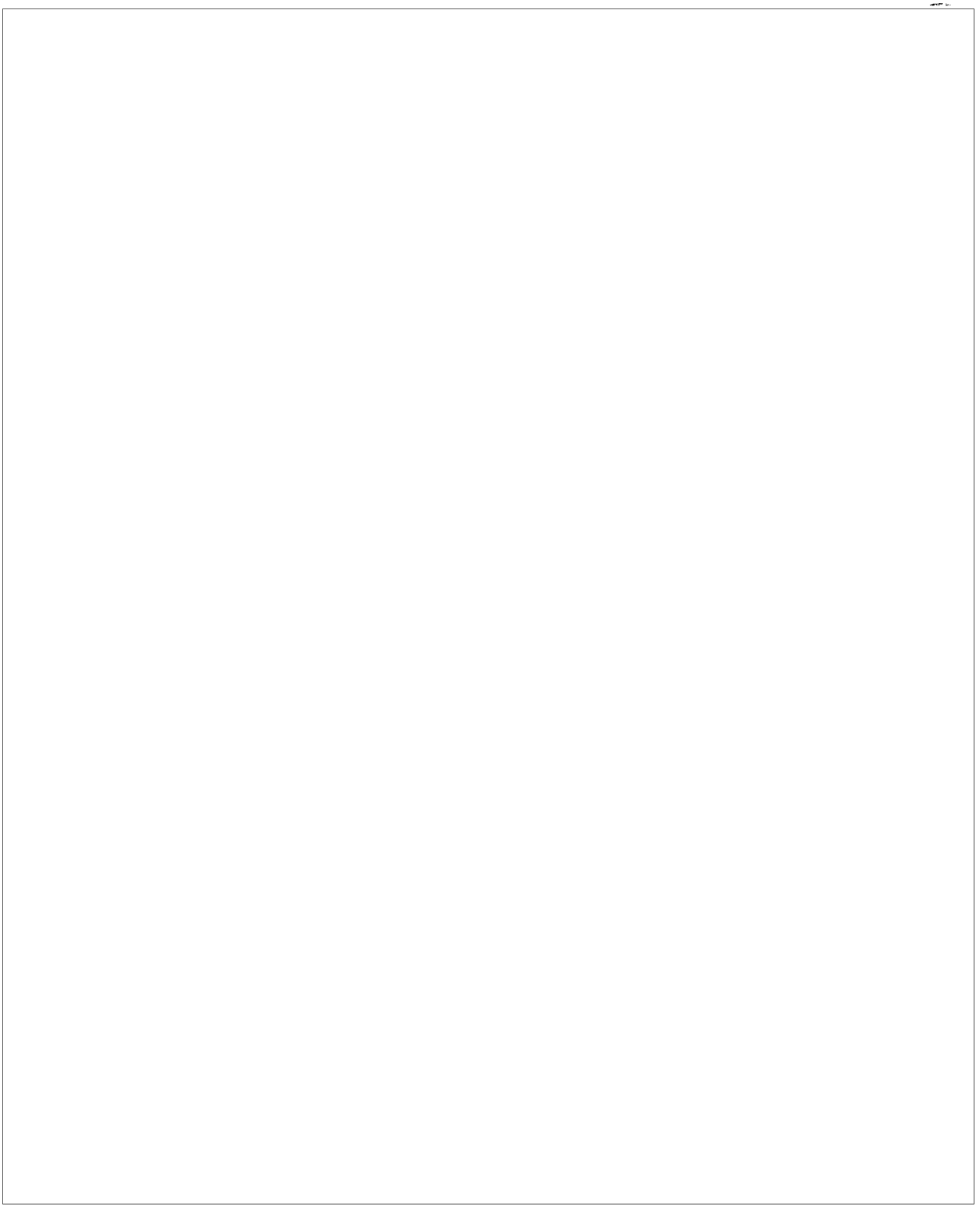

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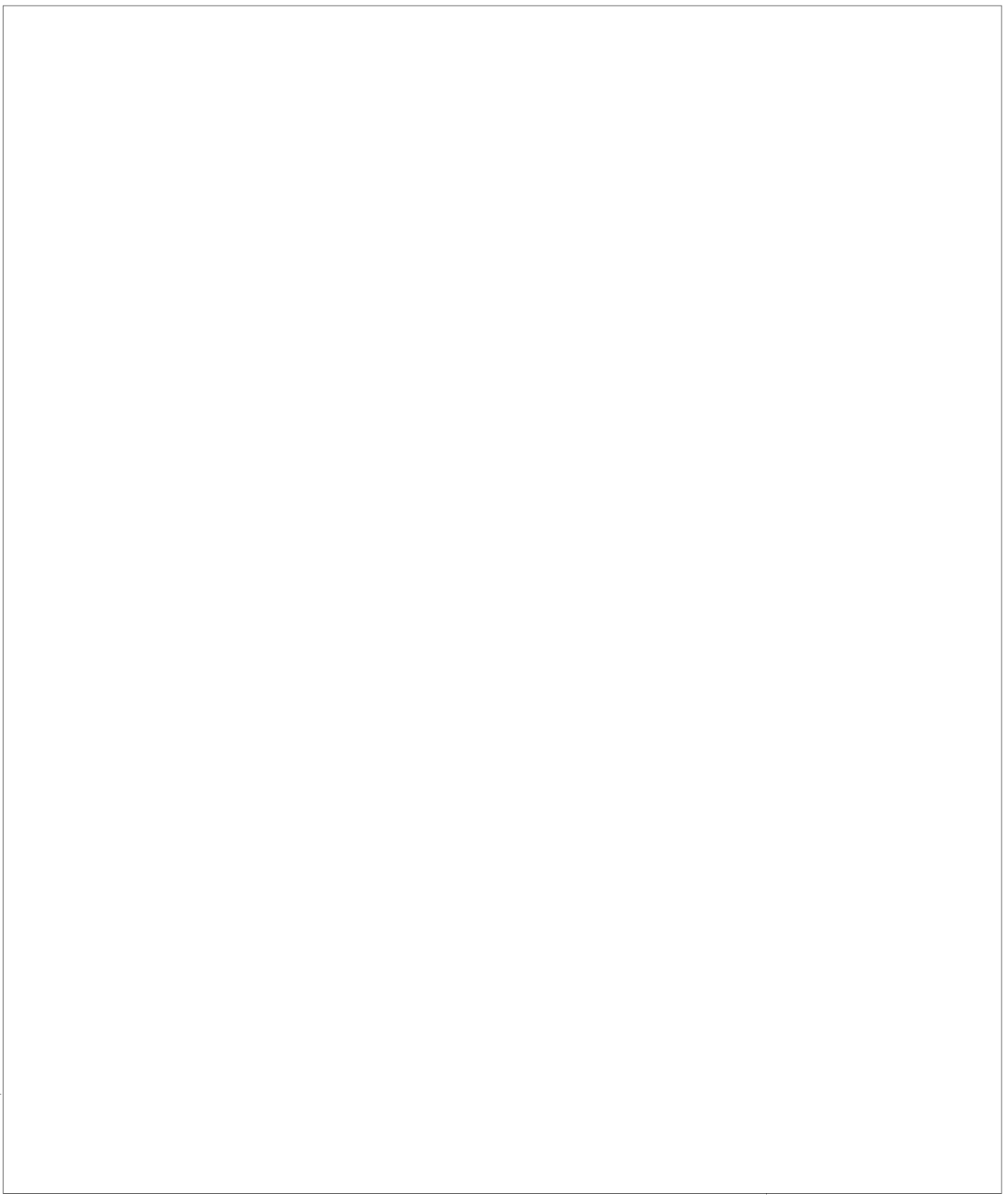

(b)(1)

N. Consultants: The Princeton Panel

The institution of the so-called Princeton Consultants began in the early Smith days (November 1950). It developed its own customary law which exercised its influence on the ONE and the business of national estimating.

The founding father was William H. Jackson, General Smith's first deputy. Mr. Jackson, a New York lawyer and businessman, who had had a valuable intelligence experience in World War II, nurtured an ambivalent attitude towards college professors. Like a lot of men of affairs, he had a respect for the academic's store of knowledge, his facility in the techniques of research, and perhaps in his ability to write, but at the same time he had his reservations about the ivory tower and the stereotype of its unworldliness. When he looked at the Board of National Estimates, as it was shaping up, he saw Professor Langer and Langer's two

first recruits, Professor Raymond Sontag and Professor Calvin Hoover; he saw Professor Kent and the Messrs. Van Slyck and Montague, a pair of ex-academics. He may have wondered about imbalance on the Board, even with General Smith's selection of a general (Huebner) and an admiral (Bieri). One of the things that Jackson did was successfully to urge the Director to appoint his friend Maxwell Foster (a lawyer from Boston and a gifted amateur semanticist). Another was to begin enlisting a panel of consultants, some of whom would be hard-bitten men of the world, "who would be able to give you professors a run for your money." At the time, he said something very similar to this to me. He didn't say "to keep you guys' feet on the ground," but I'm sure that was what he had in mind. He named himself and a man from the New York business community, Barklie Henry, as charter members of the panel. He also lined up George Kennan, Vannevar Bush, and Hamilton Fish Armstrong. At what I believe to have been Mr. Langer's suggestion he also recruited C. Burton Fahs, director for humanities at the Rockfeller Foundation and an outstanding specialist in the Far East.[97/]

97. See Jackson and Claussen *History*, IX, 51-55.

The panel first met in November 1950 in Mr. Jackson's house in Princeton (hence its name) principally to discuss its functions and agenda. It had its first meeting on matters of substance in May 1951, again in Mr. Jackson's house. Dr. Bush had by this time withdrawn.

One may safely assume that Mr. Jackson's aim was pretty much what he had said: to assemble six or eight wise and hard-to-please outsiders of differing backgrounds and exhort them to give the closest sort of critical examination to a selection of the NIEs. What he wanted from this panel is what every executive wants from his "board of visitors"--an enlightened outside view of the work of a tight little inner circle.

As I recall the first meeting of the panel, it does not seem as if Mr. Jackson was getting what he hoped. As I remember it, Mr. Langer--who presided--ran it pretty much as he must have run his seminar in the Harvard Graduate School. With all due respect, it seemed to me that he pretty much told them how it was and didn't do much in the way of soliciting comment. I do not recall much action on the part of the pure non-academics; in fact I don't think Mr. Henry opened his mouth. We did hear from George Kennan and Ham Armstrong who after

all were both academics at heart.

The tone of the proceedings which Mr. Langer set in that meeting continued in the one or two subsequent ones before his departure in January 1952. Raymond Sontag, who moved into the deputy slot when I succeeded Mr. Langer, was the obvious candidate to take on the Princeton group. All of us were very happy when he agreed to do so. Under him the panel was considerably enlarged to include some more academics: Philip Mosely of Columbia, Samuel Bemis of Yale, Joseph Strayer and Cuyler Young of Princeton, Max Millikan of MIT, and some distinguished non-academics: former Ambassadors Norman Armour and Joseph Grew, plus Gordon Gray, Richard Bissell, and Mr. Jackson himself who had left his position of deputy director.

Mr. Sontag's approach was quite different from Mr. Langer's. He greatly enjoyed a battle of wits, especially when he held the trump cards of the insider. Even so, he was a good listener. He worked hard on preparing the agendas, always trying to get the consultants to focus on the principal questions of a few NIEs that we were in the process of drafting. He saw to it that he personally was well prepared to lead the

discussion.

Under Sontag's leadership the meetings with the consultants became quite a production. He arranged to have the relevant papers delivered by courier prior to the meetings--to the consultants' home addresses so as to give them time to read in advance. He held four meetings a year, no longer at Mr. Jackson's house, but in one of the hotels of Princeton. The logistics problem itself was a formidable operation, admirably handled by [redacted] the ONE administrative officer. (b)(3)
Sontag used the consultants very deftly. There were those who thought he was at his most deft when he elicited from them almost exactly what he most wanted to hear and not much else. When successful in such cases he could come back to his colleagues and the Director with his own natural penchants reinforced by the views of these outside experts.

Sontag would take with him a fair-sized Washington delegation; some ONE staffers, always a Board member or two, and perhaps also one or more men from the staff of a CIA sister office (ORR, OCI, OSI). Upon occasion he would invite a Rep from one of the IAC agencies. As a matter of course these men would be the

the ones most heavily engaged in the NIEs to be brought under discussion.

With Sontag's departure in mid-1953, Abbott Smith succeeded him, not only as second-in-command of ONE, but also as leader of the Princeton conferences. For a number of years these sessions continued to be stimulating and productive, and of real value to ONE and to the members of its Board and Staff who attended the meetings. Mr. Smith showed both skill and tact at focusing the discussions and keeping under reasonable control the consultants' irrepressible urge to discuss policy, which was not our business nor theirs. But as the topics for consideration came to extend beyond the USSR and Europe, we suffered from the fact that only one or two of the consultants had any specialized knowledge of the Middle East or Latin America, and none, for example, of black Africa. So despite Mr. Smith's best efforts, discussions tended to revert to subjects about which he had already received the consultants' views. Furthermore, since the consultants were not cleared for certain codeword material, they were severely handicapped in discussions of Soviet military capabilities and the closely related military policy and grand strategy.

So the Princeton sessions came to be more and more a series of meetings at which ONE staffers gave extensive briefings to the Panel members. We began to feel that from the point of view of the bread and butter work of the ONE, we were making a mighty outlay for something less than a commensurate return. We never doubted the great practical value to a DCI of having so distinguished a panel assisting in the estimates, for which he personally would assume responsibility. Any one of us in his position would have supported the institution. However, from our vantage point we saw ourselves often doing a splendid job of briefing the consultants on a host of important world questions and not getting back much more than we had pumped in. This is not said in derogation of the consultants' qualities. There was scarcely a one who with a few months in residence could not have held one of our positions with great distinction. The trouble was that they were not only not in residence, but also that they had only a few hours of preparation to ready themselves for the consulting stint. In the beginning, this was not as severe a handicap as it became. But we ourselves, after years on the job and in daily contact

with the best--and highly privileged--intelligence, found that we were not getting the sort of criticism Mr. Jackson had in mind.

We began approaching our Director, first Mr. Dulles and later Mr. McCone, with the idea of closing out the institution. One after the other they heard us sympathetically and went along to the extent of reducing the number of meetings per year from four to three, and finally to two. But neither they nor their successors were willing to abandon the show. In fact Mr. Helms thought to use the consultants as a means of bolstering the Agency's contact with the academic world, and urged the recruitment of still more knowledgeable professors, who might serve to mitigate the bad press CIA was getting in the universities.

It was about this time that Mr. Smith moved on to be head of the ONE, and the leadership of the consultants was assigned to Willard Matthias, a senior member of the Board and oldest inhabitant of the ONE. Subsequent activities of the consultants fall outside the time frame of this paper. Suffice it to say that Matthias undertook a vigorous recruitment of younger consultants, versed in the variety of new fields that

had emerged in the academic community over the past fifteen years, and that the meetings assumed a renewed vigor that lasted until the ONE came to an end in November 1973.

O. Epilogue

One might conclude this essay briefly, and withal, subjectively. The "law" upon which the National Intelligence Estimate was founded and its accretions in custom resulted in a product which was probably close to that envisioned by the founding fathers when they thought about, talked about, and planned for a "coordinated national intelligence" to serve the requirements of the national security. Of the few thousand NIEs there was probably not one that did not bear upon a subject of national import and not a one which had not drawn upon the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of the intelligence community. Just as the founding fathers had planned, all of them emanated from a single authority -- the Director of Central Intelligence -- who accepted the responsibility for their factual and conjectural findings. And just as the founders had insisted they did not go forth until the Director's peers -- the heads of the

departmental intelligence organizations -- having been active participants throughout the process had had their opportunity to concur in the papers' findings or to dissent from them in whole or in part. Furthermore the final documents went out to their American readers bearing formal statement of such concurrences and dissents.

In other words, if the founding fathers had aimed at the creation of a more authoritative and more generally useful national intelligence estimate than had existed before, it can be said that they succeeded. There are several good reasons for this:

First the Director who brought the NIE to life, General Smith, had some very precise ideas about the form, the substance, and overall character of intelligence estimates designed for consumption at highest levels of government. Secondly as chief of staff for the Supreme Allied Commander in World War II he knew exactly what kind of papers were required. That they conform to his highly critical standards was one of his musts. The achievement of this goal was not easy, but General Smith's great talent for persuasive diplomacy and his power and prestige succeeded in bringing

previously warring or uncommunicative factions within the intelligence community into a working alliance. To be sure he had his troubles with his colleagues, but his leadership was seldom if ever in doubt.

Thirdly, his innovative establishment of a small office -- the Office of National Estimates -- whose sole function was to be the production of speculative intelligence at the national level, proved an indispensable aid. He personally gave the office top priority in its recruitment of staff and he himself appointed the members of the Board of National Estimates.

Fourth when the Board encountered difficulties in coordinating the NIEs, General Smith would come to the rescue, taking what steps were necessary to assure community-wide cooperation.

Finally, the General's insistence that the NIEs be formally cleared in weekly meetings of the IAC, over which he usually presided in person, gave the whole enterprise a new cachet. In these circumstances those who concurred meant something more than "the interposition of no objection" and those who dissented had had the satisfaction of a day in court and the opportunity to plead their case before their peers.

General Smith's successors continued to recognize the importance of the NIE. Like him, they insisted that it meet high standards of quality, and they backed it among their colleagues of the community and with the principal policy echelons.

To say that the NIEs were better and more useful documents than what went before -- the so-called "OREs" of CIA's Office of Reports and Estimates -- is to underline the relatively more favorable environment in which they were produced. Under General Smith and subsequent DCI's, the NIE and cognate high-level estimative papers were produced by specialists in the art form of the national estimate -- men and women who did nothing else. The original cadre, most of which the ONE had drafted from the old ORE, was of exceptional ability. Over the years the office grew only slightly in size but increased in talent and experience.98/

Its good performance and the support it received from the top of the Agency produced sympathetic vibrations in the community. Most of the difficulties which had

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98. In this matter it paid the well-known penalty. All too often its ranks were raided of high performers whose services were deemed essential elsewhere in intelligence work or in high policy-making echelons of the government.

beset the old ORE began to disappear. As I have remarked earlier, it was not long before both the chiefs of intelligence and the indians who represented them in the arduous NIE account began referring casually to our estimate on such and such or what we had previously estimated with respect to thus and such.

As to the superiority of the NIEs to their World War II counterparts -- the estimates of the Joint Intelligence Committee of the JCS -- I can offer nothing from firsthand knowledge. Although many of us in the Research and Analysis Branch of OSS made written contributions to these estimates, few if any of us saw the final product. However, it was the shortcomings of these papers -- ascribable in large measure to the absence of a commanding chairman such as the future DCI, and the refusal of the JCS to permit "split papers" (i.e. footnotes of dissent, alternative text in parallel columns, etc.) -- which prompted military and civilian leaders alike to change the system by which national intelligence would be produced.

It is one thing to say that the NIE was better than its predecessors and something quite different to say how much better. I would like to be able to say

far better, if for no other reason than that the institution was not strangled by the old JCS insistence upon "fully agreed" papers. I personally put great store by the fact that those who supervised the composition of the NIE's strove for agreed papers which were also useful and respectable. And failing in this endeavor pressed those participants who could not accept a given judgment boldly to dissent and give up trying to jigger the language so as to encompass and hence conceal their disapprobation. Our most vocal detractors however have taken the position that the NIEs suffer from this very malady -- that the papers were coordinated to least common denominators. I will do no more than offer my own dissent to this view. Be it said on our side that the NIEs received more than their share of encomia from men at the peak of the national government. Mr. Robert Cutler -- one of our most faithful readers while special assistant to President Eisenhower for national security affairs -- often spoke in highest praise of the NIEs. Secretary McNamara, unimpressed at the start of his long tour in the Defense Department, later said (and on many occasions) that the NIEs were the best

official documents that came before him.

Still and all, how good is good, not to say how good is best? What did the passage of time prove with respect to the accuracy of the NIEs? What was the NIEs' box score? Highly legitimate as the question is, it cannot be answered in a way to satisfy an outside quester. Abbot Smith has written eloquently on this subject.[99/] He points out that at the time he wrote (1969) some 1,500 NIEs had been completed and each of the NIEs contained "a multitude of 'estimates', that is, statements setting forth an explicit or clearly implied judgment." There must be not less than 25,000 such, probably far more. Assuming that all of these could be checked for accuracy, and that 95 percent of them proved correct, we would still not be "justified in swelling with pride." For "most of them were simply too easy" and an objective statistical tally of good and bad guesses would in these terms not be worth doing.

Mr. Smith goes on to point out that a meaningful box score of estimates must accordingly be

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99. See his article in Studies in Intelligence, already cited in note 83, page 126.

selective, "it must take account only of the important judgments." But "in saying this, however, we have left behind the wholly objective approach." And with this gone, who is to determine the "important estimates" worthy of admission to the tally? Mr. Smith points out that the high-level consumers of the NIEs would have a hard time agreeing among themselves as to which of the thousands of judgments were the important ones. Even if they could agree in this matter, they and others would find that they now had a selection of judgments, a portion of which could not in any circumstances be checked for validity.

I will go no further with Mr. Smith's exegesis, but urge the reader to read it himself. Having myself been in Mr. Smith's spot any number of times, I find his essay extremely helpful. I join Mr. Smith in his regrets that we can do no better for the outsider in search of a box score.

I can however, and quite subjectively cite a few NIE's which were melancholy affairs, like, for example one or two of 1955 which did not foresee that dramatic shift in Soviet foreign policy represented by the USSR's

extension of military and economic aid to Egypt. Or perhaps another couple which might have more sharply identified the beginnings of the Sino-Soviet split but didn't. Or more painful still our estimate of 19 September 1962 which carefully considered inter alia the likelihood of the Soviets emplacing strategic offensive weapons in Cuba and concluded that they would be unlikely to do so.100/ The misjudgment here was doubly painful because Director McCone had made his own estimate in the matter, which was the opposite of that made in the NIE and was, as is well-known, correct.

Unquestionably the most important of the NIE's were those devoted to various aspects of the Soviet military establishment. To the normal difficulties of piercing Soviet secrecy in even the most mundane of matters we confronted two exceptional ones. The Soviets redoubled their efforts to conceal the nature of their forces in being and made far greater endeavors to obscure their plans for future changes in the scale

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100. See my article "A Crucial Estimate Relived," *Studies in Intelligence*, Vol. 8, No. 2, pp. 1-18. See also Willard C. Matthias, "How Three Estimates Went Wrong," *Studies in Intelligence*, Vol. 12, No. 1, pp. 27-38. See esp. pp. 29-31, for a discussion of three other misestimates.

and nature of the strategic attack and strategic defense forces. Basically our task was not only to identify and enumerate the operational forces of the principal strategic weapons systems but also to project the probable size and deployment of such forces, three, five and sometimes ten or more years in the future. These flights of fancy into the outer reaches of the unknowable were forced upon us by the exigencies of our own planners. Let me underscore that these undertakings were not of a sort to be volunteered for the fun of the thing.

Needless to say a number of these highly important estimates have been proven wrong. Albert Wohlstetter in a recent issue of Foreign Affairs[101] has indicated that our estimates during the mid 1960's, contrary to some popular myths did not err in overestimating Soviet strength in strategic forces, but did in fact show a tendency to underestimate. Colonel Jack H. Taylor, who from a close personal experience with the NIE's in question, has written an illuminating

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101. Summer 1974.

article which gives substance to Mr. Wohlstetter's thesis.[102/]

One should not try to minimize errors of this sort and yet one should point out how much worse the errors would have been if the Estimates had been merely pulled out of a hat which had been previously stuffed with everyone's worst-case judgments. It must also be said and with some force that the estimated numbers -- under-strength as they were -- did not lull our planners into fatuous complacency nor reinforce their equally disquieting belief that the Russians stood thirty feet high in stocking feet.

The great proportion of the NIEs were sound, useful, and generally unspectacular. We can point with great pride to the series on Communist China whose findings occasioned comparatively little splash because of the limited military threat which the Chinese offered to our home security interests.

Another series we hope are held in respect was that devoted to Vietnam -- many individual estimates of which were contingency papers dealing with probable

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102. See his "Wohlstetter, Soviet Strategic Forces, and the National Intelligence Estimates", in *Studies in Intelligence*, Vol. 10, No. 1, Summer 1975.

consequences of certain posited US courses of action. Their general thrust was pessimistic -- as revealed in the Pentagon Papers. Their most dismal judgments, unhappily proven correct, related to the resolve and staying power of our Communist adversaries -- the Viet-cong and the DRV and its military.

Other groups of NIE's which cast credit upon the institution are those dealing with the Middle East which reiterated the proposition that the revolutionary ferment of the area sprang from the growing course of Arab nationalism. One might cite in parallel the estimates on Latin America which emphasized the overriding importance of nationalism as a basic cause for political instability and anti-Americanism. Needless to say this was unpalatable news to those who saw all our misfortunes ascribable to the powers of international Communism.

Whatever the range of sound judgments on difficult subjects, and whatever their salutary effects upon individual policy decisions, the lasting contribution of the NIEs probably rested elsewhere. It rested, for example, as a demonstration of cautious workmanlike presentation of difficult speculative intelligence information. For many a consumer -- whether or not he agreed

with the substantive findings -- the NIE was a model of government writing. The papers were as short as the subject permitted. Their prose style was clear, orderly, spare, and commendably untarnished with the many going jargons: e.g. the economic, the scientific, and technical. Short conclusions up front gave the busy reader the main points in a few paragraphs.

Another of its contributions and perhaps its most important one derived from the nature of the collaborative effort itself. Free and reasoned discussion around a table resulted in the identification and rejection of bald policy advocacy, unfounded belief in scare headlines, the urge to go for worst case estimating. In fact it is a set of invisibles -- a set of things which might have appeared in the NIEs and did not -- is a tantalizing but nonetheless landable aspect of the institution.

As to the question of how great a contribution the NIEs made to the formulation of a successful national security policy, who can say? To begin with, those of us with a familiarity of the processes of policy formulation fully realize that the intelligence

input -- far from being the single most important -- is frequently of little importance irrespective of its quality. Even in those cases where the intelligence was studied, the matters estimated as among the "almost certains" were not invariably believed, let alone those judged as "probable." Nevertheless even though some policy people found NIE's irrelevant to their needs and others found them unconvincing or wrong, there were always those who regarded a given NIE as neither of these, and often important men they were. Armed with the findings of these papers they could at a minimum deny to their adversaries at the policy table an easy walk-over victory. Thus in the last analysis, if the NIEs did nothing else, they contributed to a higher level of discourse in matters affecting the security of the country.[103/] In actual fact they almost certainly accomplished far more.

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103. See my article "Estimates and Influence," *Studies in Intelligence*, Vol. 12, No. 3, pp. 11-21.

APPENDIXES

A

Glossary of Abbreviations

Appendix A

Glossary of Abbreviations

AD/NE	Assistant Director/National Estimates.
AEC	Atomic Energy Commission.
BNE	Board of National Estimates.
CIG	Central Intelligence Group, precursor of CIA.
DCID	Director of Central Intelligence Directive.
DDI	Deputy Director/Intelligence.
DDO	Deputy Director/Operations.
DDP	Deputy Director/Plans.
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency.
EIC	Economic Intelligence Committee.
FBIS	Foreign Broadcast Information Service.
GMAIC	Guided Missile and Astronautics Intelligence Committee.
GMIC	Guided Missile Intelligence Committee.
IAC	Intelligence Advisory Committee.
INR	Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State.
JAEIC	Joint Atomic Energy Intelligence Committee.
JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee--British, Canadian, Australian, or New Zealand.
JIS	Joint Intelligence Staff, as with JIC above.
NIA	National Intelligence Authority.
NIE	National Intelligence Estimate.
NIS	National Intelligence Survey.
NSA	National Security Agency.
NSCID	National Security Council Intelligence Directive.
OCI	Office of Current Intelligence.
OER	Office of Economic Reports.
ONE	Office of National Estimates.
ONI	Office of Naval Intelligence.
O/O	Office of Operations.
ORE	Office of Reports and Estimates

ORR	Office of Research and Reports, precursor of OER.
OSD	Office of Secretary of Defense.
OSI	Office of Scientific Intelligence.
OSR	Office of Strategic Reports.
PFIAB	President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board.
PNIO	Priority National Intelligence Directive.
SE	Special Estimate.
SEC	Scientific Estimates Committee.
SIC	Scientific Intelligence Committee, successor to SEC.
SIE	Special Intelligence Estimate.
SNIE	Special National Intelligence Estimate.
TR	Terms of Reference.
USIB	United States Intelligence Board.
USCIB	United States Communications Intelligence Board.

APPENDIX B

CIA Organization and Functions

The Office of National Estimates

SECRET

"C I A"

ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONS

1. The attached organization chart of the Central Intelligence Agency is effective 1 December 1950.

2. The attached organization charts of the component units and statements of their functions are also effective 1 December 1950. However, these are subject to study by and comments of Assistant Directors and become finally effective 1 January 1951, unless you are notified of any changes.

3. All previous organization charts and statements of functions in conflict with this directive are rescinded.

4. No portion of this document may be reproduced, or distributed outside of CIA, without prior approval of the Deputy Director or the Director.

5. The Deputy Director for Administration is designated as the Agency Executive for the purpose of exercising those Agency powers specifically delegated by law to the Executive.

Walter B. Smith
Director of Central Intelligence

Note: These powers are technical in nature involving the waiver of advertising for certain procurement actions.

1 December 1950

HS/HC-18

SECRET

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

I. MISSION

The Assistant Director for National Estimates is charged with (1) initiating, directing the production of, and producing national estimates, (2) evaluating current intelligence circulated by CIA outside the Agency and (3) assisting the Director of Central Intelligence in the coordination of intelligence relating to the national security and in providing for its appropriate dissemination.

i.e. Nat'l Estimates & CIA Daily

II. FUNCTIONS

The general functions of the Assistant Director for National Estimates are two: (A) Estimative; (B) Coordinative.

A. Estimative Functions

1. Suggest to the Director of Central Intelligence amendments and additions to the schedule of priorities set by IAC and carry out any schedule of priorities as cleared by IAC to the extent of (a) alerting the IAC agencies to the accepted schedule of priorities and sudden changes which may be made therein, (b) assigning responsibilities within IAC agencies, (c) programming in consideration of the workload of the IAC agencies, and (d) setting and maintaining deadlines.

2. Initiate estimates: (a) by direction of the IAC or (b) by direction of the Director of Central Intelligence or his deputy, or (c) by his own decision pending clearance in CIA and/or IAC, or (d) at the suggestion of representatives of the IAC agencies pending clearance in CIA and IAC.

3. Direct the production of estimates through the establishment of appropriate interdepartmental arrangements. This will involve:

   a. Drafting the terms of reference for any given estimate.

   b. Calling a meeting of representatives of the IAC agencies concerned in the production of the estimate at hand.

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES (Cont.)

c. Discussing and fixing at such meetings the final terms of reference.

d. Assigning responsibility for substantive contributions from the IAC agencies.

e. Assuming or assigning responsibility for the initial drafting of the estimate.

f. Clearing the final draft with the contributing IAC agencies.

4. Produce national estimates. (This will involve taking responsibility for a final draft of any estimate to go forward to the Director of Central Intelligence and IAC even though disagreements among the contributing agencies cannot be resolved.)

5. Be responsible for all evaluative comment on items of current intelligence which are circulated by CIA outside the Agency. (It is assumed that responsibility for evaluations on Office of Special Operations raw intelligence will rest with the Office of Special Operations so long as the evaluations are confined to the probable reliability of the source.)

6. Direct the operation of a current intelligence staff which will support the above functions and which will continue the issuance of the Daily Summary.

7. Provide for oral briefings and presentation service for the Agency.

B. Coordinative Functions

1. Recommend to the Assistant Director for Intelligence Coordination on coordination matters relating to the production of national estimates.

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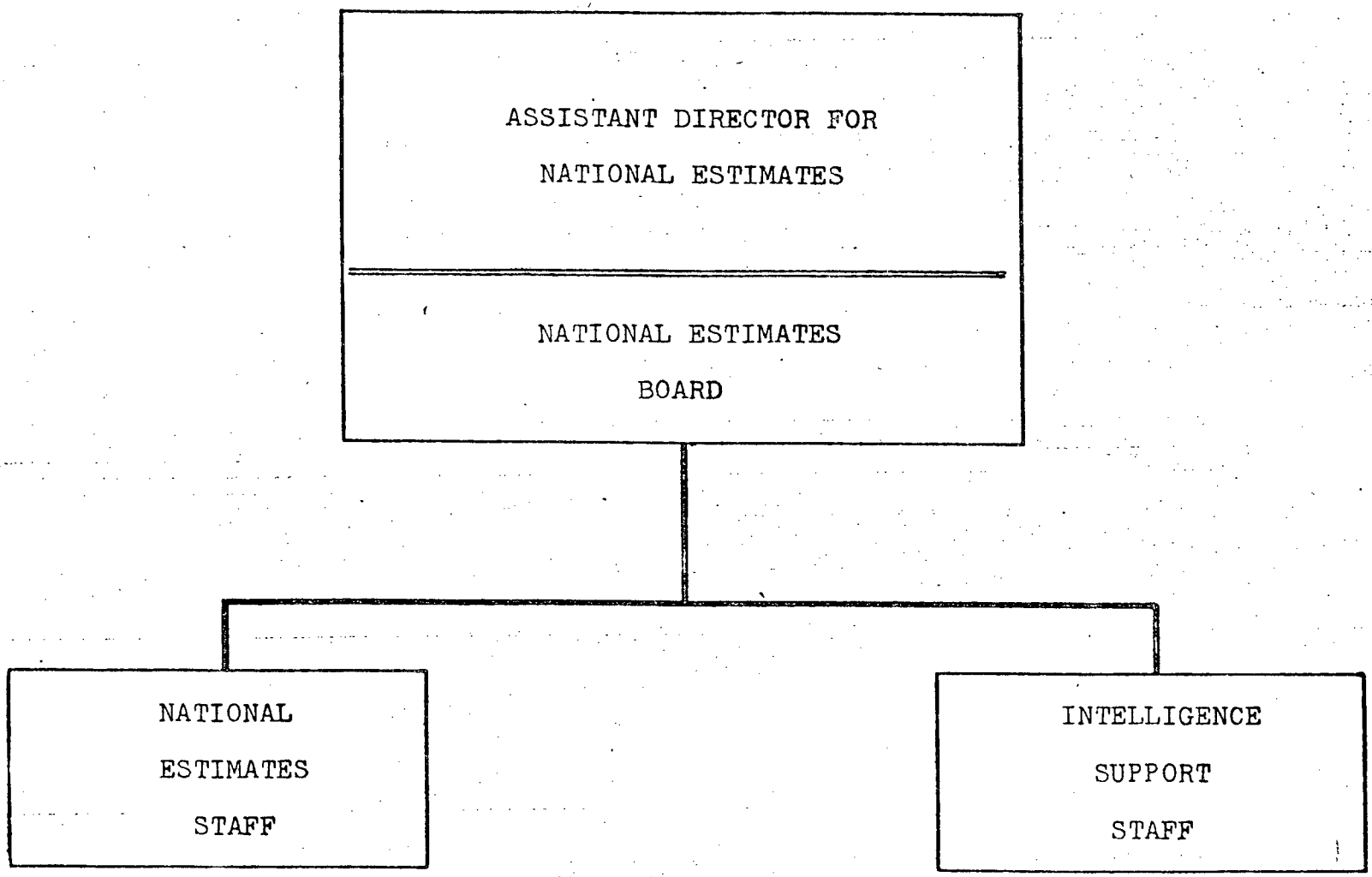
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES



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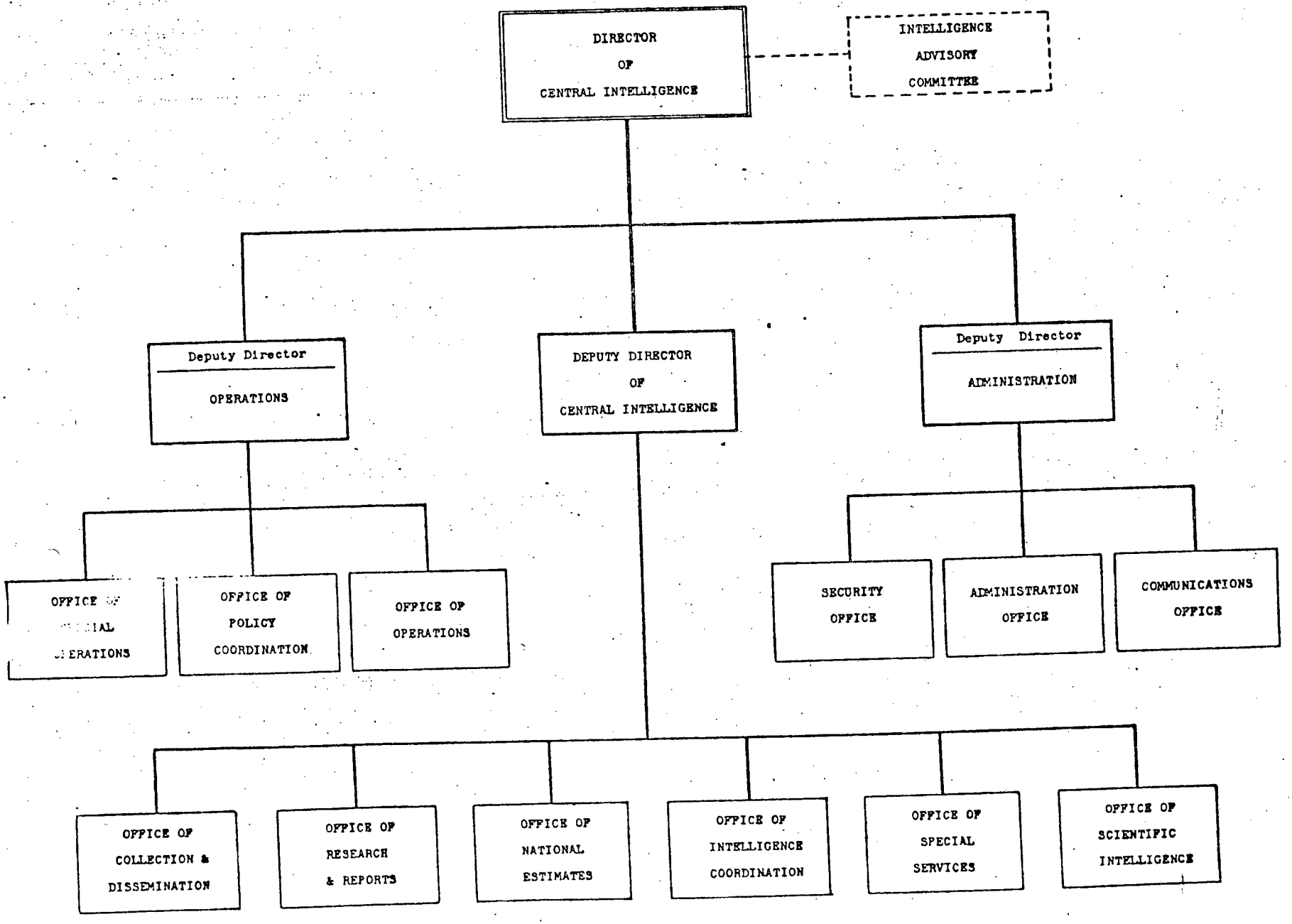
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY



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APPENDIX C

The Office of National Estimates

Membership of the Board of National Estimates

(b)(1)
(b)(3)