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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

National Intelligence Officers

15 October 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: See Distribution

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FROM : [redacted]
National Intelligence Officer for East Asia

SUBJECT : East Asia Warning Meeting

The following is the agenda for the East Asia Warning Meeting, scheduled for Wednesday, 22 October 1980 at 1400 hours in Room 7 E 62, CIA Headquarters.

Potential Problem Areas

1. Status of forces along the Thai-Vietnamese border.
What are the implications of the Vietnamese buildup in the border area, the tough statements of Foreign Minister Thach on the border question and the threatening tone of recent PRK propaganda on the border issue?

2. Sino-Soviet border situation.
Implications of the recent border incident.
Deployment of Backfires to the Far East.

3. Sino-Vietnamese Border.
Any change in anticipation of possible escalation of fighting along the Thai/Kampuchean border?

4. North-South Korea.
Evaluation of current North Korean attitude toward the South. Is Pyongyang prepared to take a harder line toward the Chun Doo Hwan Government or continue a more moderate approach?

Areas of Policy Concern

1. South Korea-Kim Tae Chung.

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[redacted] Chun Doo Hwan is under growing pressure from his military supporters not to commute Kim's sentence. He is also reportedly irritated by pressure from the US and Japan to take a more moderate position. Where is the situation heading?

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2. China internal.
Do the recent demonstrations in Changsha presage problems for Beijing's efforts to "democratize" the political process? What significance can be attached to the strong Chinese reaction to our granting diplomatic status to the CCNAA?

3. Southeast Asia.
Are we seeing an increase in the interest of the non-Communist Southeast Asian states in military cooperation among themselves and with outside powers -- Australia, Japan and the US? What are the implications for relations between ASEAN and Indochina?

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9 October 1980

NIC Warning Agenda for October

I. Iran-Iraq

Assumption: Saddam Hussein has failed in his gamble on a quick military victory and the capitulation and/or overthrow of the Khomeini regime. He now faces an unpalatable choice between a prolonged and indecisive stalemate and a risky escalation of his military commitment, either of which could generate serious domestic unrest and challenges to his authority.

Alternative Outcomes:

A. A collapse of Iranian organized military resistance and resort to guerrilla warfare against Iraqi positions and aerial harassment of Iraqi cities. The Iraqis would consolidate their gains and concentrate on destroying vital oil pipelines, LOCs, ports, and industrial facilities in an attempt to starve Tehran into submission. They would also increase efforts to establish an autonomous "Arabistan" under Iraqi protection and stimulate uprisings against Tehran by other ethnic minorities.

B. A military/political stalemate in which the Iraqis fail either to force Tehran to accept a settlement on their terms or to bring about the overthrow of Khomeini and the dismemberment of Iran.

C. Growing public disillusionment in Iraq over an indecisive and costly stalemate that would discredit Saddam's leadership and lead to his overthrow or assassination by Iraqi military leaders.

Potential for surprise in the next 30 to 60 days:

Saddam's miscalculation leaves him with no satisfactory options.

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Even the most favorable scenario (A above) offers no early prospect of a clear-cut "success." Under present circumstances, Saddam will face heavy pressures to escalate the war, but this option carries serious risks of dangerous disaffection in Shia ranks and opposition within the military leadership.

In sum, Saddam is in a race against time. If the Khomeini regime can avert domestic challenges and maintain at least a low-level guerrilla resistance, Saddam will face growing threats to his leadership and popular legitimacy. The Iranians and Syrians will intensify their efforts to undermine Saddam by encouraging the kind of street riots and demonstrations that occurred in the Shia communities of Najaf and Karbala in 1977 and 1979. Assad's decision to attack Saddam as an "agent of imperialism" suggests that the Syrians believe he has lost his gamble and is now vulnerable to domestic and external moves to bring him down. A prolonged stalemate and continued Iranian air attacks on Iraqi cities and installations may stimulate a conspiracy against Saddam among military and Baath leaders similar to the one in July-August 1979.

Soviet Perceptions and Intentions:

Moscow so far has managed to keep its options open by adopting an ostensibly impartial stance. If the conflict continues much longer, however, the Soviets will be under great pressure to tilt in favor of Baghdad. Their "moment of truth" will come if and when the Iraqis apply strong pressure for a major resupply of Soviet weapons and equipment. This would make it difficult or impossible for the Soviets to persist in their neutral posture, which is calculated to avoid burning their bridges to Tehran, thus enabling them to capitalize on a range of possible outcomes.

As Brezhnev's speech on 30 September indicated, the Soviets remain

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concerned and suspicious that the US will take advantage of the war to launch some form of intervention in the Gulf. [redacted]

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If the Soviets come to believe that a US initiative in the Gulf is imminent, they may take deterrent action such as renewing and sharpening Brezhnev's warning of November 1978 against outside interference or proposing an international conference to deal with the conflict, perhaps including revival of proposals to demilitarize the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean and establish some sort of regional collective security arrangement.

II. Egypt-Libya.

Assumption: Internal dynamics are pressing both Sadat and Qadhafi toward a collision course.

Libya: Reports of coup and assassination attempts against Qadhafi in August and May and of a mutiny in Tobruk underscore the impression of widespread discontent within the Libyan military. The Libyan-Syrian agreement on 10 September to "merge" into a single state reportedly was motivated by Qadhafi's alarm at growing dissidence in Libya, particularly within the armed forces.

Qadhafi may intend to provoke a confrontation with the US and/or Egypt as a means of controlling opposition to his leadership and extracting greater Soviet and Syrian political and military support. 25X1

[redacted]

— on the same day, Qadhafi said publicly he wanted the US to enter

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Libyan waters and airspace "because we will fight her." [redacted]

Egypt: Discontent in Egypt's military is said to be greater now than at any time since the revolution of 1952. Embassy Cairo reports that consumer discontent over rising prices and shortages is more serious now than at any time since the January 1977 food riots.

Sadat may see a confrontation with Qadhafi as an effective way to defuse domestic unrest and enhance his international stature. He may anticipate that Qadhafi's growing vulnerability at home will impel him to take provocative actions against the US or Egypt that will provide a plausible pretext for Egyptian moves to destroy him. [redacted] 25X1

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Growing domestic problems may tempt Sadat to act on his long-standing desire to eliminate Qadhafi and obtain access to Libyan oil resources by installing a friendly regime in Tripoli. His willingness to embark on such a venture may have been increased by a conviction that the Western powers would welcome and support moves to bring Qadhafi down. [redacted] 25X1

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If a combination of domestic problems and foreign incentives impels

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Sadat to order the execution of plans to invade Libya [redacted] 25X1

25X1 [redacted] he might encounter strong opposition within the military leadership and officer corps, which has long resisted a major operation against Libya. [redacted] 25X1

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III. Poland

Assumption: Cleavages within both the "Solidarity" union leadership and the party hierarchy will increase the chances of sudden, ill-advised initiatives and erratic decisions on both sides.

Differences within Solidarity surfaced over the conduct of the one-hour demonstration strike on 3 October, and the Central Committee plenum on 4-6 October was marked by "heated and bitter" recriminations and deep differences over policy and personnel decisions. Soviet efforts to discredit Walesa and the Solidarity leadership could inject an explosive element into an already highly unstable situation and precipitate a dangerous test of strength despite the desires of both union and party leaders to avoid an early showdown.

IV. USSR-Pakistan-Afghanistan.

Assumption: Despite the Soviets' reluctance to take actions that would refocus world attention on Afghanistan, their growing frustration over the failure of pacification efforts may impel them to escalate pressures on Pakistan.

TheSoviets have long believed that Pakistani support is the key factor

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in the insurgents' successful resistance. When the Soviets recognized this summer that saturation mining had failed to reduce cross-border insurgent traffic, they turned to the only available alternative—stiffer pressure on Pakistan.

In mid-September, the new Soviet ambassador in Islamabad warned that the "time is growing near" when the USSR would have to attack Afghan insurgent bases and refugee camps in Pakistan. The attacks on 26 and 28 September by Soviet helicopter gunships on Pakistani border posts presumably were intended to reinforce such warnings. If shows of force and diplomatic pressure fail to persuade the Pakistanis to reduce their support for the insurgents, Moscow may be prepared to take sterner measures, such as limited ground operations against insurgent bases in Pakistan and increased subversive activities within Pakistan.

V. Ethiopia-Somalia

Assumption: The Mengistu regime is likely to interpret the 30 September approval of a $20 million arms sale to Somalia by the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations as marking the failure of Ethiopia's world-wide campaign to block implementation of the US-Somali military access agreement.

In a press interview on 7 October, Foreign Minister Felleke warned that Ethiopia is prepared to take "any and all measures" to defend itself, including military measures. He said that if the US proceeds with military links to Somalia, Ethiopia will be forced to turn from national development to military mobilization. Felleke characterized proposed US facilities in Somalia as a

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"direct threat to our independence."

While this public reaction can be discounted as rhetorical overkill, the Ethiopians since the US-Somali agreement was signed on 22 August have been strengthening their forces in the border area opposite northern Somalia.

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