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24 October 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence

SUBJECT : Post-Mortem on Middle East War

1. I have no objection to the proposal for a post-mortem. The DCI has made it clear that he wants an honest one and all of us who share responsibility for the failure agree whole-heartedly.

2. Obviously, our performance since the opening of hostilities has been excellent and I see little need for much attention here. The post-mortem should therefore concentrate on the two basic questions. Why did we fail to predict the Syrian and Egyptian attack? How accurate was our assessment of the relative military strengths of Israel and the Arabs?

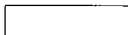
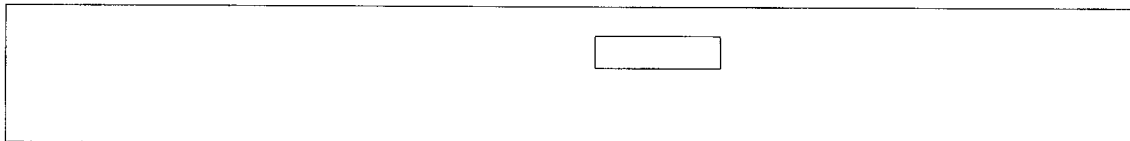
3. The problem will be to make a post-mortem honest. DDI and DIA [redacted] are exposed as being fully on the record against an attack. The collectors [redacted] in particular are taking their traditional position that the producers were given all the information and paid no attention to it. The story is a good deal more complicated than that, and such an attitude does not help to get at the truth.

4. Given that such claims are being made, I think it important that the Agency complete its own exercise before entering into the Community one. Honesty in-house will be difficult enough. Second, let us get the crisis over before we begin.

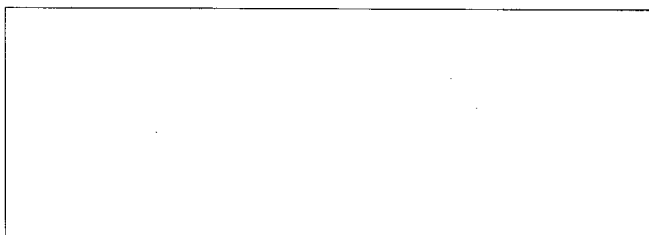
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5. I have one major objection to the specifics of the IC Staff proposal. There is some usefulness in having the IC Staff collect information and do some preliminary work, but post-mortems should not be conducted on professionals by amateurs. Our experience with the Marshall post-mortems has been that an interagency committee of intelligence officers who have been directly involved can indeed produce a truthful and introspective post-mortem. They have the great advantage of understanding the problem. I would suggest either [redacted] to chair such an effort, first within the Agency and then within the Community. The study would be conducted under IC Staff auspices; they would of course participate as Marshall's people did, and assist as Marshall's people didn't. This procedure would result not only in a better product, but in one that intelligence agencies would be more likely to accept and digest than they would an inquiry conducted by outsiders they do not entirely respect.

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RICHARD LEHMAN
Director of Current Intelligence



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OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

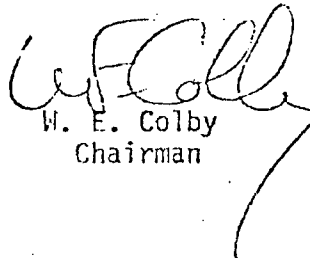
23 Oct '73

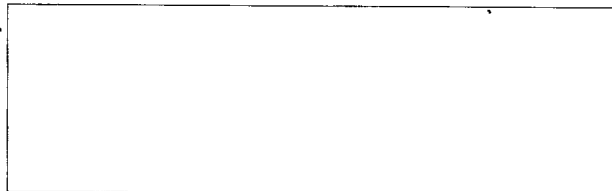
MEMORANDUM FOR: USIB Principals

SUBJECT: Post Mortem on Arab-Israeli Conflict

1. I have asked Major General Graham and the Intelligence Community Staff to review the intelligence community activities pertaining to the current conflict in the Middle East. This study will review our actions before the outbreak of hostilities and the intelligence support provided to national consumers during the crisis.

2. I request that you provide assistance to the Intelligence Community Staff in their effort. Specifically, I have in mind the after-action reports that you are undoubtedly preparing for your own organizations; these reports will be very helpful. Additionally, I ask that working level analysts and managers be available for interviews as the pressure of the crisis slackens. The final report will be considered as a USIB agenda item at an appropriate time in the next month or so.


W. E. Colby
Chairman



APPROVED FOR RELEASE - CIA INFO DATE: 29-Aug-2012

	ACTION	INFO.					
1	DCI			11	IG		
2	DDCI			12	D/PPB		
3	DDSS&T			13	SAVA		
4	DDI			14	ASST/DCI		
5	DDO			15	AO/DCI		
6	DDM&S			16	EX/SEC		
7	D/DCI/IC	✓	6	17			
8	D/ONE			18			
9	GC			19			
10	LC			20			

SUSPENSE

Remarks:

10/20/23

DCI/DDCI

13-10-1973

19 October 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Arab-Israeli Post Mortem

1. Attached is a paper outlining IC Staff actions underway to critique intelligence community responses to the current crisis, plus a recommended memorandum from you to USIB Principals requesting assistance to the IC Staff.

2. As you probably remember, one of the promises we have made to the NSCIC was to undertake just such a study of an on-going crisis because of the inability experienced in previous efforts to reconstruct the actual chain of events, reports and actions by all players in the crisis. I believe this effort can be especially fruitful since a prime critic of intelligence community crisis response--Henry Kissinger-- is giving us high marks. Thus we need not be defensive and should be able to produce a very objective critique. The warning aspect left a good deal to be desired and I think that is recognized in all agencies at this juncture. It would be very useful to us if we can get all agencies to input their own post mortems to our community-wide effort.

Daniel O. Graham
Major General, USA
D/DCI/IC

2 Attachments a/s

P.S. We have a good brief on this subject for your time is being arranged
D. G.

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17 OCT 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: General Graham
THROUGH: General Thomas
SUBJECT: Arab-Israeli Post Mortem

1. The IC Staff post mortem on the Arab-Israeli conflict is under way. We have decided to do it in two phases. Phase I will involve a study of the indications and warnings of the pre-hostility period and an analysis of why the U.S. intelligence community did not perceive the imminence of hostilities. Phase II will be concerned with events after hostilities commenced on or about 061200Z October and will focus on the intelligence support provided to national consumers during the period of crisis.

2. Organization of Post Mortem

a. One room [] has been reserved for filing reports on the crisis and for display of information. The walls of the room will be used to display events as they occurred, the intelligence community's perception of these events, and the intelligence judgments or actions taken. These will all be related to a time line so as to demonstrate the time difference between the occurrence of the event, our perception of the event, and what judgments and actions were taken. This display has been designed by [] based on his experience in analyzing similar problems.

b. Assembling information and reports, analysis, and developing displays of this data will require several weeks. The end of the project will lag after the end of the period we elect to study. In other words, the analysis of the pre-hostility period is estimated to be completed on or about 31 October and the study of intelligence support during the crisis will require about two weeks or so after the crisis period is ended. This will require the full-time efforts of [] and I will spend most of our time on this post mortem with some []. In addition, [] and I will stay abreast of the crisis and provide such support to Mr. Hoskinson as is appropriate.

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c. There is a great deal of soul searching going on in the intelligence community with each element and sub-element trying to determine what went wrong. There is probably a certain amount of self-justification in each of these separate efforts, but in the main I detect a healthy desire to make an objective assessment. We hope to draw upon each agency's efforts to support our post mortem. It would be helpful in this regard if the DCI would ask INR, NSA, DIA, and the CIA Deputy Directors to respond to our requests for copies of their own post mortem products and to allow interviews with selected working level analysts and managers.

3. Preliminary Assessment

a. A quick review of information available to the intelligence community and its reaction is shown in enclosure No. 1. It is important to note that the information listed is selective and is representative only of the more positive indications of impending hostilities. The negative indicators perceived by analysts are not so easily listed and they must await further research before they can be defined and analyzed. In any case, the list of positive indicators is impressive and certainly underscores the necessity for a post mortem.

b. The intelligence available to the community during the three weeks before hostilities was heavily weighed with what many analysts refer to as "fright factors." There were references to the assault, preparations for the attack, final preparations, and movement of units. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The major forces in Egypt have been disposed for combat along the Suez Canal for years. There had been few changes in these forces since late 1971. President Sadat had designated 1971 as the year of decision in the Arab-Israeli struggle and it passed without evidence of decision. Training of Egyptian forces had been relatively intense for the past several years and our analysts saw the activities of late September as essentially carbon copies of a preceding series of readiness conditions, mobilization exercises and the like. The post mortem must find the differences between this period and preceding exercises and determine why the differences were discounted.

c. The positive indicators on the Syrian front are more numerous and less equivocal, on first glance, than the indicators on the Egyptian front. My first impression here is that an unusually effective security operation was in effect. There is considerable evidence that the decision for a joint Arab attack was made prior to May, 1973. The preparation of the operation plan, development of the cover plan, and final deployment appears to have taken place with security measures and military skill [REDACTED]. Indications of the decision by Syria and Egypt to attack have not surfaced yet [REDACTED]. The reports of preparations for combat, indications of a cover plan and final deployment are more firm and less equivocal.

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...gue and ... are interwoven into the political background of the region. Many of the analysts believe that the Arabs realized after 1967 that a classic military victory over Israel was not possible in this generation. Arab rhetoric and military action of 1967-1971 was viewed as a means of bringing Great Power pressure on Israel to return captured Arab territory. Therefore, a serious Arab effort to achieve classic victory was not likely as a rational decision by Arab leaders. The political signals from Sadat and Asad in recent months have been interpreted by most analysts as models of rational,

e. The relations between Syria and Egypt on the one hand, and the Soviet Union on the other, appeared to be warmer and more effective in terms of military support in years past. Perhaps the analysts viewed this as a reason against an Arab military initiative and the Arab leaders saw it as a reason to strike before their military effectiveness declined in the face of the U.S.-Soviet detente.

f. None of the foregoing discussions are intended to forecast the findings of the post mortem; they simply indicate some of the areas where the community analysts were perplexed.

4. Recommendations

- a. That the post mortem proceed as outlined above.
- b. That the DCI sign the memorandum at enclosure 2.

H. F. Hutchinson, Jr.
LTC USA

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