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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

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THE JOINT STAFF.

2 November 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Subject: Net Assessment

SECTION
TO DECLASSIFICATION
REQUIRES CONCURRENCE OF
OSI CIA
DATE: JAN 11 2000

1. I attended the initial meeting of the Steering Task Group of the DOD Net Assessment Task Force at 0900 hours, this date.

2. Attendees were:

Dr. Andy Marshall, OSD, Director of Net Assessment
Dr. James Wade, DDR&E
Vice Admiral V. DePoix, DIA
Mr. Len Sullivan, Director, PA&E
Major General Schoning, ISA
 CIA
Rear Admiral S. D. Cramer, Jr., JCS

3. Dr. Marshall stated that the intent of the meeting was to formulate organizational arrangements. He gave a brief summation of his understanding of net assessment. He listed the following objectives for his charter:

a. To provide studies to Secretary of Defense (his primary customer) in areas in which the SECDEF has expressed an interest. (Dr. Marshall's staff is preparing a list of possible subjects for submission to SECDEF to obtain a priority from him.)

b. Once those areas of interest have been determined, Dr. Marshall will discuss the methods to obtain the desired results with the Steering Group, i.e., who does the study, the TOR, priority, etc.

c. Dr. Marshall and the Steering Group will review the progress and content of the study as it progresses.

d. Upon completion of a study he will present it to the SECDEF for his use as he sees fit.

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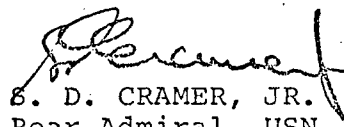
4. Dr. Marshall stated it was not his intent to schedule regular meetings. Meetings would be called only when required. The study effort connected with NSSM 186 would be continued. Although limited now to ground forces, it is anticipated that it would be expanded in the future to cover other forces.

5. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to the subject of the net assessment of the Middle East War. (See attachment.) Dr. Schlesinger has stated an interest in a thorough review of lessons to be learned from the Middle East. Dr. Marshall has been tasked to pull together a study group on this subject. He intends to find out what other studies are proceeding within the building, and then formulate a study plan to focus on what the SECDEF specifically desires. It is his intention to use Lieutenant General Glenn Kent (WSEG) to be in charge of the study effort. Lieutenant General Kent has agreed to proceed. He will be tasked to structure a study outline or set of analyses as desired by SECDEF and submit it for approval.

6. Major General Schoning suggested that General Kent should be kept in close contact with the Middle East Task Force. Vice Admiral DePoix stated that intelligence support for General Kent should come from DIA. The CIA representative, [redacted] stated that CIA assets on the Middle East analysis would be funneled to DIA.

7. Mr. Sullivan, Admiral DePoix, and I all made the point that resources are extremely limited within the DOD. Efforts to obtain the information desired should not degrade other high-priority tasks without specific recognition that this is being done.

8. The meeting adjourned at 1010 hours.


S. D. CRAMER, JR.
Rear Admiral, USN
Deputy Director for
Plans and Policy

Copy to
Assistant to the Chairman
Director, Joint Staff
Director, J-5
Vice Director, J-5
Chief, OP&MA Div., J-5
Chief, SP&P Div., J-5

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NET ASSESSMENT OF MIDDLE EAST WAR

The Secretary of Defense has requested that a thorough study be made of the latest Arab-Israeli conflict with particular emphasis on what we might learn in regard to U.S. weapons performance, tactics, military doctrine and training against Soviet counterparts.

Examples of questions of interest include:

-- What did the Israelis learn about:

(a) Unit engagements, especially in light of new Soviet-supplied SAMs, anti-tank missiles, etc.

(b) The process of gaining air superiority over the battlefield given current SAM, AAA and aircraft technology.

(c) Soviet/Arab tactics and doctrines.

(d) Naval warfare using air-to-surface missiles. ?

(e) Problems with or areas of superiority of tactics or doctrine of U.S. origin or similar to U.S. tactics or doctrine.

(f) Factors which dominated the outcome of key major engagements.

(g) Novel or non-standard tactics or practices which may appear promising for the U.S. to adopt on an experimental basis.

(h) The effectiveness of specific Soviet equipment, including an assessment of the cause of deviations from expected or nominal effectiveness.

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(i) Problems with, or areas of superiority of U. S. -supplied equipment, both those attributable to desert environment and those of more general nature.

Beyond what the Israelis say they have learned, we should assess certain questions on our own. For example:

-- How closely did the Arabs follow Soviet doctrine and operating instructions in the use of Soviet weaponry?

-- How close an approximation is the Arab side to the Soviet armies we confront in Europe? What difference would the European environment and weather make?

-- What tactics and other practices did the Israelis use? Which were most effective?

-- How close were Israeli tactics to current U. S. prescribed tactics?

-- Do the differences suggest any fixes that should be made or opportunities we may exploit?

-- Was there significant learning and adaptation on each side during the course of the war?

-- To what extent was any adaptation significant in the outcome of later engagements?

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In order to insure that all relevant questions of interest are addressed, that the results of inquiries are appropriately screened, that information produced receives proper dissemination, and that these aims be achieved without undue duplication of effort, it is appropriate to make the effort as a centrally directed study. Such a study would probably have the following major phases:

- Organization of supervisory body.
- Identification of questions of interest.
- Assignment of questions to specific agencies or groups.
- Data gathering and analysis.
- Reports back to supervisory body.
- Analysis and summarization for policymakers.
- General dissemination for information.

The purpose of the study would be to produce an assessment of the comparative effectiveness of U. S. and Soviet weapons, tactics, and doctrine in the war, to provide inferences of expected performance in other situations; e. g., NATO/PACT conflict in Europe, and to suggest key areas for further study, such as a net assessment of U. S. and Soviet air defense capability over the FEBA, or a comparative analysis of U. S. and Soviet anti-tank weapons.

We recognize that various offices are proceeding independently with parts of this study. There are several teams in the Middle East or on the way. An early task of the supervisory body will be to find out what teams are out, what their terms of reference are, and how they can be fit into our specific effort to produce a report to the Secretary. There is no intention of limiting the initiative of any organization in meeting its own needs. Rather, the emphasis is on ensuring that all relevant information is obtained, and the specific interests of the Secretary of Defense are met.

A possible supervisory body would consist of the Director of WSEG as Chairman, with representation from: DDPA&E, DDR&E, JCS, ASD(I), ASD (ISA), Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Director of Net Assessment. This ad hoc group or some agreed alternative, should meet as soon as possible. The first task would be a rapid polling of all interested offices to elicit questions of interest. These would then be screened and categorized by the ad hoc group, and responsibility for producing the answers assigned. These tasks should be completed during the next two weeks in order to take advantage of the immediate opportunities.

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NSSM 186

We will wish to continue work on NSSM 186, the basic aim of which is to get some answers to the question of whether we are pricing ourselves out of the market in national defense, which is of key interest to the Secretary of Defense. The first phase of NSSM 186 will continue under the management of ASD (I). What we hope to achieve in the first phase is some really interesting comparisons and contrasts between U. S. and Soviet ground forces, along with tentative hypotheses concerning their causes. We have not yet settled how we will attack subsequent phases. Certainly the initial work on ground forces should be followed up to identify areas of comparative advantage and disadvantage, and consequent opportunities and problems. Beyond this we should examine other sorts of forces, including tactical air forces, general purpose naval forces, and so on, using techniques of comparison developed during work on the ground forces. Experience to date with NSSM 186 suggests that detailed descriptions of the forces on both sides, especially our own forces, are not conveniently available. A good deal of start-up time could be saved if agencies who can expect to be involved will anticipate the need for force tables and do some preliminary research.

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EFFECTIVENESS OF ALLIED FORCES

An important issue of interest to the Secretary of Defense is why our allies get so little in terms of apparent military effectiveness, from their defense budgets. Are they, in some sense, inefficient competitors in producing, maintaining and operating military forces? If so, why? Do they spend unnecessarily on "balanced" forces instead of specializing on the single military problem of overriding interest -- the defense of Europe? Or do the governments subsidize inefficient industries in order to retain domestic capability to produce armaments of various kinds (ships, planes, tanks) even at a pronounced comparative disadvantage? Or are manpower costs outstripping military "productivity"? What can be learned about our own apparent problems, and how they are likely to go, by study of our allies?