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13 June 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Training

FROM :

[REDACTED]

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SUBJECT :

Critique of Air War College 1968 - 1969

1. It would be difficult to conceive a better preparation than the Air War College for my upcoming assignment to [REDACTED]. We discussed, thought about, wrote on, criticized, and argued about Southeast Asia and the U.S. future in the far Pacific almost constantly during the 10-month course. In addition I was fortunate enough to be assigned to the SEA elective which went into considerable detail on the individual countries in the area. Beyond the specialized SEA input, the AWC was a splendid experience from many aspects. For the first time in a long while I took a detailed look at this gigantic government of ours. This in itself was a rare opportunity for one who considers himself a bit of a political scientist. Further, the research thesis was a real highlight of the course for me, perhaps because I selected an interesting and provocative subject that had never been previously explored by anyone. I believe the AWC has sent a copy of my thesis -- "Aerospace Power and Strategic Psychological Conflict" -- to the National Aeronautics and Space Council in the Executive Office of the President.

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downgrading and  
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2. All of the above does not, of course, mean that the AWC was flawless. It is ironical that the world's largest Air Force should be unable to fly us to Cape Kennedy for a Saturn shoot in this outstanding space year, or to Panama to observe CINCSOUTH's rather tight little command. We went to the UN, which many of us had been to several times before, and to Fort Bragg, which I visited during the Agency's Midcareer course a few years back. Further, I found a sometimes disturbing inflexibility and conservatism among the faculty of the AWC that is hard to explain. Of course, the military is on the defensive because of the current onslaught against the Military -- Industrial complex, and perhaps this partially explains the phenomenon. Team solutions that were hyper-conservative on cost and strategy almost always won the referees' nod. Perhaps this is just the way the military mind works. In any case, General Donohew told me during our last chat that, by God, the AWC was going to change its philosophy or else! One of the major problems that bugs the General, the faculty, and students is the propensity for top government officials to give wiring diagram briefings on their organizations. Also, the tendency of top men to send deputies with prepared texts that are almost entirely lifeless and bureaucratic is regretted by everyone. Next year the policy will be to invite the top men of the various commands with a request to talk on problems and philosophy, not on the organizational structures they lead. Further, if the top man cannot come, the AWC will simply scratch that lecture and throw in a prepared one-day crisis-management problem.

3. There were other problems, of course, that have been highlighted in the critiques of previous AWC graduates. I won't repeat these here, but only note that many of them still exist. I do believe General Donohew and his faculty are doing their best to correct these faults, and time will only tell.

4. It was a fascinating year to be in the AWC. The PUEBLO, the national elections, the change of administrations, Apollo 8, the social unrest in our land, the growing clamor against the Vietnam War -- all these provided topics of unusual interest to the class of predominantly full colonels. These were

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brave and resourceful men who had, for the most part, fought in three wars. Their frustration with the Vietnam conflict was obvious, as was their anger and discontent with the McNamara years at DOD. Systems analysis control of the military structure and strategy was the basis for their discouragement. Now they suddenly find themselves under heavy political attack from various sources. This is a shame, for their service records and their accomplishments attest to their dedication and courage. We are fortunate to have such an officer cadre. I came away from the AWC with a new respect and affection for these men.

5. As for myself, the AWC was most rewarding. For the first time I understand our government's workings from national policy formulation to a small patrol action in I Corps area. I understand now how CIA fits into the picture at all levels. I could, I believe, even find my way around DOD! Most important of all, perhaps, is a vastly better understanding of what our nation faces around the world and at home in the decade to come. This should stand me in good stead during this last 10 years of my own career in the Agency. The challenges we all face now are so much greater than ever before, and the 10 months of thinking about and working on these challenges at the AWC were one of the most rewarding periods of my career.

6. The faculty and the student body at the AWC are well-disposed toward the Agency, although they know little about it. Admiral Taylor gave a good briefing and answered many good questions. Lacking in the Agency's presentation to the AWC was the fascinating but difficult-to-define philosophy of intelligence operations. This is what the students wanted but did not get. General Donohew personally urged me to see Mr. Helms and pass on the General's request to speak next year at the AWC. If this could be arranged, the General feels this would be one of the high points of the course.

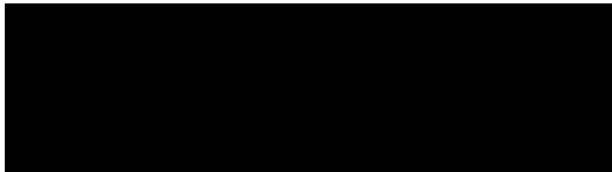
7. Living in Montgomery is pleasant. The schools our children attended (Sidney Lanier High School, Floyd Junior High School and Elementary School) were excellent. The atmosphere is relaxed and the people, both in Montgomery and at Maxwell, were friendly and outgoing.

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8. Finally, I urge all officers attending future AWC sessions to put forth their best efforts professionally and socially. Like all things, the rewards of AWC are in proportion to the input. My grateful thanks to the Agency for sending me to the AWC and to OTR for its excellent support during the past 10 months.

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