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DOCUMENT NO. 13  
NO CHANGE IN CLASS.   
 DECLASSIFIED  
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C  
NEXT REVIEW DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
AUTH: HR 70-2  
18 APR 1980  
DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ REVIEWER: 018645

4 June 1957

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director

SUBJECT:

[REDACTED]

Recommendations

25X1A5a1

Concerning NIE's

25X1A9a

Attached is

[REDACTED]

memorandum of the

[REDACTED]

25X1A5a1

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[REDACTED]

discussion on the general subject of NIE's.

This has been discussed by the Board, and we have the following comments:

25X1A5a1

1.

[REDACTED]

suggestion that estimates should

do more in the way of exploring alternative possibilities

is a good one. We have frequently done this in the past

and have tried something along this line in the redraft of

the Yugoslav paper sent to you on 28 May. We will continue

to look for occasions when this approach can usefully be

followed in future estimates.

2. It seems doubtful whether, as a general rule, we

should try to substitute a narrative summary of an esti-

mate for the present shorter form of conclusions. The

annual Soviet estimate, for example, would not lend itself

to such treatment. However, there are cases where such

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5. We do not believe that dissents should be incorporated into the text of NIE's. We do believe that dissents should be clearly expressed to point up as sharply as possible critical differences of view. To this end we would like your authority to play more active part in helping to put into precise words any expressed disagreements of the contributing agencies.

6. We do not share [REDACTED] view that the Board is often handicapped by lack of knowledge of your position on specific estimative issues. We will of course continue to consult you as soon as possible when any such instances arise.

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7. We have in the past repeatedly stressed in our estimates the importance that US policies and actions would have on the course of events. We have, however, deliberately refrained from basing estimates on assumed new initiatives in US policy, except in cases where these assumptions were given to us or approved by the NSC Planning Board or some other authority. In our opinion, this is the proper procedure. We have been most reluctant to postulate US policy on our

own and then estimate probable consequences thereof.

We have felt that such a procedure, attractive as it might be, could easily open us to the charge of policy advocacy.

FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES:

SHERMAN KENT  
Assistant Director  
National Estimates

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