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IC 75-1405
17 March 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: General Wilson

SUBJECT: The Responsibilities of the DCI in Times of
Potential Nuclear Crisis

1. Recent exercises such as Nickel Plate-74 and Prime Rate-75 have again raised the issues surrounding the role of the DCI as the primary intelligence advisor to the President. The problem basically arises from the lack of understanding of the function of the DCI as contrasted to the function of the Director of CIA. The problem stems from the fact that the DCI "hat" was seldom put on until the administrations of the last two directors.

2. Evidence of this lack of understanding is to be found in the various Defense Department plans for the survival of the National Command Authority (NCA) under conditions of nuclear attack (or a grave threat of nuclear attack). The plans include relocation of the NCA to various hardened sites or by use of the National Emergency Airborne Command Post (NEACP), or both.

3. The specific symptoms of the lack of understanding of the DCI's role show up in the lack of communication and information means dedicated to the DCI's function under conditions of relocation during nuclear crises. As DCI he is not only responsible for the intelligence generated by CIA but also for analyzing and making judgments on intelligence to be given to the President from such sources as DIA, NSA and State/INR. While these organizations (other than CIA) have other routes to the President, the convergence of all the intelligence from all sources remains the DCI's, and only the DCI's, responsibility.

4. It would seem essential, then, to periodically review the various plans related to nuclear crisis situations in order to insure that the DCI's role is recognized and that appropriate means have been provided to allow the DCI to carry out his responsibilities to the NCA.

5. In the pursuit of the above objective I am gathering information on the communication capabilities dedicated or available to the DCI when he is operating from various alternate locations (including

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25X1 the NEACP).

[redacted] are giving me their full cooperation. I have also called RADM Lucien Capone of the Defense Communications Agency who is anxious to cooperate with us. He will arrange briefings for us this week.

25X1 [redacted]
Product Review Division

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