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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

4 October 1954

SUBJECT: Post-Mortem of NIE 11-6-54, "Soviet Capabilities and Probable Programs in Guided Missiles"

DISCUSSION

1. The preparation of NIE 11-6-54, during the course of which an intensive effort was made to exploit every possible source of evidence, revealed a serious gap in our intelligence in this highly important field. Although we have had available "conclusive evidence" of the great postwar Soviet interest in guided missiles and numerous indications that the USSR has a large and active research and development program, we have "practically no current intelligence" on particular missiles the USSR is presently developing or may now be producing. In view of our estimate in NIE 11-6-54 that the US and its allies will face a growing Soviet guided missile threat, including eventually a grave threat from intercontinental ballistic missiles, this lack of up-to-date intelligence is of critical significance to the intelligence community.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That the Soviet guided missile program be specifically designated as a highest priority National Intelligence Objective on the same plane as the Soviet nuclear program.

B. That a national intelligence estimate on guided missiles be scheduled as an annual exercise to provide an authoritative estimate of Soviet progress in guided missiles and the degree of threat to US security interests.

C. That, pending the initiation of the next NIE in this series, a special ad hoc inter-agency committee be set up under the IAC to examine those fields in which a greatly intensified intelligence effort would have the greatest pay-off and make the necessary recommendations to the IAC. Subsequently this committee would be responsible for

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preparing coordinated requirements for levying on the appropriate intelligence agencies. In view of the critical importance of this exercise, the committee should be sufficiently high level to command the necessary priority attention to its needs.

D. That the IPC and other bodies or agencies then be directed to assign appropriately higher priorities to the collection and analysis of guided missile intelligence.

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