

5 June 1967


MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director  
VIA : The Deputy Director of Central Intelligence  
SUBJECT : A Comment on Mr. McNamara's Possible Difficulties  
with the DIA

Herewith a comment of possible interest.

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HRP 89-2

  
SHERMAN KENT  
Director  
National Estimates

1. I do not know the exact nature of the Secretary of Defense's complaint about DIA's performance. My guess is that it bears upon his dissatisfaction with DIA's handling of intelligence questions which call for sophisticated analysis and detached speculation. I justify the above guess on the basis of the nature of a number of requests which the Secretary of Defense has directed to the DCI in the past. If the Secretary had been satisfied with DIA's estimates of Soviet Ground Order of Battle, or estimates of the costs of the Soviet military establishment, or the effectiveness of the ROLLING THUNDER Program, he would not have come to the DCI.

2. That the Secretary has been disappointed in DIA's performance in the past, and almost certainly will continue to be disappointed, I ascribe to two built-in fundamentals in the nature of DIA. The first is that by definition it is a Headquarters military intelligence organization with all of the classical maladies of such. The second is that it reports to the Secretary via the Chiefs. Intelligence findings which relate to matters in contention between a civilian Secretary and the Military Chiefs cannot pass through the latter without picking something up. Maybe it is conclusion,

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maybe thrust, maybe nothing but flavor. By this I do not intend any reflection on the probity or objectivity of DIA, I simply mean that any intelligence utterance of an analytical nature in which the area occupied by fixed points is very small and that occupied by words very large is bound to take on some non-objective color. In this case the first source of color supply is DIA's proximate boss.

3. There is no question about Mr. McNamara having a problem. There are about three ways of handling it, only one of which seems to me feasible and that is the way he is handling it right now. Before enlarging on this thought, let me mention the two courses which are possible but which I do not believe are feasible:

a. Doing something dramatic to DIA; for example, begin by allocating to it 50 or 60 General and Flag Officer slots (this is about as many supergrades as exist in the analytical offices of CIA). Second, search the Services for their real substantive and analytical brains, assign them to DIA for long tours of

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duty (10 years to life) with all of the prospects for success which is attached to duty in the line, and third, mute this business of reporting via the JCS.

b. Leave the DIA to handle the intelligence account of the Chiefs, and the separate Services. Set up a new intelligence service to handle the account of the Secretary of Defense and the civilian echelons of the DOD.

You see what I mean by possible but not feasible.

c. Keep traveling the present route, only a bit more so. That is, keep coming to CIA for analytical work and estimates urging that the work be done in close collaboration with DIA. As long as there is a jointness about such assignments, the damage to morale in DIA will be reduced, contact with long-time CIA experts may even be providing an important educative experience to DIA analysts, and the quality of the end product surely will not be damaged and might even be improved. The only disadvantage may be in a loss of efficiency.

3. It is not at all cheerful, however, to reflect how many fine analysts in DIA have improved their talents through working

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hand-in-hand with more experienced people from CIA and then left DIA, and indeed all intelligence work, for some other duty in their Service.