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Brief for Discussion
With The President

ARA:krg
3/7/60

SUBJECT: Fifth Report to the President by the President's Board of Consultants on Foreign Intelligence Activities, dated December 11, 1959. (Recommendation Regarding "Strategic Warning Mechanism")

1. One of the recommendations of the Hull Board's report of December 11, 1959, was as follows:

"It is recommended that you direct the Director of Central Intelligence to have the Intelligence Community complete the aforementioned survey at the earliest possible date; that, based on the survey, it prepare expeditiously specific indicator lists to supersede the general indicator list which is now in use, and that you issue whatever directives are necessary to insure that the facilities of the Intelligence Community's Watch Committee and its National Indications Center are organized, supported and operated in such manner as to (a) maximize the Intelligence Community's efforts to effect timely receipt, processing and evaluation of available information pertaining to strategic early warning, and (b) insure the timely transmission to higher authority of significant information bearing upon the early warning problem."

In making this recommendation, the Hull Board expressed concern over the delay in completion of a pending study by the Intelligence Community which was under way in 1957 for the purpose of determining "how fully and promptly present and potential intelligence collection methods, sources and transmission channels can provide information which may be essential for advance warning of Sino-Soviet Bloc hostile action." In its December, 1959, report the Board noted that the completion of this study had been delayed too long and should be carried forward to conclusion under the vigorous personal direction of the DCI. The Board stressed that the interests of national survival in the missile age make it imperative that we have an effective strategic warning system as a means of providing our policy makers with the earliest possible warning of enemy attack.

2. Prior to taking action on this recommendation the President asked for the views of the Director of Central Intelligence whose comments have been submitted in a memorandum dated March 3, 1960, the highlights of which are as follows:

a. Around March 29, 1960, there will be presented to the USIB a draft report on the Warning Systems Survey which will include a proposed revision of the General Indicator List. This list provides a basis for evaluating collection capabilities and for determining which indicators are realistic.



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b. The DCI does not feel that further special directives are necessary at this time to insure that the USIB Watch Committee and its Indications Center meet the objective stated in the Hull Board's recommendation. In this regard, the DCI states that improvement has been shown in the reporting system for speeding the delivery of critical information to Washington, as previously set forth on December 5, 1959, in the joint report of the DCI and the Secretary of Defense on the subject of "Critical Intelligence Communications"

c. Also, the DCI stressed that the Intelligence Community is striving to improve our early warning capabilities, and is especially aware of the new problems in the early warning field created by recent weapons developments.

Suggestion

3. When the USIB has acted on the forthcoming report on the Warning Systems Survey, including the issuance of instructions to the Intelligence Community as may be appropriate at that time, the DCI should so inform the Hull Board.

4. Accordingly, it is suggested that the President be briefed on the highlights of the DCI's memorandum of March 3, 1960, and that the President approve an action along the following lines:

Noted the memorandum of the Director of Central Intelligence dated March 3, 1960, concerning the subject recommendation and requested that (a) the USIB give expeditious attention to the forthcoming report on the Warning Systems Survey and to the issuance of instructions thereon as appropriate; and (b) the DCI inform the President's Board of Consultants on Foreign Intelligence Activities with respect to the action taken as called for in (a), above, for consideration in the light of the Board's recommendation.

