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HEADQUARTERS AIR DEFENSE COMMAND

Memorandum and Related Papers Pertaining to

AN AIR DEFENSE COMMAND  
PROPOSAL FOR

# IMPROVED WARNING

Prepared for the  
Individual Members of the Watch Committee  
21-22 August 1953

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HEADQUARTERS  
AIR DEFENSE COMMAND  
Ent Air Force Base  
Colorado Springs, Colorado

21 August 1953

MEMO FOR: The Individual Members of the IAC Watch Committee

SUBJECT: Need for a World-wide Indications System

1. This memorandum and its inclosures are furnished you on an informal basis as a reminder of discussions at ADC during your visit 20-22 August and in full cognizance of its necessarily unofficial nature.

2. You will have gathered from your briefing here the extreme dependence of air defense on adequate warning of hostilities and the related air attack on the United States. The current ADC solution to the strategic warning problem described and illustrated in inclosures 2 and 3 entitled Project Blindman and illustrated by the briefing on the Indications Board has met certain of our requirements. We realize its many deficiencies and its relationship to the much larger problem of the Watch Committee. We are confident that our approach has many features which would contribute measurably to a world-wide system.

3. Inclosure 1 to this memorandum, in the form of an informal staff study, represents our idea of the basic structure for a world-wide system of indications intelligence using the Watch Committee as a central monitor and clearing house. Such a system must be established on proven principles of indications intelligence, but above all, requires standardization of method and rapidity of informational exchange.

4. I reiterate here, therefore, the wholehearted though necessarily informal recommendation of the Commander, Air Defense Command, that the Watch Committee vigorously pursue the early establishment of a coordinated world-wide indications system based on the principles we have discussed.

3 Incls

1. An ADC Proposal for Improved Warning ~~(SECRET)~~
2. Manual for Opn of the ADC Indications Board ~~(SECRET)~~
3. Photograph - ADC Indications Board - 1 Jan to 30 Jun 53  
~~(Secret)~~

  
W. M. BURGESS  
Brigadier General, USAF  
DCS/Intelligence

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HEADQUARTERS  
 AIR DEFENSE COMMAND  
 Ent Air Force Base  
 Colorado Springs, Colorado

AN AIR DEFENSE COMMAND PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVED WARNING

I. PROBLEM:

1. To establish the requirements and criteria for U.S. indications intelligence evaluation.

II. FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM:

X 2. The Air Defense Command has an over-riding requirement for warning of the imminence of air attack on the United States.

3. The missions of all U.S. defense agencies and military commands throughout the world would be made easier by adequate, timely and dependable warning of events to come.

4. The U.S. government in Washington has the highest requirement for similar warning of general hostilities and related world events.

5. The Air Defense Command has established an indications system using a graphic portrayal and a mechanical memory to assist in the orderly evaluation of indications of hostile air attack on the U.S. However, this system requires the consideration of many factors which are not within the competence or resources of this command to provide.

6. Similar projects in varying degrees of detail ~~are known to exist~~ in various other commands and agencies with generally similar disadvantages.

7. The Washington Watch Committee, a sub-committee of the Intelligence Advisory Committee, maintains a continuous indications evaluation of all events world-wide which bear on the imminence of general hostilities and related world events. It receives contributions from all pertinent and competent ~~Washington~~ agencies.

X 8. The coordination and exchange of information between these several indications efforts are neither systematized nor timely. There is a lack of uniformity of terms, methods, criteria, scope and scheduling in these several efforts.

9. The scope of the Washington Watch Committee responsibility is sufficiently broad to embrace the several separate efforts.

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10. The existence of such separate but related efforts, as presently constituted, throughout the world involves much duplication of the evaluation effort -- in many cases by people not fully competent and with divergent results.

11. Indications efforts as now organized are producing results less reliable than the security of the nation requires and the commanders' concerned deserve.

### III. DISCUSSION:

12. The coordination, standardization and systematic inter-relationship of this effort would overcome many of the present shortcomings, particularly from the standpoint of the Air Defense Command. The obvious solution is to charge the Watch Committee, as the most competent and most authoritative of the agencies presently involved in indications evaluation, with specific responsibilities for overall coordination and through its member agencies to achieve the required directional effort.

13. If such central coordination and direction are effected, the following are some of the principles, criteria and procedures believed essential by the Air Defense Command:

- a. An agreed list of indications and sub-indications world-wide in scope. The Watch Committee would monitor this list on a continuing basis making additions and deletions as required. Coordination and even active participation in its preparation by contributing agencies and sub-agencies would be necessary. The monitoring responsibility would also include continuing development of the basic philosophy of indications evaluation and of new methods for applying it.
- b. Assignment of indicators for evaluation to specific participating agencies or sub-agencies according to primacy of interest or competence. As an example -- Air Defense Command might well process intelligence concerning its principal area of interest -- Soviet Long Range Aviation activity. Similar assignment of responsibility would be made to other commands or agencies.
- c. Provision to furnish these same agencies with indications evaluation on all other indicators which are pertinent to their own warning problem but for which they do not have primacy of interest or full competence in evaluation. The Watch Committee, acting as a clearing house for such an evaluation, would be responsible for the receipt of this

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information throughout the world, passing from an overall standpoint on its adequacy and reallocating it as required to the participating commands and agencies on a timely basis.

- d. Timely, secure and dependable communications. The establishment of reliable world-wide indications evaluation would be nullified if the resultant information failed to arrive at the using agency before the event itself. Present communications or other means for passing information of this nature are generally unsatisfactory. On-line teletype communications between the coordinating agency and all participating and contributing agencies on a split second basis are mandatory. Cross communications between selected commands and agencies are also essential.
- e. Standardized methodology and display system. At the present time it takes almost as long for an officer reporting to a new headquarters to learn its special terms, abbreviations and connotations as if he were faced with a foreign language. The standardization of methodology, terms, displays and criteria throughout the proposed indications evaluation system would promote speed, understanding and accuracy, not only of warning information, but of intelligence application in general. The system of graphic portrayal and mechanical memory, now used throughout the Air Defense Forces of ADC is an attempted solution to this problem.

14. Summary and example of the concept. Under the above criteria, the Watch Committee would maintain and follow the master list of indicators and sub-indicators pertaining to the imminence of general hostilities and related world events. Of this master list, the several indicators pertaining to Soviet Long Range Aviation might be assigned to the Air Defense Command for continuing evaluation and timely relay of results to the Watch Committee. At the same time, conclusions on a portion of the remainder of the master list might be required by the Air Defense Command as indications of the imminence of air attack on the U.S. The Watch Committee would be responsible for continuous and timely transmission to the Air Defense Command of evaluation on these subjects. A similar system would be in effect with each other contributing agency or command, world-wide.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS:

15. The importance of the warning problem, world-wide, requires its consideration on an immediate basis by the most competent and cognizant agency or level of government.

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16. The Watch Committee by virtue of its position, membership and authority is best fitted to consider this problem and provide for its solution.

V. RECOMMENDATION:

17. The Air Defense Command, cognizant of the limitations and requirements imposed by command channels, informally recommends that this study be placed before the individual members of the Watch Committee for their information and appropriate action.

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