

UNCLASSIFIED  
SECRET/SENSITIVE  
UNCLASSIFIED

RELEASED IN PART  
B1, 1.4(D)

INR - Mr. Ray S. Cline  
THROUGH: INR/DRR - Mr. David Mark

November 15, 1972

INP/REA - Morton Abramowitz

SNIE 43-1-72: Taipei's Capabilities and Intentions Regarding Nuclear Weapons Development

I recommend you concur in this SNIE, which is to be considered at the USIB Meeting tentatively scheduled for 10:30, Thursday, November 16. The conclusions are set forth on pages 9 and 10.

The Estimate does not advance our knowledge of the subject, but it is the first formal Intelligence Community assessment addressed totally to this question. Its conclusion, That the ROC is developing a capability to produce nuclear weapons, is new only in this format. As for the GRC's motivations and intentions, the Estimate states that we have no reliable information on the military and political calculations behind the GRC's activities in the nuclear field, (page 6), but (essentially assuming the GRC would reason as we do) the Estimate concludes with doubt that a decision would be made to proceed with testing or with the fabrication and stockpiling of untested devices" (pg. 10).

R  
in SNIE 43-1-72  
para 12

B1  
B1  
B1

R in SNIE 43-1-72  
para 12

This estimate, you will recall, was requested for EA initial memorandum from you to Mr. Helms dated October 25, 1972, suggesting the terms of reference and a completion date in mid-December, which memorandum (attached) was subsequently circulated to USIB members as the framework for the SNIE. ONE advanced the due date to November 16 for its own scheduling reasons. The original draft done in ONE the preceding weekend arrived in INR on Thursday, November 9, with the representatives meeting set for the afternoon of Monday the 13th. We asked ONE for a postponement of the meeting until the end of this week to give us more time to consider the draft and coordinate with EA. ONE refused, on the grounds that the DCI emphatically wanted the SNIE ready for USIB consideration on the 16th.

Given the time constraints and our own objections to the original draft, Monday's meeting was long (almost five hours). It resulted, however, in changes which we feel make the final draft more responsive to our terms of reference than the original had been. We are satisfied with the present draft, but continue to feel that a more generous schedule would have permitted the production of a more useful estimate. Though ONE says the Agency has no further information, we feel that a less hasty schedule

SECRET/SENSITIVE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
REVIEW AUTHORITY: DONALD A JOHNSTON  
CLASSIFICATION: SECRET REASON: 25X1, 25X6  
DECLASSIFY AFTER: 21 JUN 2015  
DATE/CASE ID: 07 SEP 2004 199904776

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
REVIEW AUTHORITY: APPEALS REVIEW PANEL  
APPEAL ACTION: RELEASED IN FULL  
DATE/CASE ID: 14 OCT 2004 199904776

UNCLASSIFIED UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

SECRET/SENSITIVE

- 2 -

might have permitted more detailed consideration of such particular points as the probable source and effect of foreign technological assistance and the nature of internal GRC controversy over the program.

Before the Monday meeting and again today, we consulted with staff members of EA/ROC and EA/ACA; they are satisfied but not edified by the final draft. We understand that EA/ACA will now push ahead with a request for a NSSM in which we had concurred and which was held up by Deputy Assistant Secretary Sneider pending the completion of this SNIE.

We would not expect any of this background on the production of the paper to come up at USIB. You may find it useful, however, because in our exchanges with the working level at ONE, and particularly in making our pitch for postponement of the representatives' meeting, we ran into a considerable amount of flak for having requested the SNIE in the first place. One counterpart complained that INR was overloading the system with what he clearly thought were silly requests for SNIEs. This moved Stan Brooks to respond with the personal observation that manifesting an attitude of that kind was no way to encourage use of, or confidence in, the system. (Some part of the bad atmospheric may be due to this SNIE having the same chairman and drafter as the NIE on Taiwan last spring, over which so much blood -- mostly ours -- was shed).

Attachments: Terms of Reference  
BNE - approved SNIE

Cleared by: RSG - GDMonk

Drafted by: INR/REA/NA:JdeWilde/TSBrooks:tr 11/15/72

SECRET/SENSITIVE

UNCLASSIFIED