

30 December 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

M 1/5/77

SUBJECT: Meeting with National Security Advisor Brzezinski

1. Joined by John McMahon, Dick Lehman and Bill Wells, we met with Mr. Brzezinski and David Aaron in Mr. Brzezinski's temporary office in EOB this afternoon for about two hours. The meeting was set up yesterday on request by Aaron who asked us to cover two main topics: the nature of our technical collection capabilities and the status of our successes with regard to the so-called hard targets. The second topic was to be a description of the state of Soviet strategic affairs, including a briefing on nature of the "B Team" exercise and the current NIE about which there has been so much publicity.

2. At the outset I explained to the Professor that Mr. Bush was out of town, otherwise he most certainly would be involved in the briefing. Brzezinski asked me to relay his personal thanks and appreciation to Director Bush for the latter's earlier telephone call extending an offer of Agency support and intelligence briefings.

3. I led off with brief summary descriptions of the nature of our technical and human collection, our growing reliance on technology, the pride we have with the successes that have been obtained in the Soviet field with regard to clandestine collection, and our hopes for improvements in the future in the other hard target areas. McMahon then described at some length, using charts and photographs, the nature of the various over-head systems, including satellites, aircraft, and covering [REDACTED] imagery. The Professor, though he does not now hold all of the clearances, showed some awareness of most of these systems, including the general nature of the [REDACTED] system which McMahon described at some length. I invited Brzezinski to be thinking of [REDACTED] as a means for developing new approaches to the Government's crisis-management work. [REDACTED] and systems like it can be tasked by crisis managers, made responsive to live needs and can be the basis for re-thinking the organization of current crisis management. KENNAN

4. Bill Wells followed with a reasonably detailed briefing of current Soviet agents and the nature of the materials they provide us with. Brzezinski and Aaron seemed quite impressed, though Brzezinski wondered whether such agents could not be used to pull off a rather massive deception operation against the U.S. Wells explained why this is not likely.

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5. Brzezinski had various questions at different points in time during the briefing. He asked about the motivation of Soviet agents; he asked how the motivation of Soviets differed from the motivation of our Polish agents. (Essentially, Wells explained that the Soviets, as a general rule, are more unhappy with the system in which they live, whereas the Poles appear to be more responsive to pure monetary rewards.)

6. Because of the shortness of time, Wells was unable to brief as he had intended on the "channels" which the Agency has which can be of use to the Department, the National Security Advisor and the President in getting word officially or unofficially to various governments abroad. He explained that he would like to cover this at a later time. Brzezinski agreed and said he would also like to be briefed in detail on "agents of influence" that belong to us abroad.

7. With the completion of these two topics, the remaining time was given to a discussion of strategic matters, in particular the "B Team" composition, its report, the origins of the comparative analysis exercise and the general nature of the current NIE. It was obvious in this discussion that Brzezinski found Soviet civil defense matters to be of intense interest to him and asked a number of questions about this subject. The discussion of this matter involved John Whitman and Ray DeBruler who joined as Mahon and Wells departed.

8. Specific actions and questions raised by Brzezinski include the following:

(a) He asked me how we propose to move ahead with future briefings on intelligence matters with him. I said that we were in process of preparing a list of recommended topics and would serve them up to him and Aaron and they could react to the list we would give them. This was agreeable.

(b) He asked what our sources have to say about the travesty of Gierek's policies in Poland which have led to the chaos of the present.

(c) With regard to being briefed on agents of influence, Brzezinski said he did not want to be surprised in meeting with or dealing with foreign VIPs, if in fact those VIPs were our agents of influence. In such cases, he would want to know. He said he was open to a procedure whereby he would be briefed in toto on such agents, or we could see to it that he would be briefed prior to foreign travel or the presence on American soil of one of those agents who would be traveling to the U.S.

(d) He commended the Agency's track record with regard to analysis and reporting, but he asked several times why the Agency was so late to recognize Soviet civil defense intensification, particularly, since in hindsight, it began about 1970 or 1971.

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Explanations which had to do with the lack of consumer requirements or the problem of determining priorities for intelligence treatment when resources are scarce seemed not to impress him at all. He was told simply that we had taken our eye off this particular ball and had not followed it in detail since 1970-71, and more recently.

(e) When told that an update of the recent inter-agency memo on civil defense would be ready sometime during the fall of 1977, Brzezinski asked us to consider the consequences of speeding that work up substantially. He said, "I may ask you for such a report long before the fall of 1977."

(f) He said he would be traveling to Plains to see the President-elect late next week and asked Lehman to advise him if he could count on taking a copy of NIE 11-3/8 to the President-elect at that time.

(g) After the meeting, Aaron relayed his and Brzezinski's request for brief papers by 4 January covering the situations in Panama and the Middle East.

[REDACTED]
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Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

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