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Net Assessment

The Concept, Its Development and Its Future

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Net Assessment
The Concept, Its Development and Its Future

NET ASSESSMENT

THE CONCEPT, ITS DEVELOPMENT AND ITS FUTURE

Report From a Symposium

Held at the

Institute for Defense Analyses

May 22, 1990

Jointly Sponsored by

Director, Net Assessment, OSD, and the President of IDA

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

On May 22, 1990 the Director, Net Assessment in OSD and the President of IDA sponsored a symposium at IDA on net assessment. The symposium was held as part of a thrust to help the DoD and IDA gain a deeper understanding of the significance of recently changing strategic conditions in world events, and of the implications of the changed conditions for DoD strategic planning. Net assessment has been a part of the DoD planning landscape for many years. The key questions to which the symposium sought answers were how the activity has served the DoD in the past, and how it could continue to serve it in the future. Participants met for a day in the IDA boardroom, to discuss the history and issues implicit in these questions, with emphasis on the future of net assessment. The discussion was held on a not-for-attribution basis.

This paper reviews the main points of discussion and summarizes some salient observations about net assessment that emerged. The discussion was far-ranging and covered all aspects of net assessment with varying degrees of thoroughness, revisiting many of the topics in different contexts and from various points of view at several points during the symposium. In preparing this paper it was deemed advisable, in the interest of conciseness and logical flow of thought, to draw together the various points of discussion on individual topics or aspects of net assessment and to present them as related, continuous narrative. Inevitably, some of the richness and subtlety of ideas taken out of the context in which they were presented will have been lost, but we hope that what was lost in that way has been compensated by the interweaving of ideas that sometimes appeared in fragmentary and disconnected manner when that was not intended.

Also, it became apparent on reviewing the record of the symposium that although three distinct sessions were planned and conducted -- on the concept of net assessment, on changing issues for net assessment, and on net assessment in the future -- the discussion of the last two topics had merged into a continuum that was best left unbroken. Therefore, this paper has been divided into two main parts: Part I, on the concept of net assessment; and Part II, on net assessment in the future. One especially strong challenge for future consideration, relating broadly to the future security of the United States, was raised at several points during the discussion of future net assessments; this was singled out for special attention and exploration in Part III of this paper.

There were widely varying points of view and interpretations of events or concepts on some of the issues discussed. Although it was agreed that all discussion at the symposium was on a not-for-attribution basis, it appeared inappropriate in the preparation of this report to write it entirely as though all points presented were agreed upon by all participants. Therefore, some areas of disagreement are noted, in which it is indicated that one or some unnamed participants presented particular views and that others, also unnamed, presented alternate views. As the reader will understand from the presentation in this paper, the topic of net assessment is a rich and varied one with much prior and remaining potential for controversy. This paper does not attempt to emphasize the controversy, but it does not attempt to hide it. Therefore it does not attempt to be a definitive treatise on net assessment, but it is, rather, a recounting of a detailed discussion of the subject by knowledgeable performers and users of the art.

The symposium was organized by (b) (7)(C) with assistance by (b) (7)(C) (b) (7)(C) (USAF, Ret.) acted as overall chairman. Session I was chaired by (b) (7)(C) Session II by (b) (7)(C) and Session III by (b) (7)(C) (b) (7)(C) kept a detailed record of the discussion. This paper was prepared in draft by (b) (7)(C) and reviewed by the others listed above for accuracy and completeness; the final version reflects inputs and comments by all.

OBSERVATIONS OF THE SYMPOSIUM ABOUT NET ASSESSMENT

The following observations about the concept, the history, the present status, and future needs and prospects of net assessment emerged from the symposium. They are presented here in abbreviated form to summarize the main insights that were reached:

Net Assessment as a Concept and a Discipline

1. Net assessment is a two-sided (or many-sided) comparative evaluation of the balance of strengths and weaknesses of countries, groupings of countries or other regional and institutional entities of interest for strategic planning. The primary concern is with the *net balance* that emerges from comparison.

2. Net assessment is eclectic in scope. In addition to quantitative factors, assessment of qualitative factors such as cultural bent and organizational capability of potential participants in events, frames of reference, and training of key individuals on all sides contributes importantly to the overall assessment of the balance.

3. To be useful, net assessment must focus on trends, starting as far into the past as current understanding will demand, showing how the trends have led to the current balance, and extrapolating into the future to the extent feasible.

4. Net assessment differs from systems analysis in that it tends to express situations and balances in terms of their qualitative and quantitative complexities while systems analysis, although remaining mindful of the complexities, tries to simplify outputs to reach concise, quantitative measures of effectiveness of discrete entities. Net assessments are oriented toward *diagnosis* of complex relationships to understand the nature of their actual and potential interactions over the long term, while systems analyses are designed to be *prescriptive* in the sense of offering resolution of complex issues in the nearer term.

5. Net assessments focus on highlighting uncertainty rather than resolving it; the resolution is left to policy-makers who use the results of the net assessments to inform their judgments.

6. Because of their complexity net assessments better suit the higher levels of government, where there is more integration of areas of responsibility.

7. Issues, trends and data must be viewed as the different parties who are subjects of the assessments would think about them, rather than in "Amero-centric" terms.

8. The organization and missions of the U.S. Intelligence Community have made it difficult for them to focus on weaknesses of the opposition, and to make "Red" data they gather fully relevant to the "Blue" side in an assessment. Therefore, for comparative evaluation the net assessment community itself has had to search out both the weaknesses of an opponent , and "n"th-party as well as "Blue" data. Since the judgments that lead to a *net* assessment depend on the quality of the data, this problem in establishing reliable data bases has been one of the most difficult to resolve in the net assessment discipline and it will become critical in the future.

Net Assessment in the Future

9. Heretofore, the discipline has been focused mainly on the U.S./Soviet ("Red/Blue") competition. Now, the increasingly multipolar world situation will lead to changes in the net assessment process and focus. "Green/Green" situations and analyses, in which two other parties are in a conflict in which the U.S. is not directly involved but in whose outcome we have an interest and into which we may be drawn, will become much more important to our security concerns.

10. Instead of being viewed as two-sided, net assessments in support of strategic planning will have to be viewed from a multi-party point of view, where the possible developments become correspondingly complex. International conflicts in which the U.S. may become involved may have less to do with capture of terrain and more to do with influencing events and the behavior of nations; who the "competition" is will be uncertain; and the notion of deterrence will be much more difficult to work out in practical terms.

11. Net assessment of world forces (with the term used in the broad sense) in such situations will be vastly more complex than simple U.S.-Soviet assessments.

12. There will be a need for a greater diversity of assessments in the future, including such things as net military assessments, net economic assessments,

and net technical evaluations[1], all leading to net "global" assessments supporting broad strategic planning.

13. Net technical evaluations will be made more difficult by the fact that the DoD and even the U.S. will have less control over the development and spread of technology.

14. It will become important to develop a broad spectrum of "country" and regional expertise. The current lack of availability of credible, reliable data bases will be the biggest obstacle to future net assessments in a multipolar world, and, together with the limited availability of area expertise, could become the pacing item in application of net assessment to the new strategic issues facing the U.S.

15. The intelligence community must be told what is needed. Resources will be a major problem.

16. The diversity of interests and scope of future net assessments will raise issues of deciding who the users should be, reconciling the needs of users in many agencies, and deciding who will adjudicate priorities in committing resources to data-gathering and assessments for a multiplicity of recipients.

17. Future net assessments may involve and be performed by or for many agencies concerned with issues in national security and international affairs, such as the CINCs, the JCS, the Services, "country teams" overseas and other relevant non-DoD groups and agencies. Although the current international situation calls for broader audiences for net assessments they will continue to function best when they can be full, frank, and designed to be used by small groups at very high levels of government or levels of command in the military.

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1 "Net technical evaluation" is the term being applied by the current DDR&E to the activity that was called "net technical assessment" in the 1970s. It carries the connotation of assessment of matters dealing with technology that are much broader than the concentration on weapon systems in the earlier work.

PART I -- THE CONCEPT OF NET ASSESSMENT

A. What Is Net Assessment?

Net assessment is a complex process that has contributed to high-level decision-making in the national security area. Because it has been most useful at high civilian policy levels, and because it has been confused with other kinds of analyses and assessments, it needs not only a clear definition but also characterization that heightens understanding of its unique features. The multifaceted definition of net assessment occupied extensive discussion of its many aspects, ramifications, users and how they used it.

Net assessment was portrayed in this discussion as a two-sided (or many-sided) comparative evaluation of the balance of strengths and weaknesses of countries, groupings of countries or other regional or institutional entities (such as military forces, military alliances, industrial complexes, and so forth) of interest for strategic planning. The primary concern is with the net balance that emerges from comparison of the strengths and weaknesses of the sides being assessed. It is eclectic in scope, including concerns about many qualitative factors affecting the strengths of the parties, in addition to quantitative factors. In the military area, this would include, for example, states of force training, readiness, mobilization potential, logistic support capability, feasible and infeasible force operational capabilities, concepts of operation, quality of command and control, and decision-making modalities and capabilities at different levels of command -- all, in addition to the usual measures of force structure, force strength and capabilities, and potential force effectiveness. Beyond the military measures of effectiveness factors such as the strengths and weaknesses of the economies backing up the military forces, their ability to support the forces and to sustain operations in crisis and war, their reaction times, and the potential support of their own populations and their allies would figure in the balance.

Net assessments can be carried out at various organizational levels for different purposes. At the level of the Secretary of Defense and comparable high-level managers, the goals would be to provide assessments of the current and potential future states of balance in selected areas of the world or the capabilities resident therein, and the path of arrival at the current state, to help ascertain where to go from where we are now. Emphasis is on peacetime issues that must be dealt with to prepare for the eventuality of war but preferably to preserve the peace. In the process, problems are surfaced for top-level attention, and new opportunities for action are identified.

It is clear from the definition thus far that net assessment cannot be all quantitative in character. Assessment of qualitative factors, judged by diverse expertise and methods, contributes importantly to the overall assessment of the balance. Quantitative inputs to the qualitative assessments, in such areas as descriptions of historical trends where statistics or experiential data exist, and possible system or force performance in specific scenarios, can enter the evaluations, but only as background contributions rather than as main outputs of the assessments.

To be useful, net assessment must focus on trends rather than on current or static situations. It should start as far into the distant past as current understanding will demand, show how the trends have led to the current balance, and extrapolate the trends into the future to the extent that the qualities of the subjects of the assessment permit characterization consistent with the trends. Net assessment is thus a tool that exposes decision-makers at high levels to possible developments in the relationships between the countries or groups of countries being analyzed, and it is tailored to help answer "what if" kinds of questions during the planning of broad courses of action.

Extensive attention was devoted to explaining the subtle differences between net assessment and the more familiar systems analysis. Net assessment tends to express situations and balances in terms of their complexities, only some of the effects of which can be expressed quantitatively. Systems analysis, while remaining cognizant of the uncertainties and folding them in to the extent feasible, tries to reach concise, quantitative measures of effectiveness of discrete entities, whether they be systems or forces, in specific scenarios and situations. Systems analyses designed to assist in making decisions about what weapons or military systems and forces to buy must of necessity eliminate many external, complicating factors from their calculations, although in the best practice of the art those factors are highlighted as potentially affecting the results. Net assessments try to bring all such factors into the evaluation on equal terms, and they give more attention to the unquantifiables than to the quantitative aspects of the situation if the importance of the former overshadows the latter, because broad courses of action can foster potentially damaging outcomes if the external factors are set aside, even though they cannot be quantified.

Put another way, net assessments can be considered as oriented toward *diagnosis* of situations and the factors affecting them, currently and as they may develop. The assessments are designed to help decision-makers appreciate the ramifications of alternative

courses of action and their possible consequences for the international balance in question. Systems analyses, by contrast, are designed to be *prescriptive* -- they attempt to say, to the extent feasible, how each of the choices being compared will perform in rigorously described situations. In that way they are designed to focus on the choice among the alternatives rather than to heighten appreciation of the many factors that affect such choice and make it difficult. Net assessment is thus a tool oriented toward helping a decision-maker think a problem through to some conclusion, without necessarily offering conclusions itself, while systems analysis is a tool designed to elucidate an array of possible choices with indications of probable outcomes for each.

It was pointed out that there are also similarities and differences between net assessment for the top-level managers in DoD and the "commander's estimate of the situation" in military planning. The "Commander's estimate" can be viewed as a form of two-sided net assessment, whose character depends on the level of organization making the assessment and the situation being dealt with. As described by one of the participants, the estimate includes:

- A statement of the mission;
- Description of the conditions that prevail;
- Descriptions of the opposing forces, their capabilities and limitations;
- A statement of the principal courses of action open to each side;
- Enumeration of his own possible actions that are likely to lead to potential successes, and those that should be ruled out because they heighten the probability of potential disasters.

Based on this sequence, the commander then decides on the best, or, failing that, the "least worst" (in the game-theoretic sense) course of action.

It was pointed out that this estimate is analogous to net assessment in that the sequence can be put on a time line from past to future, and the "commander" would be considered the user of the net assessment. It is also replete with the "what if" sorts of questions that both the military commander and the high-level civilian decision-maker must consider. Finally, both are concerned with the net balance rather than with the absolute situation on each side, alone.

Other discussants noted, however, that the "Commander's estimate" differs from net assessment in that the commander's estimate of the situation focuses on forces available and near-term action, and is seeking to reduce uncertainty to arrive at a firm course of action, while the net assessment is trying to heighten the appreciation of uncertainty in the long term and make its consequences known. A course of action may or may not be the ultimate objective of the assessment. Also, the military commander, in making his estimate, usually deals with a wartime situation. Defense managers, in performing and using net assessments, have been dealing with a situation in which the nation is not at war, and they have been trying to manage the ongoing interactive processes between and among nations that could lead to the creation of forces not in existence when the assessments are made. Finally, while the military commander *starts* with a mission in making his estimate of potential outcomes of alternative courses of action (a mission that might be changed by the estimate), the civilian decision-maker may be seeking to use the insights elicited by the net assessment to *define* missions as well as to understand the consequences of carrying them out in different ways.

B. History: How It Came About and Whom It Has Served

The activities that led to net assessment as a formal activity -- as a discipline, if one will -- began with the establishment by President Eisenhower, in 1953, of an evaluation subcommittee in the White House, to focus on potential consequences of a large-scale nuclear exchange. The activity of the committee, which came to deal with a variety of topics, continued until 1964. In 1967 an office of Net Technical Assessment was established in OSD, to explore the relative positions of the U.S. and the USSR in various technological areas important to the defense of the United States and its allies. This activity continued until the early years of the Carter Administration.

In the meantime, during the early 1970s there developed in the community of leaders in national security affairs a feeling that a top-level net-assessment kind of activity should be established in government. The Blue Ribbon Panel on Defense of 1970 perceived a gap in high-level national security planning capability and activity, and urged the establishment of an office for net assessment and strategic assessment reporting to the Secretary of Defense. In 1971 President Nixon ordered a reorganization of the intelligence community, and established a net assessment function in the National Security Council staff to monitor the implementation of the order. In 1973, when James Schlesinger moved from the CIA to become Secretary of Defense and Henry Kissinger moved from the NSC

to become Secretary of State, the net assessment function was transferred to OSD under the leadership of Andrew Marshall (who has been the Director of Net Assessment since that time), reporting to the Secretary.

The key point in establishing this organization was the feeling that there was a gap in the nation's national security planning capability, in terms of being able to achieve a broad assessment of the strategic balance, with special attention to the NATO-Warsaw Pact balance and the world maritime balance including capability for power projection. The Secretary's initial purpose in seeking these assessments was to lead the Services to understand the complex planning environment in which their planning, training and acquisition activities were taking place, and to develop appropriate tools and data bases to improve the planning activities as a whole.

Since beginning in the DoD, numerous net assessments on various topics have been performed in 12 to 14 areas of concern. Most were successful, although they cannot be described for reasons of sensitivity and security. They have had various readership, including one assessment that had only two readers (but was nevertheless very useful) and others that have been distributed more broadly. Among the notable net assessments that can be mentioned are assessments of C^3I in the 1970s and assessments of the strategic balance and of the NATO/WP balance, both in the 1980s. Of particular interest was an assessment of the investment balance, including resource flows into and out of the U.S, the USSR, and allied countries, and consequent estimates of the long-term relative sustainability of security-related efforts including consideration of the national economies, demographic trends, and related factors.

There was also a net *technical* assessment activity in the DoD, in the Office of the Director of Defense Research and Engineering, during the late 1960s and early 1970s. This reviewed the net balance in weapon system capability between the U.S. and the USSR. The net technical assessment concept included comparative evaluations of like system capabilities and numbers (e.g., SAMs on both sides) and comparison of system and force capabilities and counter-capabilities (e.g., armored attack vs. the defense against such an attack). In recent months the current DDR&E has defined such activity as net technical evaluation, and the concept will be broadened to encompass technological capability evaluations in many areas underlying military system performance, beyond the systems themselves.[1]

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[1] This was pointed out after the symposium.

The Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, at the direction of the Chairman with the J-8 having the execution responsibility, undertook to portray the comparative military power of the U.S. and the USSR in the pattern of a net assessment during the mid-1980s. In 1989 this activity was applied more broadly to the developing world situation, to help the JCS think about the changing basis for military planning that the situation was presenting to the DoD and the Congress.

The Services have attempted net assessments, with varying success. The Army has displayed the least interest. The Navy undertook some effort that initially appeared to promise some useful payoff, but it later died. The USAF undertook some net operational assessments that were highly successful vis-à-vis one dangerous opponent; the assessments heightened the realization that the USAF was viewing that opponent in an American rather than in his own context, and that they had developed serious vulnerabilities as a result. This realization helped them devise operational concepts that would exploit the opponent's previously unperceived weaknesses.

On the whole, however, it has developed that the most useful applications of net assessment have been in the areas of interest to the top levels of OSD and the JCS. Heretofore, the discipline has been focused mainly on the U.S./Soviet competition; it is clear that now it will have to be extended into other areas, as will be discussed subsequently.

C. "Global" Issues in Performing and Using Net Assessment

1. Developing Net Assessment as a Discipline

Since net assessment evolved over a long period of time during which its uses, values and organizational orientation emerged only gradually, it has gone through what might be termed a continuous "trial and error" period. As a discipline, it remains idiosyncratic in many respects that emerged only gradually as the area developed. However, this very quality can be taken to describe the nature of the discipline. Its significance is that the nature of the discipline depends on both the performer of the assessments and the user of the results as well as on the issues dealt with, and will vary from time to time and from context to context.

The highest payoffs from net assessment have emerged from analysis of trends. This has helped to focus attention on asymmetries in international relationships, and on

opportunities for action or policies that arise as a result. This implies greater value in sharpening judgment than in attempting prediction, and it has led to the realization of the weakness of rigorously formulated combat models in this application. The models can be used to assess the relative importance of various quantifiable parameters, but should not be stretched farther than that. For example, models such as those in use today, run mechanistically, would have predicted a French victory in 1940 based on relative force sizes and equipment alone, while the actual outcome depended on the concepts of operation, the training, and the personalities and tactics of the commanders.

A specific example of the complexity and subtlety of the discipline is given by the C^3I area. The information acquisition, processing and utilization aspects of warfare have continued to increase in importance until they have become even more central to it than they have always been. Both sides in a conflict are always involved in gathering and use of the information, denying it to the other side, and damaging and manipulating that side's information input and his understanding of the information's meaning. The state of analytic capability in this aspect of information management is primitive; we do not even have good nomenclature for the problems that must be dealt with in the analyses. Those that are performed do not include behavioral characteristics of the "players," although those characteristics determine how each side will evaluate and respond to specific elements or aggregations of information (valid or distorted) and therefore their vulnerabilities and strengths. It is therefore difficult to predict what will happen when man/machine/computer combinations in use by each side are damaged, interrupted or experience noise and confusion. The difficulty is analogous to diagnosing the consequences of complex dysfunctions of the human central nervous system.

A final, related problem in this area is that we often think about the other side's behavior as we wish it to be, or as we would define it were we in the other side's position. We are rarely able to think about the situation as the other side perceives it, and to assess either how the other side would view the information presented to it, or how that side would react to that information in its own cultural and conceptual terms. Yet all of these problems must be dealt with in performing a net assessment in the C^3I area (and, as was pointed out, in other areas as well). The U.S. government, in particular, faces structural problems in that the interrelated areas of concern in broad assessments (some of which will be explored in more detail shortly) are divided among agencies with disparate and circumscribed missions, so that it is difficult to probe the other side's potential thinking in a coherent way.

Other net assessment areas are equally complex and require equal subtlety. This complexity is what suits assessments better to the higher levels of government, where there is a greater degree of integration of areas of responsibility. And yet, experience has shown that the discipline of trying to think like the opponent, in his terms, can have a high payoff even in more restrictive contexts. The approach has been especially valuable in evaluating approaches to deterrence in the U.S./Soviet relationship. Application in the new world of more national players, with whom we haven't had time to become as familiar, will be even more important.

It was pointed out by one participant that another conditioner of the net assessment discipline has often been so obvious that it tends to escape us, namely, that it is performed in a democratic society in the political context. The results can come to be exposed to the public in some form, and when that happens many of the subtle nuances tend to be lost. Also, if the results are significant, then the military forces will ultimately have to use them in their planning. The part of the defense community concerned in the outcome will then have to face resource and policy implications in which the Congress is the ultimate decider, through the budget allocations that it authorizes and the money it appropriates. Thus, in one way or another, the performance and outcome of a net assessment will be reflected in interactions with the political process. The assessment will be conditioned by that process in how potential outcomes are viewed, in the number and level of the participants, in the allocation of responsibilities among performers, and in the way the results are managed and used. This is also what lends value in high-level application and utilization, however.

In this context, emphasis on the "jointness" of the using community is important. Net assessments deal with the arena in which CINCs and the JCS must exercise their responsibilities in helping the national leadership come to grips with broad strategic problems. On a rational basis, therefore, one would expect increasing interest and participation on the part of joint commanders and the Joint Chiefs, while Service interest would decline, and that tendency has been displayed in the history of net assessment. Now, especially, the JCS have the charter and responsibility to be major participants in such exercises; they are able to involve the CINCs; and the intelligence agencies must be brought in as well. These tendencies will be highlighted again in discussing the future.

Finally, as part of the evolution of the discipline, there has been a continuing search for the best ways to involve contractors as helpers in net assessments. There are obvious issues of sensitivity, which can be solved for some classes of "helper" organizations.

Since the scope of assessments is extremely broad, these organizations, when they are able to serve as a means to involve *national* expertise, wherever it exists, can help the assessments expand beyond the limitations of in-house staff. Such contributions have greatly assisted the net assessments performed to date.

Another aspect of net assessment, that had to be accommodated as the discipline developed, was the importance of having a sense of the assessment mission and its relationship to the goals that each user might be trying to achieve. Unlike systems analysis, where focus on a set of issues and their resolution through analytic rigor is needed, each user of the results of a net assessment may have goals in applying the results that differ from those of another user. If the conditions and results of the assessment are made too explicit, then the outcome can be turned into a debate about goals in the assessment rather than strategic goals, and that would interfere with achieving the educational and stimulative impact about the subject of the assessment that is the primary intent of the assessment. Thus, it is best, in this area, to be less explicit about the predictive significance of the outcome so that diverse groups can adapt the results to their own goals. This emphasizes the value of modesty in making predictions. Net assessment serves to define areas of uncertainty, and the results must be used with caution and judgment.

In summary, the development of net assessment as a discipline has been characterized by:

- growth in utility for high-level users in the joint and multi-agency arena, and, with a few significant exceptions, a general lack of utility for specific planners at the Service level;

- broad concern with unquantifiables like qualitative historic trends, cultural bent of potential participants in events, frames of reference, concepts of operation and training of both practitioners and users;

- the need to think about issues, trends and data as the different parties who are subjects of the assessments would think about them, rather than in "Amero-centric" fashion;

- performance of the assessments in a political environment, where results are politically sensitive and may affect agency budgets profoundly, requiring careful consideration of how, where and with whom the results are applied;

- a need to preserve some lack of specificity about the outputs that will allow different users to adapt them to their own goals;

- focus on highlighting rather than resolving uncertainty;

- some utility of computerized models and quantitative data to illuminate some of the broad issues, but not as arbiters of the assessments or predictors of outcomes in situations; and

- Use of contractor support, within the limits of sensitivity issues, as a potential means to marshal resources from the nationwide pool.

2. Especially Difficult Analytical Hurdles

The organization and missions of the U.S. Intelligence Community are such that it has been difficult for them to focus on weaknesses of the opposition, and to make the data they gather fully relevant to the "Blue" side or party in an assessment.

With regard to the first, the intelligence agencies have consistently viewed focusing on *weaknesses* as of lesser priority and interest than the need to find, understand and highlight the *strengths* of potential enemies that our defense forces and national security planners will have to guard against and try to overcome. In addition, the intelligence agencies have had difficulty in creating an appreciation of *the other side's* assessment of a situation -- how they do assessments, the war games they play, their judgments about potential U.S. actions, and their calculations about our capabilities; such insights have obvious importance if we are trying to deter militant actions by that side. These problems have appeared to result more from a failure to come to grips with difficult problems than as a result of isolation from the data. Therefore, it has been necessary for the net assessment community itself to search out the weaknesses of an opponent for comparative evaluation; this has required more work by the assessors, and affected the relative quality of data and results in the two areas of comparative strengths and comparative weaknesses of the two sides in an assessment.

With regard to the data issue, discussants pointed to periods of considerable controversy about efforts by intelligence agencies to gather and analyze data systematically about aspects of U.S. military capabilities in relation to those of other countries. The agencies have responded to questions about the U.S. when asked, but they have not been

able, for political as well as internal agency reasons, to keep and furnish such data on a systematic basis to support the net assessment community. The intelligence agencies have been able to gather data about allies as well as potential opponents, but the concentration on the USSR as the principal opponent has kept data gathering about allies and neutrals at a relatively low level. At other times, while they may have been able to use U.S. data, it has not been viewed as within their mission to perform net assessments, and they have not been permitted by higher authority to do so.

The net result of these orientations of the intelligence agencies has been difficulty in establishing reliable data bases (to be noted as a separate, major problem area, below) for net assessments, and difficulties within the intelligence agencies themselves in fully appreciating the scope and significance of the data they do gather and evaluate. The intelligence community can interact with the assessor only if it knows what the assessor is seeing.

These problems remain to be solved within the net assessment discipline.

3. Data Bases

The data base issue noted above is broader than simply gathering the data. It involves exploring and interpreting 20-year trends, on both sides (or all sides in multi-sided assessments). The intelligence community does it for the main opposition, with the gaps in revelation of potential or actual weaknesses that were noted. But the assessment community must assemble and analyze the data on the Blue side, including the U.S., its allies, and third countries. The data required extend beyond force data to such things as logistic and support functions, training, and the characteristics and behavior of the officer corps. They then extend further to economic, demographic, and social factors that affect the ability of a country to wage war. Ultimately the essential judgments that lead to a *net* assessment depend on the quality of such data. This has been one of the more difficult areas to resolve in the net assessment discipline, and it will become critical in the future.

4. Assessor/User Relationships

The ultimate utility of net assessment depends heavily on the user's qualities and attitudes toward the assessment and the user/assessor relationship.

Some views were expressed to the effect that because net assessment is diagnostic in character and tries to surface problems rather than solve them there is a tendency to

separate the assessor from the user; the people who must carry out the task that the assessment supports become disengaged from those who perform the assessment. It was pointed out that such separation carries the danger that the assessment can become arcane, ethereal, and cannot be related to real-life situations. Or, people who perform the assessment and those who will have to use the results may be operating in different frames of reference -- for example, an assessor may use the POM as the force basis, while the decision-maker will have to deal with the budget and forces that will come out of the political process that is external to DoD.

Further, if the user is not the assessor, the process can be viewed as outside the user's frame of interest or challenging to the user's position in the political process that characterizes high-level decision-making. During the 1960s, before either net assessment or systems analysis were developed as decision-supporting disciplines, there was some tendency on the part of top-level managers to use data gathered for decision support purposes as a source of information facilitating control over the bureaucracy. Since then, even as the disciplines developed, some managers who were situated to be users of net assessment have viewed it as posing unwelcome challenges to positions they had taken for other reasons, and some were simply not comfortable with the inherent elements of uncertainty. Other users, also at Secretary of Defense level, have been comfortable working in an environment of uncertainty and have therefore welcomed the process and found its outputs useful. The working relationship between assessor and user in those cases was close and profitable.

Although this experience suggests that the relationship between assessor and user must be closer, it also shows that the nature of the relationship is critical. If the process is broadened and becomes routine, even though the user and assessor may be closely integrated, the assessments could come to be reduced to routines for bureaucratic use, like many systems analyses. It thus becomes clear that ultimately good ideas for assessment, good methodological approaches to it, and useful outputs from net assessment depend on individuals. Improvement of the process will therefore depend on the analysts and the officials involved, as well as and perhaps more than on the institutional relationships among them.

5. Congressional Interest

The net assessment discipline has caught the attention of the Congress, where it has generated a fair amount of enthusiasm. The result has been a series of requests for special

net assessments. This is proving to be a mixed blessing. The Congressional interest is welcome, and assessments for the Congress help to expand understanding of complex and uncertain areas. This can only be beneficial in achieving a broader and more commonly held view on important issues. On the other hand, the staff is not readily available to manage a large increase in net assessment activity; Congressional interests tend to focus more narrowly than the discipline encourages; and the prospect of publicity for the results of a net assessment, which can be very sensitive on an important topic, can discourage candor.

This issue will have to be resolved to the mutual satisfaction of all concerned, within the political system.

PART II -- NET ASSESSMENT IN THE FUTURE

A. International Strategic Issues Warranting Net Assessment

1. New Situations, "Players," and Areas of Interest

We are entering a period in which the next 20 years will be totally unlike the past 20 years. Strategic issues are different, since the U.S./Soviet conflict alone will no longer dominate our military and national security concerns. We used to analyze both sides in "Red/Blue" terms, and we came to understand the two sides so that the analyses evolved into a lucid form for which all the users had developed a shared frame of reference. Now, what might be termed "Green/Green" situations and analyses, in which two other parties are in a conflict in which the U.S. is not directly involved but in whose outcome we have an interest and into which we may be drawn, will become much more important to our security concerns. We will have much less a priori understanding of the participants and the issues in all their cultural and historical diversity and complexity -- this will be true even in areas where we have been involved for some time, such as the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In this new world, the more likely contingencies are those that will start without the U.S., but in which we will have to decide how to act and whether and how to participate if our interest demands it. To take one example, in the Arab-Israeli situation just mentioned the Syrians in the past may have counted on the U.S. to restrain Israel while they had the USSR in the background to motivate us to do that; but now the U.S. may not do so because the USSR plays a smaller role, while at the same time Iraq could weigh in in a way that threatens peace in a much broader region. Thus, the "Green/Green" analyses must incorporate the Greens' views of each other, Blue and Red views of the Greens, as well as our view of potential Green, Red and Blue actions and interactions and their significance. It is clear that the net assessment of world forces (with the term used in the broad sense) in such situations will be vastly more complex than simple U.S.-Soviet assessments.

Additional conflict situations in which these much greater complexities operate could include

- NATO's role and orientation under the impact of German reunification;

- conflicts in Eastern Europe, arising out of local and even internal ethnic and other rivalries;

- a possible war in some part of Europe that would now be viewed as "regional" and in which the U.S. and Soviet roles would not be central because the long-term survival of the countries or their closest allies would not be at stake;

- India and Pakistan in a conflict over Kashmir;

- many possible conflict scenarios in Southwest Asia, as influenced by powerful new forces like Iraqi irredentist claims;

- [redacted]

- further Chinese involvement in a conflict on the Korean peninsula or other conflicts in Asia;

- (b) (5) [redacted]

- more broadly than in any of the specific instances mentioned above, regional conflicts in areas where there is a high probability that weapons of mass destruction will be used, or, alternatively, in which the U.S. has very high economic and geopolitical stakes;

- implications of cooling the past U.S./Soviet conflict for the development and the spread of advanced conventional weapons -- whether slowing or accelerating the spread, and the mechanisms and significance of either;

- allies, who they might be and how we would have to work with them -- for example, how to interact militarily at high levels on their own terms, if need be, with Japan or Saudi Arabia -- and the relevance and application of our European experiences in such situations; there are also other relevant "connections" from which we might learn and benefit, such as the French relationships with their former colonies in Africa;

- arms control issues in the context of broad regional conflicts, in which nations with whom we are closely associated, (b) (5) [redacted], may rethink their positions vis-à-vis nuclear weapons;

- Western Hemispheric issues, for which we would have to build deeper understandings than currently exist about the personalities and motives of the individuals involved, the political factions and movements of which they are a part, and the special problems carried forward from old attitudes about the U.S. role in the hemisphere; and

- future developments in, potential for controlling, and implications for U.S. security of state-sponsored terrorism and narco-terrorism.

Although the new world situation appears to be evolving in the presence of, or even because of, the reduced state of U.S./Soviet tensions, new national security problems involving the USSR also arise for us because U.S./Soviet relationships are in a state of flux. Such problems include:

- the future of the Soviet Union as a world military and economic power;

- the impact on targeting doctrine and necessary force and targeting capability of reduced U.S. and Soviet strategic nuclear forces while other nations' forces remain unaffected by U.S. and Soviet arms reduction agreements;

- Soviet conventional or theater warfare capability in the absence of the Warsaw Pact;

- areas where the U.S. and the Soviet Union can cooperate; and

- the role of the Soviet military in Soviet decision-making, as it may affect all the previous questions;

Other kinds of issues warranting broad exploration via the net assessment approach may be viewed as functional, or else related rather less directly to national security because the background to the issues focuses them on peacetime activities. Some examples are:

- defining U.S. goals in a complex, multipolar world and enumerating the risks to achieving those goals;

- the characteristics of U.S. military forces that will be needed in Third World as well as in variations of "traditional" interactions such as those in Europe and East Asia; in particular, how forces can and should be transformed from those designed for the earlier concept of a major NATO/WP conflict in Europe to the much more diverse possibilities current events present, in recognition of the fact that forces cannot simply be downsized in proportion to perceived reduction of the European threat and retain effectiveness for the new situations we anticipate;

- levels of force readiness and active/reserve force mixes needed in a world *not* characterized by the U.S./Soviet conflict;

- the role of the political process in being able to attain and maintain the results of carefully calculated positions in such areas;

- industrial capability and mobilization response times, needs and abilities;

- implications of chemical and nuclear weapons in Third World hands;

- changing roles of major system categories in the future, which would be reflected in peacetime defense budgets and force mixes -- for example, (b) (5)
(b) (5)
[redacted]

- C^3I and how it would work in the world of many players and much more complex motivations and viewpoints in strategic understanding; this includes learning who the individuals are with whom we have to work, their frames of reference and interactions among their concepts of operations and ours;

- space, and the control of how assets may flow to third countries, and how third countries (other than major U.S. allies and known past opponents like the USSR) may use such assets;

and such broader issues as

- security assistance in the Third World and its role in future U.S. strategy and tactics; in particular, whether the concept and its implementation may now be lost in larger capital flows from newly developed countries to less developed countries

(such as the greater Taiwanese investment in Thailand for business purposes, in relation to U.S. security assistance to that country);

- defining participants in shifting coalitions, and anticipating who may align with whom, for what purposes.

All the areas listed above would not necessarily be examined as net assessments on their merits, so much as becoming elements of net assessments looking toward broader strategic issues. Implications for the defense community in performing such analyses would involve difficulties in assembling reliable and useful data bases; determining areas in which to task the intelligence communities to acquire much of the needed data, and insuring timely followup; uncertainties about priority in expending the resources to develop the data bases; and uncertainty about the DoD role if large elements (but not all) of the conflict situations and geopolitical concerns exist in the non-military sphere. These implications and others will be reviewed in more detail shortly.

2. Net Assessment for Strategic Planning

Net assessments involving issue areas such as those enumerated amount to turning the net assessment process more explicitly to strategic planning in a variety of areas. In planning a U.S. strategic posture for the future we will have to enumerate the things we would like to do militarily in a geopolitical world whose dimensions and characteristics will have to be defined, then evaluate military forces' capabilities to accomplish those tasks. But to do that we would have to progressively expand our attention from the forces to our ability to project military power, to communications and intelligence, to C^3, to interaction with allies, to the questions of *which* allies and *which* opponents, and the underlying strengths of the participants, in military, economic and political dimensions. Thus, the basic defense planning questions raise broad, national strategic planning issues of the kind that were earlier considered mainly in connection with the U.S./Soviet interaction but which now involve consideration of the U.S. position vis-à-vis much of the rest of the world.

The current situation can be viewed as analogous to that in 1946 and 1947, when the U.S, having accomplished the tasks it had set for itself in World War II, began searching for a new strategic position under external conditions whose dimensions were just beginning to emerge. Later, when the nature of the long-term competition between the U.S. and the Soviet Union was beginning to emerge in the 1960s, performers of strategic

analyses in the pattern of net assessment at the RAND Corporation sought out opinions and insights from relevant university groups, such as those at Carnegie-Mellon and the Harvard Business School, to develop a clearer view of the ways in which that competition might develop. Subsequently, when the DoD undertook such assessments in the 1970s, it was knowledgeable enough to ask what goals and strategy we should have for such an extended competition. The subsequent net assessments emerged from this evolution. Thus, net assessment and strategic planning have always been linked.

Future net assessments will have to undergo a similar evaluation. Moreover, instead of being viewed as two-sided, net assessments in support of strategic planning will have to be viewed as multi-party (rather than "sided") and multi-possibility. A useful analogy can be drawn with planning for the long term in the business world. In that environment, a business starts with goals -- what it wants to achieve; it identifies the competition vis-à-vis specific goals or sets of goals; it determines what it needs to know about the competition, the environment and their potential evolution; it specifies what it must accomplish; it estimates how much of that it is likely to be able to accomplish; it identifies problems to be solved and opportunities to be exploited; and then it decides where to focus its efforts. At this stage, high-level decisions about the future of the business are made leading to a strategy that will have emerged from the process; tactics are worked out later.

Translating this analogy to the issue of DoD's future strategic posture, it was suggested that key issues will involve deciding what the goals are for U.S. military forces, especially with respect to Third World countries. Conflicts may have less (but not nothing) to do with capture of terrain and more to do with influencing events and the behavior of nations. Who the "competition" is will be uncertain, and the notion of deterrence will be much more difficult to work out in practical terms. Especially in the use of forces to exert influence, the goals in such use must be clear; if not, situations like that in Lebanon in 1983 could occur, in which it appeared, to the detriment of U.S. policy, that we were uncertain what our presence was supposed to or could accomplish. On the other hand, the measures of such accomplishment will have to be broadened into qualitative areas like influencing the thinking of the parties involved. For example, the main effect of the Doolittle raid on Tokyo in World War II was to shake the Japanese people's confidence in their leadership and enhance American confidence in our ability to carry the war to Japan, even though little was achieved militarily.

B. Performing Net Assessment in the Future

1. Further Evolution of the Technique

The techniques of net assessment will have to evolve to deal with a more complex world.

There will be a need for a greater diversity of assessments in the future, including such things as net military assessments, net economic assessments, and net technical evaluations, all leading to net "global" assessments of the kind discussed with respect to strategic planning. All will be made more difficult by the diversity of actors and environments. Several military and economic issues have already been mentioned. Net technical evaluations will become increasingly important because of the underlying technical basis for both our military forces and the supporting economy. Such evaluations will be made more difficult by the fact that the DoD and even the U.S. will have less control over the development and spread of technology. Parts of the evaluations will have to pay attention to the technologies that may develop elsewhere than in the U.S., and to U.S. ability to recognize their importance and to learn how to capture them for our own use in the defense context.

It will be important to decide which types of net assessments are most needed, and then to adapt the net assessment technique to the types of assessments, the new environment that they are concerned with, and a broadened spectrum of users, including the JCS, CINCs, and possibly the Services, in addition to the Secretary of Defense.

Given the greater diversity of parties and possibilities in any assessment, and the need to anticipate the thinking and cultural orientations of the parties, it will become important to develop a broad spectrum of "country" and regional expertise. Language and "area" training will be essential to provide this expertise. In this respect, country teams and regional groups selected from country teams can make extensive contributions and even become primary performers of some net assessments (although some doubt was expressed about whether they would have the resources or scope to do so on their own); they will also join the community of users, since they will have reporting and planning responsibility in their respective areas.

The business analogy becomes more apt in the context of broadening the discipline and its scope of subject matter. The availability of a broad spectrum of outside assistance

to the DoD studies and analyses complex could be helpful if they help achieve the scope and sensitivity noted earlier, especially as DoD comes to work with other agencies. The more subtle qualities of goals and the qualitative measures noted earlier will further complicate an already complex process.

2. Data Bases

The need for credible, reliable data bases is the biggest obstacle to future net assessments in a multipolar world.

The Red/Blue, intelligence/own imbalance of responsibilities and resources in eliciting information needed for Red/Blue net assessments has been noted earlier. The problem will be even more complex and difficult in the future. There is uncertainty about what data exist and where to find them, with respect to all the additional countries that might be of interest and concern. Sources of expertise have to be found, and the available knowledge assembled, enlarged where necessary, and developed to be able to support net assessments. The intelligence community must be told what is needed, and in addition, external sources and experts must be involved.

The extent to which the DoD should try to involve other agencies where the expertise may exist and who may have an interest in participating in the net assessments for other reasons, is not clear (see further discussion of this issue, below). This would raise the question of who would decide which agencies should be involved, and how their participation would be coordinated. However, once other agencies are involved many other sources of data, in universities and industry already working with those agencies, could become available.

Resources will be a major problem. The new requirements for net assessment demand the construction of a new intellectual infrastructure, different from but associated with the one that was developed when the U.S./Soviet competition was the main concern. The assembly of the requisite data bases in adequate detail and putting them into usable form will take extensive investment, and it is unknown at present whether the DoD and the intelligence agencies will want to or be able to make the investment. It might be observed that this would depend on the rate at which assessments are performed, and whether the rate will be such that the data can be accumulated gradually over time. The need for data and area expertise could become the pacing item in application of net assessment to the new strategic issues facing the U.S.

C. Serving Users of Net Assessments

Some key, high level DoD officials who have become accustomed to the idea of assessments in the U.S./Soviet context doubt the value of extending net assessments into broader areas. It will take time to make those extensions, for reasons noted just above. These officials may come, in time, to view the extended net assessments as useful, but others may find them valuable sooner. This raises the question of who the customer is or will be in the immediate and farther future, which, in turn raises questions about who would support net assessments, what issues should have priority and who would decide priorities at high levels of government if many users are involved.

Net assessments are not value-free, in that the user and the performer work together and a value structure comes, unavoidably, to be reflected in the result. The symbolic end of "World War III," signified by the Soviet turning inward and away from the conflicts of the past 45 years, requires that the DoD and other agencies reexamine their values to determine what has now become important to them and to the nation. Agency values will vary with agency missions, requiring multiple users to reconcile their values. The growing interest of the Congress in net assessments not only raises the issue, noted above, of data sensitivity in a much less controllable environment, it broadens the diversity of values underlying the performance and reaction to the results of net assessments. Although this must ultimately be beneficial in reflecting possible strategies and their limits for a nation guided by democratic processes, the performance of net assessment for such a multiplicity of recipients means that reconciling user interests and needs will become increasingly difficult. In addition, support of users who are used to operating in the public view could come to require a dual-track approach in net assessments that are of mutual interest to the executive and the legislative branches, with one track using classified material and the other not. The issue of data and value sensitivity will then become more acute. The value question is also reflected in user reactions to the products of net assessments. Some officials have rejected results that challenge their values, the expression sometimes taking the form of a denial of utility.

All such interactions lead to a concern that assessments may come to lose their balance, and will start to show the prejudices of the using and performing bureaucracies. Should this come to happen, the analytical approach to anticipating future problems could degenerate into simple "crystal balling," to the detriment of the discipline, the users and ultimately the country. Yet, since the links between net assessment and strategic planning

will become more important in the future some degree of bureaucratization of the process is inevitable.

Looking back on the history of net assessments, it appears that even though the current international situation calls for broader audiences for such assessments they will continue to function best when they can be full, frank, and designed to be used by small groups at very high levels of government or levels of command in the military. This style could be extended into the other interested agencies and groups and into the Congress where the possibility of protecting sensitive, classified and even compartmented information has been demonstrated.

The chief value of the assessments, in the context of a broader using community, will be to introduce information, knowledge of a situation and its complexity into the minds of the users. In the new environment revolutionary changes in technology are appearing hand in hand with parallel changes in society, analogous to those associated with the Napoleonic era. This raises the importance of such matters as the basic education and training system, which leads into evaluations that must consider the shape of society as a whole. The complex dynamics are very difficult to explain to the public at large, who appear not to be concerned at present about pulling together the diverse aspects of a national strategic position. Early strategic decisions are needed based on incomplete information and understanding, and net assessments can be very helpful in illuminating the conditions and potential consequences for the decision-makers.

D. Integrating Multi-Agency Approaches

The need to involve many agencies, all of them essentially autonomous, in the assessments raises the issue of how their work is to be integrated across using communities in such a way as to maximize the utility of the work. The DoD role will change as topics come to emphasize issues outside the purely military. Inter-agency barriers will have to be overcome, as will differences in agency viewpoint--between DoD and the Treasury Department, for example, in the area of international resource flows, or between DoD and the State Department about the value of analytic approaches to problems of broad scope with many imponderables.

Diverse mechanisms can be visualized to help the integration. Given the importance of data and information, the university community, which has links to all the interested agencies, can function as a mechanism for cross-communication among them. On the other

extreme, the importance of obtaining useful high-level assessments of new and complex situations could make it worth setting up special organizational mechanisms to deal with the integration problem, much as a new, high-level joint staff mechanism had to be established during World War II to deal with the British General Staff, or, in a recent development, the establishment of an international organization to manage the issue of loans to the Soviet Union.

A general observation is that the U.S. government bureaucracy has been starting to change to meet the new world situation. As politics, economics and national security matters become more completely integrated in the life of the nation, we will be able to pursue a more focused and integrated national interest. This can be expected to encourage more integration in the execution and use of net assessments, by whatever name. Managing the coordination and integration of multi-agency assessments and related strategic planning will not come easy. How it best can be done, and by whom, will have to be determined.

PART III -- A CHALLENGE FOR THE LONG TERM

Remembering that the original purpose of net assessment was to explore national security issues in the large, the symposium closed on a note that harks back to military concerns.

The participants agreed that we may be entering a unique period in the development of warfare, with revolutionary advances in technology that may be reminiscent of the 1920s and 1930s. During that time we saw the emergence of such capabilities as the modern airplane, the tank, the aircraft carrier and radar, all in different stages of invention, but all destined to have a profound impact on the outcome of World War II. Now, military operations are coming to be dominated by all forms of computers and related electronic devices. We see all manner of guided weapons; accurate, long-range tactical ballistic missiles with effective conventional warheads; the space-supported revolution in C^3I; stealth (the obverse of the revolution in observation that emerged from World War II, Korea and Vietnam); and, not far away, directed energy weapons that are inexpensive, lightweight, and able to do devastating damage. All these capabilities are finding their way into the arsenals and armies of the less developed nations of the world.

The year-to-year changes will be gradual, but the cumulative impact will be revolutionary. Of even greater significance will be the accompanying changes in concepts of operation. For example, prior to World War II Gen. Marshall observed the German Army giving verbal orders to Corps-sized units; this was consistent with the operational maneuver and responsiveness of the large armored units that came to constitute the Blitzkrieg, and had a profound unsettling effect on the U.S. Command and General Staff College when it was first observed. We were not instantly responsive to the observation, however. Today, we can observe that eight of the ten largest armies in the world are in Asia, and that Asia is rapidly assimilating the new technologies of warfare. The effect can be revolutionary because it will change the means and effectiveness of warfare by a set of newly capable and differently oriented practitioners. The significance of the potential changes in the technology of warfare and the users of that technology are beginning to become apparent, but are not fully appreciated yet.

The implementation of technological and organizational revolutions in military affairs has, in general, not emerged from the entrenched military bureaucracies. In the case of U.S. Army aviation, for example, a young group of officers led the advances in

devising and practicing new concepts of operation prior to World War II, when the ideas about bombardment and how to use fighter aviation were worked out. Again in the 1950s and 1960s, a group of young Army officers led the way in thinking about and introducing the Army to the operational concepts involving helicopter mobility. Such groups, contributing to net assessments based on changes observable today, may well be the ones needed to show the significance of the changes for future U.S. security and our activities in the new world environment in which we find ourselves. That is, the examination would take place "from the bottom up," even though decision-making based on realization of the potential significance of the changes might take place "top down."

The net assessments must explore the significance of the changes we are seeing today. As was observed at the beginning of this paper, they cannot *predict* what will come about, but they can alert the top levels of the government to the changes that are taking place, so that anticipatory strategic planning can begin. There have been arguments within the discipline about whether net assessments are "pulled" by events, in an explanatory mode, or whether they might "push" events by creating insights in the using community that heighten the realization of the need for action. In the former case, sponsors request the assessments and furnish the resources for them. In the latter case, the assessors may have to take the initiative. The latter circumstance may be the governing one now. The problem, if that is so, is where to find the resources for the necessary initiatives.

ANNEX A

NET ASSESSMENT SYMPOSIUM

Institute for Defense Analyses
May 22, 1990

Co-sponsored by
The President of IDA
and
The Director of Net Assessment, DoD

Discussion will be held at the SECRET security level

AGENDA

0900-0910	Introduction	(b) (7)(E) [redacted]

I. CONCEPT OF NET ASSESSMENT

0910-1000	Opening remarks by discussion leader	(b) (7)(E) [redacted]
1000-1015	Break	
1015-1130	Discussion	

Session should address the following points:

--What is net assessment?
--How is net assessment related to global issues?
--Goals of net assessment
--Where is net assessment being applied?
--How does net assessment differ from other types of analysis?
--Striking examples of completed net assessments
--Underlying problems of net assessment
--Lessons learned

II. CHANGING ISSUES FOR NET ASSESSMENT

1130-1200 Opening remarks by discussion leader [redacted] (b) (7)(C)

1200-1215 Break

1215-1330 Working lunch and Discussion

Session should address the following points:

--Changes in the national security environment

--Changes in military, economic and political issues

--New regional areas for net assessment

--Fundamental challenges around the world for net assessment

III. NET ASSESSMENT IN THE FUTURE

1330-1400 Opening remarks by discussion leader [redacted] (b) (7)(E)

1400-1500 Discussion

1500-1515 Break

1515-1630 Discussion

Session should address the following points:

--What types of net assessment are most needed (e.g. net technical assessment, net economic assessment, etc.) based on recent global changes?

--Priorities in future net assessments

--Important net assessments involving the armed forces

--Important net assessments not involving the armed forces

--Should process of net assessment be altered?

--How can the defense and intelligence communities work more closely to produce balanced net assessment?

--How can other government organizations and the intelligence community work more closely on net assessment?

--Next steps?

1630 Adjourn

ANNEX B

(b) (7)(C), (b) (7)(E)