

From: [redacted] Director's Message to the Work Force [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2004 1:45 PM
To: NSA/CSS Work Force
Subject: (U) DIRgram 325: "The Future of U.S. Intelligence"

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(b) (3) - P.L. 86-36

(U) It would be hard for any of us to ignore the current national debate on the future of the U.S. Intelligence Community (IC). We especially tend to be swept up into it, as we often have professional knowledge of the subjects being discussed, and any outcomes are likely to affect us personally. Then, too, there is concern that the Nation get this right. We, perhaps more than others, know how important intelligence is to the security and liberty of Americans.

(U) As you might expect, I've been involved in a series of discussions with a variety of audiences on this very subject. My testimony to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI) is at:

[redacted]

It's not clear to me, yet, how this will all come out, but I can share with you some general thoughts:

(U//~~FOUO~~) NSA in the Discussion: First of all, when NSA enters the discussion, the consistent theme of all is that nothing we do should reduce the level of support we now provide. Everyone emphasizes their great reliance on us and admonishes, "First, do no harm" in terms of SIGINT and information assurance. You can see this publicly reflected in the comments of the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, former DCI Tenet, and others.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Turf, Autonomy, and Cohesion: Frequently, elements of the current debate are characterized as "bureaucratic politics" and "protecting turf." Actually, there's far less of that and far more of trying to decide the right balance between cohesion of the whole and autonomy for the parts in the IC. This is a classic dilemma for any complex organization (and the IC certainly is that), and the best equilibrium isn't always obvious. Lashing up CIA's Counter Terrorism Center (CTC) more tightly with the community's Terrorist Threat Integration Center (TTIC) seems a "no-brainer" until one sees that this could [redacted]

[redacted] We all want National Intelligence Estimates to be as authoritative as possible, and yet we also want to preserve "competitive analysis" throughout the community, especially in departmental intelligence offices (like the Defense Intelligence Agency or State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research). The concepts needn't be mutually exclusive, but reconciling them isn't easy either.

(b) (3) - 50 USC 3507 OGA

(U//~~FOUO~~) Consensus and Authority: There is one issue, though, that seems central. I think it can be fairly said that for most of the past half century, the U.S. Intelligence Community has been governed under the broad principle of consensus. That has not been bad, since it reflected a careful (and practical) balancing of interests, needs, requirements, and resources across a variety of competing agencies and departments. If nothing else, the concept of a National Intelligence Director moves from the consensus model to one with much sharper lines of responsibility and authority. My personal view is that, once we have decided to have an NID, he must

be adequately empowered to govern, coordinate, and lead the community he heads and have direct authority over it.

(U//~~FOUO~~) NSA: Bi-cultural, Bi-modal, and Effective: NSA has always had a split personality: by charter a national agency, but equally by charter embedded in the Department of Defense; a workforce that has historically comprised military and civilian personnel in equal measure; a combat support agency with equal responsibilities to the State Department, White House, and other policymakers. This duality worked especially well under the consensus governance approach, as it allowed the agency to easily "shift its weight" as the consensus itself shifted over time. My current objective is to make the duality work equally well under an empowered NID even if the NID exercises more direct authority over the National Security Agency. We know too well the powerful synergies of information assurance and the aggressive combining of what we used to call national and tactical SIGINT into a unitary, self-aware, and self-synchronizing cryptologic system to allow it to be separated, re-segmented, and re-compartmented.

(U) None of these thoughts dictates in detail the future shape of the American Intelligence Community. But this does represent some of my key beliefs as we participate in the dialogue. This is not easy work, and I'd welcome your thoughts as this debate moves forward. In the meantime, we need to keep our eye on the ball and remember that the most important job we have is defending America, today, right now! Don't let the discussions distract us, and, above all, don't let them be the source of discouragement. The Nation is still counting on us.

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Director

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