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James E. Connor File: Intel series, to SE, F. "Rockefeller Com Recs - Implementation (S)".

THE WHITE HOUSE

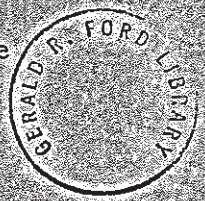
WASHINGTON

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.

September 12, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: DONALD RUMSFELD
FROM: JIM CONNOR *JEC*
SUBJECT: THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY

This memorandum describes current problems in the intelligence community and suggests some solutions for them.



BACKGROUND

One of the most serious fallouts of Watergate was that the intelligence community became a topic for Congressional investigation, public and press debate. Starting with CIA links to Watergate, the issue has expanded to:

- ... CIA involvement in domestic affairs
- ... Questions of illegal or improper behavior such as assassinations
- ... Disregard of Presidential orders (the toxins case)
- ... Poor management of resources and duplication of effort.

The President's response to date has been to appoint the Rockefeller Commission to look at those situations in which the CIA violated the prohibition on domestic activities. The Commission completed its report last spring. The President then directed that the recommendations of the Rockefeller Commission and the Murphy Commission be consolidated. This exercise has been under way for two months. The attached memorandum (Tab A) shows the progress of that effort.

CURRENT SITUATION

Two Congressional committees are holding investigations ranging from assassinations to expenditures. They are demanding classified material from the Executive Branch and promptly leaking them to the press. By common agreement, the Central Intelligence Agency is demoralized.

Other U. S. intelligence agencies are protecting themselves either by cutting off ties with CIA or by leaking information which will portray their own operations favorably. Foreign intelligence agencies have curtailed contacts with the CIA and other American intelligence agencies, thus eliminating a major source of our own information. There is no effective mechanism within the White House or elsewhere in the Federal Government to untangle the situation and to restore the vitality of the intelligence system.

Unless steps are taken soon to deal effectively with the situation, the outlook will worsen. Church and Pike have latched on to the issue and are using it as a platform for furthering their political ambitions. There is no evidence that they intend to act responsibly or that they will restrain their efforts in order to preserve a functioning intelligence community. Indeed, all of the evidence is to the contrary. Attempts at negotiating in good faith with both committees have ended in failure. The most recent examples are Church's moves on the toxin issue and Pike's efforts on the Yom Kippur War. Church seems moving toward a conclusion that assassinations were basically exercises conducted by the Eisenhower and Nixon Administrations. In between there was an eight year interlude when the CIA acted as a rogue elephant. Otis Pike is attacking Secretary Kissinger in order to advance his own New York Senate candidacy. Yesterday, for example, he attempted to unilaterally declassify information which was specifically given to him on the agreement that it would not be declassified without our consent.

If the present course is continued, the following outcomes are likely:

- ... On the assassination issue, the involvement of the Democratic Administrations will be ignored or at best underplayed considerably, while the involvement of a Republican Administrations will be highlighted.
- ... Henry Kissinger will be put into a position in which all of his actions, past and future, will be called into question.
- ... The Administration will be characterized in the press as faceless bureaucrats resisting the honest attempts of Congressional committees to get at the truth.



- ... There will be increased demoralization of the entire intelligence apparatus.
- ... Suspicion of the Administration's motives will grow among liberal and moderate elements.
- ... Eventually, charges will come from the conservative wing of the Republican Party that the President has failed to protect the intelligence community.

Thus, if left unattended, the intelligence issue can blossom into a major political liability both before the Convention and after.

THE ISSUES

From the President's perspective there are two broad issues. First, how should the President organize the intelligence community so that future abuses are prevented and the community is responsive to his needs? Second, how should the President respond to the political assault on the intelligence community now being made in the media and in the Congress?

Organizing the Intelligence Community

The question of organizing the intelligence community is one that has been under study for years. The views of most of the actors frequently coincide, not surprisingly, with their institutional positions. From the President's perspective, it is not necessary to examine all of the issue in detail, rather he can focus on the question of responsibility for intelligence matters at the highest level. The question can be most broadly phrased as:

Should the President have a principal intelligence official located in the White House or Executive Office of the President whose role is to oversee, coordinate and perhaps even manage the activities of the intelligence community agencies?

The concept of an intelligence czar is usually presented in one of two forms:

- Modification of the present "two-hat" role of the DCI which will enhance his status but retain his operational role in CIA.



--Separation of the roles of DCI and Director of CIA.

The former approach could be accomplished within the present legislative framework. Since the latter would require separate legislation, it would entail intensive Congressional debate and the attendant risk that the legislation would be so distorted that it would reduce the effectiveness of the independent DCI.

In general, those who support the concept of an intelligence czar, whether with one hat or two, argue that an overseer is necessary to:

- Insure rational management of the community and eliminate duplication and waste.
- Insure responsiveness to the President's requirements for intelligence.

Those who question the utility of a czar point out that:

- A large share of our intelligence assets are used to supply information of a tactical nature to battlefield commanders or of a strategic nature to help in weapons design. The concept of an intelligence community, they claim, is attractive at first glance, however, the real activities of the community are so diverse that no single individual in the White House or Executive Office could manage or coordinate these diverse functions.

An alternative way of achieving some degree of oversight and coordination (but not management) would be to expand the role of the National Security Council by enlarging its intelligence committee and by giving it a broader charter in looking at the operation and effectiveness of intelligence programs in agencies and departments. This approach has been suggested by some of the President's advisers in the memo from Buchen, Lynn and Kissinger. It should be noted, however, that Jim Schlesinger and Admiral Anderson both have reservations about the expansion of NSCIC and their views are attached at Tab B.



Should the President wish to go the route of expanding NSCIC he has the choice of doing so now or waiting until a review of the entire organization of the intelligence community is completed. It is important to note, however, that the question of the expansion of the role of NSCIC has political as well as organizational overtones. Such expansion would be the equivalent of giving Secretary Kissinger a third hat. Both Church and Pike could be expected to discredit the President's organizational move by attacking the Secretary personally and on the basis of past actions and policies.

A third organizational question is the role of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. Internally this appears to be the least controversial. The President's advisors have agreed upon a draft Executive Order which would expand PFIAB's role. The very lack of controversy in this area should serve as a warning signal. PFIAB is the institution that most of the people here are comfortable with. Because it is part-time it does not threaten any of the existing territories. Critics will pick this up quite easily and may charge that such a move is ineffectual and cosmetic. Before the President reaches a decision on expanding PFIAB's charter through an Executive Order, he probably ought to consider the option of creating a separate institution which would not bear PFIAB's past history of relative ineffectiveness.

The Political Issue

As mentioned earlier, a great deal of the problem now at hand can be related to partisan or personal politics. Our strategy to date has been essentially a low profile one. We have left the issues in the hands of the lawyers and the community professionals. Each day Church and Pike win the battle of the headlines. And this will not change until we recognize that the battle is essentially a political one rather than one of legal proprieties. The President must decide how he wishes to wage the political battle. His choices are twofold:

- ... He can enter the fray himself using the power and prestige of his office to draw the issue and to mobilize public opinion on his behalf.
- ... He can choose someone to wage that battle for him, thus preserving his own flexibility.



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Should the President decide on the former route, it will be necessary internally to develop a clear and concise game plan. Such a plan would include Presidential speeches, direct Presidential contact with influential groups and the press, as well as a major effort on the part of Senior Administration and White House officials to convey to the press the President's viewpoint. On the other hand, should the President decide to rely upon another individual, it is necessary to determine first who that individual should be. Again, there are two choices:

- ... Someone from within the Administration relatively closely involved with intelligence community matters, or
- ... Someone from outside the Administration or at least someone who has not to date been closely involved with intelligence community matters.

The latter course clearly seems preferable. The Administration's major strength in this political battle is that it was in no way involved with events of the 50's, 60's or 70's which are now causing such public concern. Our only stake is in maintaining a vital intelligence community and avoiding compromising sources and methods of intelligence gathering. The President has no reputation to protect and thus his reluctance to conceal information or drag out hearings cannot be attributed to base motives. Any individual who is chosen to speak for the President on these subjects should be able to make the same kind of claim and be believed. If it is decided to use someone other than the President, it will still be necessary to work out some kind of plan to insure that the political battle is fought comprehensively and effectively.

RECOMMENDATION

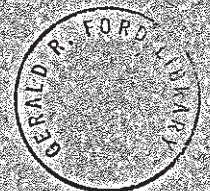
My personal recommendation on the preceding issues is as follows:

- Defer decisions on the organization question for the time being. This would include decision to issue Executive Orders even in the relatively non-controversial areas such as PFIA. We will not get a great deal of political credit for these kinds of decisions, and they are in fact very difficult ones to make wisely. For that reason they should not be made in haste. Moreover, since they will not be seen as effective political responses, there is no pressure to make them quickly.



--I would next suggest that the President choose an individual who will fight the political battle for him. An ideal choice would be someone who could combine the stature of George Shultz with the political sophistication of Mel Laird. The individual chosen could be designated as Counsellor to the President for Intelligence Affairs. He would not have direct management responsibility for the political community, nor would he expect or even want to serve in the ongoing role of intelligence czar for the White House. His grant of authority from the President however for the time in which he was engaged in his activities would have to be quite broad. He would not involve himself with the operational matters of the intelligence community but the heads of individual agencies would be expected to report to him on questions of Congressional testimony. As a final task he might be asked to recommend to you a new structure for the intelligence community. He should keep that activity, however, quite separate from the political activities. In fact, I would suggest he do little if anything on that issue until the political picture is much clearer than it is right now.

Attachments



WA: Office of Staff Secretary (James E. Connor): Memo to Asst to the Prez (Donald
Rumsfeld)

advice on next steps to meet infid scandal

Sept 12, 1975

Source: front



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