

# THE CREATION OF THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY:

## FOUNDING DOCUMENTS



### A BILL

To promote the national security by providing for a National Defense Establishment, which shall be administered by a Secretary of National Defense, and for a Department of the Army, a Department of the Navy, and a Department of the Air Force within the National Defense Establishment, and for the coordination of the activities of the National Defense Establishment with other departments and agencies of the Government concerned with the national security.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SHORT TITLE

That this Act may be cited as the



The Creation of the Intelligence Community:

# FOUNDING DOCUMENTS |

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# MISSION STATEMENTS



The Historical Collections Division (HCD) of CIA's Information Management Services is responsible for executing the Agency's Historical Review Program. This program seeks to identify and de-classify collections of documents that detail the Agency's analysis and activities relating to historically significant topics and events. HCD's goals include increasing the usability and accessibility of historical collections. HCD also develops release events and partnerships to highlight each collection and make it available to the broadest audience possible.

The mission of HCD is to:

- Promote an accurate, objective understanding of the information and intelligence that has helped shape major US foreign policy decisions.
- Broaden access to lessons-learned, presenting historical material that gives greater understanding to the scope and context of past actions.
- Improve current decision-making and analysis by facilitating reflection on the impacts and effects arising from past foreign policy decisions.
- Showcase CIA's contributions to national security and provide the American public with valuable insight into the workings of its government.
- Demonstrate the CIA's commitment to the Open Government Initiative and its three core values: Transparency, Participation, and Collaboration.



The History Staff in the CIA Center for the Study of Intelligence fosters understanding of the Agency's history and its relationship to today's intelligence challenges by communicating instructive historical insights to the CIA workforce, other US Government agencies, and the public. CIA historians research topics on all aspects of Agency activities and disseminate their knowledge through publications, courses, briefings and web-based products. They also work with other Intelligence Community historians on publication and education projects that highlight interagency approaches to intelligence issues. Lastly, the CIA History Staff conducts an ambitious program of oral history interviews that are invaluable for preserving institutional memories that are not captured in the documentary record.



### **The VC-54C *Sacred Cow***

When President Franklin D. Roosevelt flew to the Casablanca Conference in 1943 on board a commercial Boeing 314 Clipper Ship, he became the first U.S. president to fly while in office. Concerned about relying upon commercial airlines to transport the president, the USAAF leaders ordered the conversion of a military aircraft to accommodate the special needs of the Commander in Chief.

After encountering difficulties with converting a C-87A transport, the USAAF arranged with Douglas Aircraft to construct a new transport aircraft specifically for presidential use. Nicknamed the *Sacred Cow*, this VC-54C became the first military aircraft to transport a U.S. president when President Roosevelt took it to the USSR for the Yalta Conference in February 1945.

On 26 July 1947, President Truman signed the National Security Act of 1947 while on board the *Sacred Cow*. This act established the Air Force as an independent service, making the *Sacred Cow* the "birthplace" of the USAF.

*Extracted and quoted from: The National Museum of the US Air Force*

# THE FOUNDING OF THE POST-WWII US INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY

*Its Tortuous Creation Initially Revealed in Eight Hundred Newly Declassified  
Documents Released by CIA's Information Management Services/Historical Collections  
Division at a special Release Event at Culver Academies, Culver, Indiana, 14 May 2009*

Elizabeth Bancroft

AS WORLD WAR II WAS COMING TO A CLOSE, General William Donovan, head of the Office of Strategic Services – the wartime intelligence agency run by the War Department – put forth a plan to continue intelligence activities as an independent agency reporting directly to the President. The need was recognized, but his proposal as presented, met a cautious, chilly reception. Other senior US officials began debating the closing, restructuring, and creation of new agencies or internal intelligence-gathering divisions within existing arms of the government (often their own agencies or military branches), to form a new, centralized, post-war US Intelligence Agency.

These plans faced a major obstacle: a skeptical Harry Truman, as an unenthusiastic new President distrustful of post-war secret intelligence activities becoming a permanent government function. As his first decision, Truman had little hesitation in marshaling support for shuttering OSS at war's end. But in its absence, the State Department, the Navy, and the War Department recognized that a secret information vacuum loomed, triggering calls and discussions for the creation of something to replace a wartime intelligence service...something different from OSS...to take over in 1946.

Showing the need for a new, centralized capability, and arriving at its creation, was not easy. It required skillful diplomacy, awareness of openly or secretly coveted activities or interests by existing military, FBI, State, and other entities, and the desire to shape any new agency so it would work seamlessly with, and support, existing military capabilities

and enterprises. These *previously released* documents alert researchers to some of the plans and suggestions that were colored by political expediency, conflicting goals, personal antipathy to all forms of intelligence, and turf battles among existing Intelligence Community players...all of it overlaid by the widespread recognition that an expanded, permanent, centralized intelligence group was urgently needed to face the post-War world.

This rich mix of declassified historic material weaves a fascinating story of the twists and turns in communications and events that culminated in CIA's creation. They were thus the perfect tools for a public symposium jointly sponsored by CIA's Historical Collections Division and the Culver Academies' Global Studies Institute on 14 May 2009. This release event hosted more than 300 students, faculty, and guests at the Academies' Indiana campus. The symposium, titled *Creating Global Intelligence: The Creation of the US Intelligence Community and Lessons for the 21st Century*, spotlighted the public release of more than 800 declassified documents from the late 1940s to the early 1950s. The documents are a montage of notes, letters, memoranda, radio bulletins, briefings, minutes, routing slips, drafts, reports, speech transcripts, directives and executive orders. They display the considerable political and legal finesse required to assess the plans, suggestions, maneuvers, and actions that ultimately led to the establishment of the Central Intelligence Agency and other national security entities possessing special safeguards to protect civil liberties.

*It was the intent of Congress in establishing CIA to establish an independent agency which would be the focal point of all foreign intelligence information, to correlate and evaluate all such information and to disseminate the product to the necessary Government officials. The Congress felt it had conferred the statutory authority necessary for CIA to perform these functions, even though it left broad direction largely to the NSC and the President. We believe there is ample authority latent in the law, and that adequate directives will permit CIA to fulfill the role which, even now, the Congress believes the Agency is playing as an essential element in the national defense and security.*

Lawrence R. Houston/2/  
Walter L. Pforzheimer

Memorandum From the General Counsel (Houston) and the Legislative Liaison Officer of the Central Intelligence Agency (Pforzheimer) to the Executive of the Central Intelligence Agency (Shannon) Washington, 27 September 1949.

This symposium was particularly important because it provided two beginnings. For scholars, the public, and the students, the event presented the first ‘beginning’—the many steps that led to the founding of CIA, highlighted through declassified documents, one convoluted step after another. The second ‘beginning’ fell to the young symposium participants, for whom this was the first time they had heard official government and academic experts discuss the creation of the modern intelligence establishment, and the first time they had seen or worked with newly declassified national security and intelligence documents. It also provided exposure to some of the existing, and occasionally bewildering, intelligence war year acronyms and entities: FBIS, CIG, ICAPS, IAC, CIA, SSU, OSO, OSS, NIA, DCID, NSCID, IAB.<sup>1</sup> Symposium participants were able to glimpse the give-and-take required by military branches, government agencies, Congress, and the White House, to establish duties, responsibilities, personnel, leadership, reporting, funding, and physical locations for an entirely new agency...today’s independent CIA.

Christine Burke, a Culver Academies Global Scholar, opened the event by saying that reading the declassified documents was “like watching history come to life.” She commended CIA for making the documents available to the Culver students, noting that reading first-hand accounts of historical events is “a lot more intriguing than just reading out of a textbook.” CIA Chief Historian David Robarge kicked off the event by describing how the United States’ intelligence requirements after World War II interacted with political, legal, and institutional forces leading to the overhaul of the US national security apparatus. These activities ushered the passage of the National Security Act of 1947, which created a National Security Council, a Secretary of Defense, a statutory Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Department of the Air Force, and a Central Intelligence Agency.

Other speakers included NSA Chief Historian Dr. David Hatch, who provided a presentation on how inter-service rivalries in the field of communications intelligence created the underpinnings for the creation of the National Security Agency. Dr. David Barrett, Professor of Political Science, Villanova University, described how the relationship between Congress and the Intelligence Community has evolved since 1947; and Eugene Poteat, President of the Association of Former Intelligence Officers, gave a personal perspective of the role of intelligence in informing senior US policymakers.

Dr. John Buggeln, Director of the Global Studies Institute and host for the symposium, closed the event noting that the program contributed to the school’s goal of providing students a forum for learning about significant events that shaped the country, and our relations worldwide.

Each symposium attendee received a CD-ROM containing the released documents—providing detailed insight into the complex issues senior US Government officials grappled with in establishing the Intelligence Community.

<sup>1</sup> FBIS – Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service; CIG – Central Intelligence Group; ICAPS – Interagency Coordinating and Planning Staff; IAC – Intelligence Advisory Committee; CIA – Central Intelligence Agency; SSU – Strategic Services Unit, War Department; OSO – Office of Special Operations; OSS – Office of Strategic Services; NIA – National Intelligence Authority; DCID – Director of Central Intelligence Directive; NSCID – National Security Council Intelligence Directive; and IAB – Intelligence Advisory Board.





L-R: David Robarge, CIA Historian; David Hatch, NSA Historian; Eugene Poteat, President, AFIO; David Barrett, Prof. of Pol. Sci., Villanova Univ.; John Buggeln, Director, Global Studies Institute.

*History balances the frustration of “how far we have to go” with the satisfaction of “how far we have come.” It teaches us tolerance for the human shortcomings and imperfections which are not uniquely of our generation, but of all time.*

—Lewis F. Powell, Jr. US Supreme Court Justice

# THE CORNERSTONE BOX

President Dwight D. Eisenhower at the cornerstone laying ceremony and installation of a copper-covered steel time capsule at the new CIA Headquarters Building, Langley, Virginia, 3 November 1959.



## Contents of the Cornerstone box include:

- Memorandum for President Franklin D. Roosevelt from Major General William J. Donovan, Director of the Office of Strategic Services, dated 18 November 1944, regarding the establishment of a permanent centralized intelligence service and Memorandum from President Roosevelt to General Donovan, dated 5 April 1944, directing that General Donovan discuss his plan with the appropriate officials of the Government.
- President Harry S. Truman's Executive Letter of 22 January 1946, establishing the National Intelligence Authority and the Central Intelligence Group.
- Statement of General (then Lieutenant General) Hoyt S. Vandenberg, Director of Central Intelligence, before the Senate Committee on Armed Services, on 29 April 1947, in support of the sections of the proposed National Security Act of 1947 to establish the Central Intelligence Agency.
- A Text and Explanation of Statutes and Executive Orders relating specifically to the Central Intelligence Agency, including Enabling and Appropriations Acts for the construction of the new CIA Building.
- Reproduction of the CIA seal and its official description.
- "William J. Donovan and the National Security." A speech by Allen W. Dulles, Director of Central Intelligence, to the Erie County Bar Association, Buffalo, New York, 4 May 1959.
- An aerial photograph of the area of the CIA Building site.
- Drawings of the CIA Building as it will appear when completed.
- The Program, a recording, and photographs of the Cornerstone Ceremony.
- Microfilm copies of daily and weekly newspapers of 3 November 1959.

# CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE:

## ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION—HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Editor Michael Warner  
CIA History Staff

### HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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*“...what have appeared to be the most striking successes have often, if they are not rightly used, brought the most overwhelming disasters in their train, and conversely the most terrible calamities have, if bravely endured, actually turned out to benefit the sufferers.”*

—Polybius, *The Rise of the Roman Empire*, Book III, 7

THE EXPLOSIONS AT PEARL HARBOR still echoed in Washington when President Harry Truman and Congressional leaders passed the National Security Act of 1947. A joint Congressional investigation just a year earlier had concluded that the Pearl Harbor disaster illustrated America’s need for a unified command structure and a better intelligence system.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the President and many of his aides rightly believed that the surprise attack could have been blunted if the various commanders and departments had coordinated their actions and shared their intelligence. With that thought in mind, the creators of the National Security Act attempted to implement the principles of unity of command and unity of intelligence, fashioning a National Security Council, a Secretary of Defense, a statutory Joint Chiefs of Staff and a Central Intelligence Agency.

In almost the next breath, however, the National Security Act made important concessions to the traditional American distrust of large military establishments and centralized power. The Act (among other qualifications) ensured that the Joint Chiefs would not become a Prussian-style “General Staff,” created an independent air force, and insisted

that the new Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) would have no law enforcement powers. The Act also decreed that the intelligence divisions in the armed services and the civilian departments (what came to be called the “Intelligence Community”) would remain independent of the CIA.

Since 1947, Directors of Central Intelligence (DCIs) have served within the bounds of this ambiguous mandate. They have had the responsibility of coordinating national intelligence collection and production without a full measure of the authority they needed to do so. Many Presidents and Congresses—not to mention DCIs—have expressed their frustration with this ambiguity and have assumed that the solution to the dilemmas it created lay in concentrating more power in the office of the Director of Central Intelligence. This centralizing impulse has prompted various reforms to increase the Director’s ability to lead the Intelligence Community. For years these attempts were made by the National Security Council (NSC) through a series of NSC Intelligence Directives. In the wake of “the time of troubles” for the Intelligence Community in the mid-1970s—marked by investigations into questions about excesses and accountability—three Presidents issued successive executive orders aimed at one goal: rationalizing American intelligence and increasing the DCI’s power. Since the end of the Cold War, Congress itself has taken up the task, repeatedly amending the intelligence sections of the National Security Act.

The various regulations and amendments, however, have not fundamentally altered the “federalist” intelligence structure

created in 1947. Strong centrifugal forces remain, particularly in the Department of Defense and its Congressional allies. Indeed, the case for centralization seems to be countered by historical illustrations of the perils of excessive concentration. In actual practice, the successful end to the Cold War and the lack of any national intelligence disasters since then seem to militate in favor of keeping the existing structure until some crisis proves it to be in dire need of repair.

## REFORM AFTER WORLD WAR II

The Agency began its statutory existence in September 1947—its creation ratifying, in a sense, a series of decisions taken soon after the end of the Second World War.<sup>2</sup> That conflict ended in the summer of 1945 with Washington decisionmakers in broad agreement that the United States needed to reform the intelligence establishment that had grown so rapidly and haphazardly during the national emergency. Nevertheless, when President Truman dissolved the wartime Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in September 1945, he had no clear plan for constructing the peacetime intelligence structure that he and his advisers believed they needed in an atomic age. President Truman wanted the reforms to be part and parcel of the “unification” of the armed services, but the overhaul of the military that the President wanted would take time to push through Congress.<sup>3</sup> In the interim, he created a Central Intelligence Group (CIG) to screen his incoming cables and supervise activities left over from the former OSS.

In early 1946, the White House authorized CIG to evaluate intelligence from all parts of the government, and to absorb the remnants of OSS’s espionage and counterintelligence operations.<sup>4</sup> Initially these disparate components of the new CIG shared little in common except an interest in foreign secrets and a sense that both strategic warning and clandestine activities abroad required “central” coordination. Indeed, these two missions came together in CIG almost by accident. Under

the first two Directors of Central Intelligence, however, CIG and the Truman administration came to realize how strategic warning and clandestine activities complemented one another.

Meanwhile, the military “unification” issue overshadowed intelligence reform in Congressional and White House deliberations. In mid-1946 President Truman called again on Congress to unify the armed services. That April, the Senate’s Military Affairs committee had approved a unification bill that provided for a central intelligence agency, but the draft legislation had snagged in the hostile Naval Affairs committee.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps with that bill in mind, Secretary of War Robert Patterson and Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal in May agreed among themselves that a defense reorganization bill should also provide for a central intelligence agency. President Truman the following month sent Congress the result of the Secretaries’ accord (with modifications of his own), repeating his call for lawmakers to send him a unification bill to sign.<sup>6</sup>

The administration’s judgment that a central intelligence agency was needed soon firmed into a consensus that the new Central Intelligence Group ought to form the basis of this new intelligence agency. Indeed, CIG continued to accrue missions and capabilities. Oversight of the CIG was performed by a committee called the National Intelligence Authority (NIA), comprising the Secretaries of State, War, and Navy, joined by the President’s chief military adviser, Admiral William Leahy. National Intelligence Authority Directive 5, issued on 8 July 1946, provided the DCI with the basic implementation plan for the broad scope of powers envisioned in President Truman’s charter for CIG. Indeed, it was NIAD-5 that created the real difference between OSS—an operations office with a sophisticated analytical capability—and CIG, a truly (albeit fledgling) national intelligence service authorized to perform strategic analysis and to conduct, coordinate, and control clandestine activities abroad.

NIAD-5 represented perhaps the most expansive charter ever granted to a Director of Central Intelligence. It allowed



## 1942

**13 June:** President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs a military order establishing the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and naming William J. Donovan as its Director. Donovan remained a civilian until 24 March 1943, when he was appointed brigadier general. He advanced to the rank of major general on 10 November 1944.



CIG to “centralize” research and analysis in “fields of national security intelligence that are not being presently performed or are not being adequately performed.”<sup>7</sup> NIAD-5 also directed the DCI to coordinate all US foreign intelligence activities “to ensure that the over-all policies and objectives established by this Authority are properly implemented and executed.” The National Intelligence Authority through this directive ordered the DCI to conduct “all organized Federal espionage and counter-espionage operations outside the United States and its possessions for the collection of foreign intelligence information required for the national security.”

In NIAD-5, the National Intelligence Authority determined that many foreign intelligence missions could be “more efficiently accomplished centrally” and gave CIG the authority to accomplish them. This in effect elevated CIG to the status of being the primary foreign intelligence arm of the US government. This mandate did not, however, give CIG the controlling role in intelligence analysis that DCI Hoyt Vandenberg had sought. The NIA’s authorization was carefully phrased to allay fears that the DCI would take control of departmental intelligence offices; the Cabinet departments were not about to subordinate their own limited analytical capabilities to an upstart organization. In addition, NIAD-5 did not force a consolidation of clandestine activities under CIG control. Indeed, the Army defended the independence of its Intelligence Division’s own collection operations by arguing that NIAD-5 gave CIG control only over “organized” foreign intelligence operations.

### NATIONAL SECURITY ACT OF 1947

Congress initially paid scant attention to the new Central Intelligence Group. Indeed, CIG had been established with no appropriations and authority of its own precisely to keep it beneath Congressional scrutiny. As CIG gained new authority in 1946 and the White House gained confidence in its potential, however, a consensus emerged in Congress that postwar military reforms would not be complete without a simultaneous modernization of American intelligence capabilities.

The budding consensus even survived the death of the Truman administration’s cherished unification bill in 1946. Ironically, prospects for unification only brightened when the opposition Republicans subsequently swept into control of the Congress in that year’s elections, taking over the committee chairmanships and displacing powerful Democrats who had made themselves (in Harry Truman’s words) “the principal stumbling blocks to unification.”<sup>8</sup> With the Presi-



Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles at Cornerstone Box ceremony for new CIA building, Langley, Virginia, 3 November 1959.

dent’s goal of military modernization suddenly in sight, the White House firmly told DCI Vandenberg that enabling legislation for CIG would remain a small part of the defense reform bill then being re-drafted by the President’s aides, and that the intelligence section would be kept as brief as possible in order to ensure that none of its details hampered the prospects for unification.<sup>9</sup>

This tactic almost backfired. When President Truman sent his new bill forward in February 1947, the brevity of its intelligence provisions had the effect of attracting—not deflecting—Congressional scrutiny. Members of Congress eventually debated almost every word of the intelligence section, and made various adjustments. Ultimately, however, Congress passed what was essentially the White House’s draft with important sections transferred (and clarified in the process) from Truman’s 22 January 1946 directive establishing CIG—thus ratifying the major provisions of that directive. Thus the Central Intelligence Agency would be an independent agency under the supervision of the National Security Council; it would conduct both analysis and clandestine activities, but would have no policymaking role and no law enforcement powers; its Director would be confirmed by the Senate and could be either a civilian or a military officer.

What did Congress believe the new CIA would do? Testimony and debates over the draft bill unmistakably show that the lawmakers above all wanted CIA to provide the proposed

National Security Council—the new organization that would coordinate and guide American foreign and defense policies—with the best possible information on developments abroad. Members of Congress described the information they expected CIA to provide as “full, accurate, and skillfully analyzed”; “coordinated, adequate” and “sound.” Senior military commanders testifying on the bill’s behalf used similar adjectives, saying the CIA’s information should be “authenticated and evaluated”; “correct” and based on “complete coverage.” When CIA provided such information, it was believed, the NSC would be able to assess accurately the relative strengths and weaknesses of America’s overseas posture and adjust policies accordingly.<sup>10</sup>

Congress guaranteed CIA’s independence and its access to departmental files in order to give it the best chance to produce authoritative information for the nation’s policymakers. CIA was to stand outside the policymaking departments of the government, the better to “correlate and evaluate intelligence relating to the national security.”<sup>11</sup> Although other departments and agencies would continue to handle intelligence of national importance, the Agency was the only entity specifically charged by the Act with the duty of producing it. To assist in the performance of this duty, the DCI had the right to “inspect” all foreign intelligence held by other agen-

cies, as well as the right to disseminate it as appropriate. If the DCI happened to be a military officer, then he was to be outside the chain of command of his home service; this would help him resist any temptation to shade his reports to please his superiors.<sup>12</sup> Finally, the Agency was to provide for the US Government such “services of common concern” that the NSC would determine could more efficiently be conducted “centrally.” In practice, this meant espionage and other clandestine activities, as well as the collection of valuable information from open sources and American citizens.

Having approved the placement of these authorities and activities under one head, Congress in 1947 expected that CIA would provide the best possible intelligence and would coordinate clandestine operations abroad. Congress also implicitly assumed that the executive branch would manage CIA and the Intelligence Community with these purposes in mind.<sup>13</sup> After fixing this course in the statute books, Congress stepped back and left the White House and CIA to meet these expectations. This was how Congress resolved the apparent contradiction of creating “central intelligence” that was not centrally controlled. The institution of central intelligence would henceforth steer between the two poles of centralization and departmental autonomy.

## NOT ONLY NATIONAL BUT CENTRAL

Congress passed the National Security Act on 26 July 1947 and President Truman immediately signed it into law. The act gave America something new in the annals of intelligence history; no other nation had structured its foreign intelligence establishment in quite the same way. CIA would be an independent, central agency, but not a controlling one; it would both rival and complement the efforts of the departmental intelligence organizations.<sup>14</sup> This prescription of coordination without control guaranteed friction and duplication of intelligence efforts as the CIA and the departmental agencies pursued common targets, but it also fostered a potentially healthy competition of views and abilities.

The National Security Council guided the Intelligence Community by means of a series of directives dubbed NSCIDs (the acronym stands for National Security Council Intelligence Directive). The original NSCIDs were issued in the months after the passage of the National Security Act. Foremost was NSCID 1, titled “Duties and Responsibilities,” which replaced NIAD-5 and established the basic responsibilities of the DCI and the interagency workings of the Intelligence Community.<sup>15</sup>



The National Security Act was amended on 10 August 1949, to put the service secretaries under the aegis of the defense secretary. At the same time, the National Military Establishment was renamed the Department of Defense.

NSCID 1 did not re-write NIAD-5, but instead started afresh in the light of the debate over the National Security Act and the experience recently gained by the new CIA. Where the earlier document had authorized the DCI to coordinate “all Federal foreign intelligence activities” and sketched the initial outlines of his powers, NSCID 1 had to work within the lines already drawn by Congress and precedent. The Director who emerged from NSCID 1 was more circumscribed in his role and authority than previously. He was now to “make such surveys and inspections” as he needed in giving the NSC his “recommendations for the coordination of intelligence activities.” Nonetheless, the DCI was—in keeping with Congress’ implicit intent in the National Security Act—a substantial presence in the intelligence establishment. NSCID 1 gave the DCI an advisory committee comprising the heads of the departmental intelligence offices, and told him to “produce” intelligence (but to avoid duplicating departmental functions in doing so). The type of intelligence expected of him and his Agency was “national intelligence,” a new term for the information that the National Security Act called “intelligence relating to the national security.”<sup>16</sup> The DCI was also to perform for the benefit of the existing agencies such “services of common concern” as the NSC deemed could best be provided centrally. The NSC left the particulars of these responsibilities to be specified in accompanying NSCIDs (which eventually numbered 2 through 15 by the end of the Truman administration in 1953).<sup>17</sup>

Under this regime, DCIs were faced with contradictory mandates: they *could* coordinate intelligence, but they *must not* control it. Since the prohibitions in the statute and the NSCIDs were so much clearer than the permissions, every DCI naturally tended to steer on the side of looser rather than tighter oversight of common Intelligence Community issues. Because of this tendency to emphasize coordination instead of control, CIA never quite became the integrator of US intelligence that its presidential and congressional parents had envisioned. The DCI never became the manager of the Intelligence Community, his Agency never won the power to “inspect” the departments’ operational plans or to extract



CIA office workers, circa 1950.

community-wide consensus on disputed analytical issues, and CIA never had authority over all clandestine operations of the US Government.

## REVISIONS AND OVERSIGHT

This federalized intelligence structure did not satisfy the White House. Indeed, presidents from Dwight Eisenhower through Richard Nixon sought to adjust the NSCIDs to improve the functioning of the Intelligence Community, primarily by pushing successive DCIs to exert more control over common community issues and programs. President Eisenhower paid particular attention to this issue, approving in 1958 the first major revisions of NSCID 1. The September 1958 version of the revised directive added a preamble stressing the need for efficiency across the entire national intelligence effort, and began its first section by declaring “The Director of Central Intelligence shall coordinate the foreign intelligence activities of the United States...”

The September 1958 version of NSCID 1 also added a section on “community responsibilities” that listed the duties of

1 October: President Harry S. Truman’s Executive Order 9621 abolishes the OSS and transfers its functions to the State and War Departments.

1945





the DCI to foster an efficient Intelligence Community and to ensure the quality of the intelligence information available to the US Government. It also emphasized to the existing departments and agencies their responsibilities to assist the DCI in these tasks. To this end, the new NSCID 1 created the United States Intelligence Board (USIB), a panel chaired by the DCI—with the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence (the DDCI) representing CIA—to coordinate a range of cooperative activities through a network of interagency committees. USIB soon built a sophisticated set of procedures, prompting former CIA Executive Director Lyman Kirkpatrick in 1973 to declare that “the USIB structure provides the community with probably the broadest and most comprehensive coordinating mechanism in the history of any nation’s intelligence activities.”<sup>18</sup>

In 1971 President Nixon turned to the topic of intelligence reform and issued a directive that precipitated the first major revision of NSCID 1 in over a decade. In the spirit of President Eisenhower’s earlier initiatives, Nixon authorized a full-dress study of Intelligence Community cooperation, with an emphasis on cutting its costs and increasing its effectiveness. A committee headed by James Schlesinger of the Office of Management and Budget recommended major reforms, among them a greater role for the DCI in managing the Intelligence Community. President Nixon directed the adoption of many of these recommendations in a 5 November 1971 letter to the cabinet secretaries and senior policymakers who oversaw the community’s far-flung components.<sup>19</sup> The NSC issued a revised NSCID 1 in February 1972 to disseminate the new guidance to the community.

The new version retained much of the earlier text, while adding that the DCI had “four major responsibilities.” He was to plan and review all intelligence activities and spending, submitting annually to the White House the community’s overall “program/budget”; to produce national intelligence for the President and policymakers; to chair all communi-

ty-wide advisory panels, and to establish intelligence requirements and priorities. In addition, the 1972 NSCID 1 established several objectives to guide the DCI in discharging these responsibilities. He was to seek the attainment of greater efficiency, better and more timely intelligence; and, perhaps most of all, “authoritative and responsible leadership for the community.” The provision for DCI authority (albeit limited) over the Intelligence Community budget was new and significant; henceforth all subsequent directives governing the community would place at least one of the DCI’s hands on the collective purse strings.

The years that followed the issuance of the 1972 version of NSCID 1 witnessed dramatic changes in the policy dynamic surrounding the Intelligence Community. For several reasons—many of them related to the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal, but including Agency misdeeds under earlier administrations as well—Congress began to impose itself directly on CIA and other parts of the Intelligence Community in the mid-1970s. The White House responded to the new mood in Congress by acting to protect what it defended as the exclusive prerogatives of the executive branch. Republican and Democratic Presidents had long been content to delegate the chore of overseeing the community to the National Security Council, but President Gerald Ford, concerned that Congress would re-write the statutes undergirding the Intelligence Community, intervened with an executive order that supplanted the earlier NSCIDs.

Executive Order 11905 (18 February 1976) retained much of the language of the 1972 NSCID 1, but added much else as well. Most prominently, it established a lengthy list of restrictions on intelligence activities, which ran the gamut from a prohibition on the perusal of federal tax returns to a ban on “political assassination.” E.O. 11905 also revisited the traditional ground covered by the now-obsolete NSCID 1 series, assigning “duties and responsibilities” to the DCI and the various members of the Intelligence Community.



## 1946

**22 January:** President Truman signs an executive order establishing the Central Intelligence Group to operate under the direction of the National Intelligence Authority. Truman names the first Director of Central Intelligence (DCI), Rear Admiral Sidney W. Souers, USNR, who was sworn in on the following day.



President Ford's executive order did not diverge noticeably, however, from the earlier listings of the DCI's duties. These were now to be: acting as "executive head of the CIA and Intelligence Community staff;" preparing the community's budget, requirements and priorities; serving as "primary adviser on foreign intelligence," and implementing "special activities" (i.e., covert action). Indeed, E.O. 11905 encouraged the DCI to devote more energy to "the supervision and direction of the Intelligence Community." In this spirit, it revived an Eisenhower administration idea and urged the DCI to delegate "the day-to-day operation" of CIA to his Deputy Director for Central Intelligence.

President Jimmy Carter superseded E.O. 11905 with his own Executive Order 12036 barely two years later. The new order retained basically the same (albeit reordered) list of duties for the DCI in his dual role as manager of the Intelligence Community and head of CIA. It also revamped the old United States Intelligence Board, expanding the list of topics on which it was to advise the DCI and renaming it the National Foreign Intelligence Board (NFIB). Where E.O. 12036 differed from preceding directives was in tasking the DCI to oversee the Intelligence Community budget. President Ford's executive order had created a three-member committee, chaired by the DCI, to prepare the budget and, when necessary, to reprogram funding.<sup>20</sup> Under the new provisions of E.O. 12036, however, the DCI now had "full and exclusive responsibility for approval of the National Foreign Intelligence Program budget." These combined powers were somewhat less sweeping than under E.O. 11905, but more concentrated in now being vested in the DCI alone. He would issue guidance to the community for program and budget development, evaluate the submissions of the various agencies, justify them before Congress, monitor implementation, and he could (after due consultation) reprogram funds.

President Ronald Reagan in his turn replaced the Carter directive with Executive Order 12333 (4 December 1981), which remains in effect today. The new order deleted provisions for the NFIB and other boards, allowing the DCI to arrange interagency advisory panels as he needed (DCI William Casey quickly reinstated the NFIB on his own authority). This was, however, almost the only enhancement of the DCI's power in an executive order that otherwise stepped back slightly from the centralization decreed by President Carter. Specifically, E.O. 12333 diluted DCI authority over the National Foreign Intelligence Program budget that E.O. 12036 had briefly strengthened. Where Carter had explicitly made the DCI the manager of the NFIP budgeting process,

Reagan instead outlined a leading role for the DCI in developing the budget, reviewing requests for the reprogramming of funds and monitoring implementation. The change was not dramatic, but it was significant.

Management of the Intelligence Community by executive order during this period did not forestall increased Congressional oversight. In the 1970s both houses of Congress had created permanent intelligence oversight committees and passed legislation to tighten control of covert action. With the renewed polarization of foreign policy debates in the 1980s, both Republican and Democratic officials and lawmakers sought to "protect" intelligence from allegedly unprincipled forces that might somehow co-opt and abuse it to the detri-



On 26 July 1947, President Truman signed the National Security Act of 1947 while on board the *Sacred Cow*, a Douglas C-54 Skymaster (VC-54C) originally configured for President Roosevelt. The Act established the Department of the Air Force as an independent service, making the *Sacred Cow* the "birthplace" of what is now the USAF.

ment of the community and the nation's security. Responding to these concerns, Congress further toughened the new regulatory, oversight, and accountability regime to check the powers and potential for abuses at CIA and other agencies. Congress ensured permanence for these changes by codifying them as amendments to law, particularly to the National Security Act of 1947.

By the late 1980s, Congress's increased oversight role (and its new appetite for finished intelligence) prompted then-DD-CI Robert Gates to comment publicly that CIA "now finds itself in a remarkable position, involuntarily poised nearly

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