

3 June 1947.

Chairman Chan Gurney  
Senate Armed Services Committee  
Senate Office Building  
Washington, 25, D.C.

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My dear Senator Gurney:

Through your courtesy, there has been communicated to me for comment the contents of a letter, dated 2 June 1947, which was written to you by  I had a very pleasant meeting with  on Memorial Day, and we reached substantial agreement on all matters connected with the Central Intelligence Group.

As he noted in his letter to you, there were three points about which  felt some concern. I would like to review briefly my position on them.

had two arguments for his position that the Central Intelligence Agency should be headed by a civilian. The principal argument was concerned with a lack of permanency and continuity in the position of Director. The second was that the Director must be in such a position that he cannot be influenced by any one Department, through fear or favor. We both agreed that there would be no objection to the Director being an officer of the armed services, provided that he serves in a retired status and in a civilian capacity. However, the proposed legislation should specifically provide for this contingency, for the absence of a specified period of service as Director would work an undue hardship upon an officer required to forego his military career to accept this position for an uncertain period of time. This could be remedied by establishing a specific term for the Director. The question of tenure of office seems to have been omitted from the proposed legislation in order that the President might have a free hand in nominating a Director of his own choosing, as he does in the case of other executive positions in the Government.

I informed  that, were the bill passed and were I appointed to the post of Director of the new Agency, I would be willing to retire from active service and consider the position of Director as a career job. I feel sure that  understands that in such a case it must be a career job -- that is, for a specified period. It would be manifestly unfair for me to retire now, with the idea of making the position of Director my career, and then, perhaps, after the next election, be relieved of my post because of a desire to fill it with a political or personal appointee. If I were thus relieved, I would be without a career in the Central Intelligence Agency and foreclosed from returning to the Navy.

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The second point raised in [redacted]'s letter is "that the Agency should have its own independent budget." With that point I am in no disagreement. As I have explained to him, we do, in effect, have our own independent budget at the present time, and no other Department or Agency has control over the funds which the Congress allocates to us in that budget.

The third point is that the Director should report to an individual rather than to a Committee. As I previously stated before the Senate Appropriations Committee, I feel that this is a matter to be determined by the Congress rather than by me. On purely theoretical grounds, it would, of course, be best to report to one individual rather than to a group. However, I can work with a Council equally well, and see no great difference in either solution that Congress may determine. There may be some question as to the wisdom of having the Director of Central Intelligence report to the Secretary of National Defense. This, in effect, might be considered as placing the Agency within the military establishment, which would not, in all probability, be satisfactory to the State Department. They have a great interest in the operations of the Agency, and their contributions in the intelligence field are particularly important in time of peace, when the Foreign Service can operate throughout the world.

As General Donovan stated in his memorandum to you of 7 May 1947, intelligence "must serve the diplomatic as well as the military and naval arms." This can best be done outside the military establishment. As General Donovan stated further, on page ten of his memorandum, "Since the nature of its work requires it to have status, it should be independent of any Department of the Government, (since it is obliged to serve all and must be free of the natural bias of an operating Department.)"

In view of [redacted] remarks and my views expressed above, it is my opinion that there is no necessity to change the wording of Section 102 of S. 750 to restrict the position of Director to a civilian only. It is my feeling that Section 102 should be left in its present form.

I very much appreciate your having given me the opportunity to express my views to you on this subject.

Sincerely yours,

*/ RHN*

*Disp. by Hand of [redacted] 7 June 47*

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Signer's chrono

R. H. HILLENKOETTER  
REAR ADMIRAL, USN  
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP  
INTER-OFFICE ROUTING SLIP  
 (Revised 10 Sept 1946)

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REMARKS: