

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

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TO : WLP  
FROM : MSC  
SUBJECT: Edson Testimony on H.R. 2319.

DATE: 17 June 1947.

#16

1. Attached herewith is the text of the prepared statement of General Merritt A. Edson, USMC, in testifying this morning before the House Expenditures Committee on H.R. 2319. References to CIG are to be found on pages 4, 7, 9 and 10.

2. After reading his prepared statement, General Edson was questioned concerning his testimony on CIG by Representatives Chat Holafield, (D., Cal.), Mitchell Jenkins, (R., Pa.), and John McCormack, (D., Mass.). (Brown of Ohio was absent and Busbey of Illinois left before CIG came up for discussion!) The questions and answers concerning CIG were substantially as follows:

HOLAFIELD: I was quite concerned about your testimony regarding the Central Intelligence Agency — your statement that this could very easily work into a Gestapo or NKVD. In what way does the proposed CIA differ from the present CIG in scope?

EDSON: As I understand it, the CIG is largely a clearing house for all the intelligence information which is collected by the various departments and agencies. There the information is collected, evaluated and disseminated. In that respect, the CIG is an extremely desirable agency. Under no circumstances, however, should the CIG have any domestic police power.

HOLAFIELD: It does not have such power now. Do you think that it would have under this bill?

EDSON: I think there is a possibility that it might. I think that Congress should definitely set forth in this piece of legislation what its intention is for the powers, functions and scope of this Agency.

HOLAFIELD: I agree with you on that point. Your contention, then, is not that the bill goes too far. It is that you feel that it does not go far enough in providing safeguards.

EDSON: That is right.

JENKINS: I think that the matter with which Mr. Holafield is concerned is that nowhere in the provisions of the bill are the functions of the Agency defined. The present functions of the CIG are defined by Executive Order, are they not?

EDSON: Yes.