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CIA deputy calls secrecy vital

"We must come to grips with the very difficult issue of secrecy to protect the investment that we make in our ability to collect, to process and to report on foreign intelligence," the deputy director of central intelligence told a General Session.

Adm. Bobby R. Inman said that legislation to make it a crime to publish the names of U.S. covert foreign intelligence agents and to limit the applicability of the Freedom of Information Act to the Central Intelligence Agency will help but not completely solve the secrecy problem.

"I can't guarantee to you that they will do the job entirely because we are still caught with the psychology of leaks," said Inman.

In response to a question from Charles S. Rowe, chairman of the FOI/First Amendment Working Group of the ANPA Government Affairs Committee, Inman said he does not believe there is "any high likelihood that one will need to use" the agents' identities legislation now before a House-Senate conference committee.

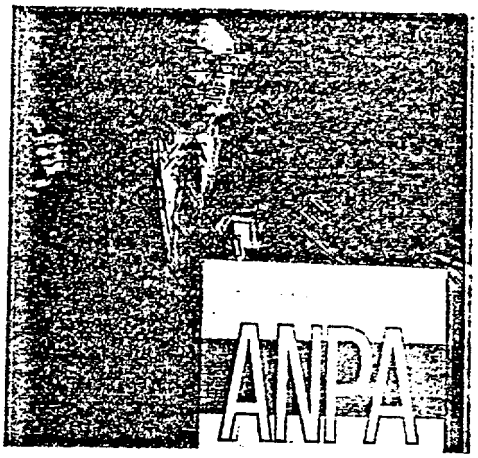
"I am in hopes it will have the deterrent effect," Inman said; to which Rowe, co-publisher and editor of The Free Lance-Star in Fredericksburg, Va., responded, "What you call the deterrent effect, we would call the chilling effect."

Inman urged ANPA to continue its dialogue with intelligence officials on FOIA issues.

Although the administration has said it wants a full exclusion for the CIA from the FOIA, Inman said that as a private citizen he would favor legislation introduced by Sen. John H. Chafee (R-R.I.), providing less than a full exclusion, as "a good compromise."

And a private citizen is what he will become July 1, after 30 years in the Navy. The White House announced less than a week before the Convention that Inman will leave government service. Inman told the publishers he had made the decision to do so in 1980 but had had his "arm . . . twisted severely" to help shape a long-range program to rebuild U.S. intelligence capability.

"I've done that," Inman said, "and it seemed to me now was the right time to get off the train." He denied any disagreements with Reagan and called his working relationship with CIA



Inman decries the "psychology of leaks."

Director William Casey "very good."

The session was named "The State of Intelligence," and Inman rated it "marginal" for some of the kinds of problems the United States can expect to face in the next two decades.

The nation's intelligence and warning capabilities against a surprise attack "from our principal adversary" are better than they have ever been, he said, and U.S. intelligence does well in monitoring military developments. But it does "substantially less well" in the political and economic areas, he added, and "very poorly" in maintaining an "encyclopedic" knowledge about the nations of the world.

He asked publishers to give "strong support" to the program now before Congress to rebuild U.S. intelligence capability. □

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