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Vice Admiral V. P. de Poix, USN
Director, Defense Intelligence Agency
Room 3E258, The Pentagon
Washington, D. C. 20301

Dear Vince:

In connection with your memorandum on the provision (section 16(b)) in the State and USIA authorization bill to reduce the number of Department of Defense personnel attached to military attache, MAAG or military aid missions it is my understanding that the Defense Department has made representations to Chairman Morgan of the House Foreign Affairs Committee in the hope that this section will be stricken by the House members in conference.

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We have determined from the Committee staff that they will hold hearings on the subject of State's authorization. The Senate bill does present problems; however, there has been no guidance as to how the Committee will resolve these differences when they consider the Senate bill. Section 16(b), along with several others, including an amendment by Senator Muskie pertaining to the authority of the ambassador over all civilian personnel within his country of assignment, were the subject of discussion at a meeting of the Legislative Inter-departmental Group at the White House on 7 May. It was agreed at that time that efforts would be made to oppose these provisions in the Senate and if unsuccessful there to attempt to have them stricken from the bill in conference. I believe the most effective argument against the proposed cut in the Defense Attache System is a jurisdictional one--that is that the subject is one for consideration by the Armed Services Committee and should not be included in legislation pertaining to State and USIA.

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I am aware of the sharp cutbacks in the Attache System which have occurred in the past several years and of the Kissinger memorandum of 26 May 1970 that suspended personnel reductions in the Defense Attache System. Also I fully subscribe to the value of attache reporting to both national and departmental needs. I will certainly support the budget levels we have agreed to, and add that we both are trying to increase the productivity of these assets. It would be useful to me in discussing this matter to have a set of examples of the value of attache reporting along the lines that you use in your own defense of the DAS. Can we also show how attache assignments reflect priority requirements for intelligence and representational needs?

Much of the criticism of the Attache System consists of complaints about the quality, not the numbers of attaches. I know you have taken steps to improve this. Can we demonstrate that higher quality personnel are entering the Attache System since the end of the Vietnam war?

If you can provide this support to me through General Graham, I will certainly include it in my presentations to the Congress.

Sincerely,

W. E. Colby

W. E. Colby
Director

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DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Executive Registry

74-3839/1

Bill:

In view of your responsibilities for, and great interest in, the capability of all segments of the Intelligence Community to perform adequately their assigned functions, I thought you would be interested in the enclosed. It is a copy of a memo that I have just dispatched to Al Hall containing an appraisal of the impact of our fiscal 74 DIA personnel reductions on our capability to perform.

I have the uneasy, if admittedly subjective, feeling that we are slicing awfully close to the muscle at a time when it is terribly important to the United States to have a vigorous and exceptionally competent intelligence machine.

Voices
DIRECTOR