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Turner and Carter: Replacing brawn with brain in our intelligence operations.

In From the Cold War

Admiral Stansfield Turner's dismissal of hundreds of clandestine operatives in the CIA Directorate of Operations has made him—without question—one of the most controversial directors in the agency's history. Late last year, Turner summarily removed 820 officers of the clandestine services (some 400 more are to go next month) including the deputy director of operations, William Wells. This 8 percent reduction in the CIA's 15,000 employees shattered CIA morale even more than the Senate investigation by the Church committee two years ago.

The resentment of the victims and the fears of those who may go next should not be surprising. CIA officers are the only U.S. government employees who have neither job tenure nor the right to appeal dismissal—no matter how many years they have worked for the agency.

But all the bloody screams from the CIA's decimated undercover rank and file have obscured the real news behind the Turner slaughter: The intelligence community is making a major shift in policy.

Among the hundreds of purged agents are many Ivy League veterans from the elitist Office of Strategic Services and the CIA's cold-war years. These are the folks who spent far too much time and money figur-

ing out elaborate espionage games, like how to deprive Fidel Castro of his beard, running weird behavior-modification experiments with LSD, or conducting subversive activities against unfriendly governments.

In their stead, there is a new breed of superspook who is rated more for his ability to understand and interpret—rather than manipulate—world events.

What is emerging, finally, under Carter and Turner is the age of the analyst of intelligence—something sadly neglected in the past in favor of clandestine political and paramilitary operations.

When Jimmy Carter took office thirteen months ago, he discovered he had the worst of both worlds: The Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and their fellow sleuths had been cavalierly violating American rights as well as interfering thoughtlessly in the affairs of other countries (assassination plots, "destabilization" of governments, and so on) and only rarely coming up with a decent intelligence product.

To present the president with a rational foreign policy today, national-security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance must know, for example, why French Communist-party boss Georges Marchais suddenly started referring to his social-

ist rivals as "comrades" in mid-January, or what Iraqi leaders had in mind when they strangely decided last week to boycott a summit meeting of hard-line Arabs. And it is vital to know for what long-range purpose the Soviets flew 2,000 Cuban troops to Ethiopia in recent months and whether Japan is likely to stop buying beef from the United States.

And Carter is not the first to view the CIA with great skepticism. So little did Nixon think of intelligence analysts that the invasions of Cambodia and Laos in 1970 and 1971 were ordered without a systematic study—what's called a Special National Intelligence Estimate (SNIE)—and no attention was paid by the CIA command to the assessments on Chile by in-house analysts (who themselves were never told that the covert side was busily undermining the Allende regime).

The U.S. intelligence community not only failed to predict the energy crisis triggered by the 1973 Arab oil embargo but was unable to provide the Nixon administration with a clear picture of available world energy resources. So contemptuous were Nixon and Kissinger of our spy network, they even failed to believe the one good piece of information passed forward to them that year—that the Arabs were planning a massive attack on Israel. Espionage credibility had been seriously damaged the previous year when it turned out U.S. intelligence officers had no idea that the 1972 Soviet grain harvest was a disaster. Nixon, accordingly, had no timely warning that the Russians were about to engage in massive purchases in the United States, badly damaging our own markets. But if he had wanted to, Nixon could have read the less-than-world-shaking study of how the Peruvian fish-meal industry was being affected in 1972 by Pacific Ocean currents that had removed schools of anchovies far away from traditional fish-breeding grounds.

Why is our political-military estimative capability so poor? Surprisingly, it suffers less from lack of information than it does from the disagreement among agencies about what the information means. Studies the agencies provide are so riddled with dissenting opinions that they are reduced to gibberish. Quite early on, Henry Kissinger decided to disregard the political