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on page D-1, D-5

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The Intelligence Community Against Turner

By Benjamin F. Schemmer

THE AMERICAN intelligence community has been suffering from a prolonged, critical illness. Now CIA Director Stansfield Turner may be administering the *coup de grace*.

Stansfield Turner became director of central intelligence with broad, bipartisan congressional support. At the time of his appointment, it generally was thought that the reforms of American intelligence begun under President Ford would receive even more impetus from President Carter. Carter's 1976 campaign themes of excellence and reform, and his sensitivity to the Third World, aroused expectations of even greater progress.

In only two years, Turner and the Carter administration have dashed those hopes. Turner has emerged as concerned mainly with advancing his own authority and acquiring influence with the president. His preference for technology over people, his willingness to politicize intelligence and his single-minded focus on centralizing control of the intelligence budget and collection activities have destroyed morale within the CIA, led hundreds of key CIA personnel to resign and prompted far more to "retire in place."

Turner has gravely damaged the quality of the intelligence community's product. Administration sources admit that more than 250 CIA professionals put in their retirement or resignation papers in the first pay period of 1979. The departures of concern now do not involve the "cold warriors," special or "black" operations executives and counterintelligence officers affected by Turner's 1977 Halloween purge of 820 surplus CIA personnel (a purge which William Colby had planned to be even more drastic.) The men who are leaving now are career professionals — the intellectual cadre, the very brain of American intelligence.

Recent losses include such experts as Sayre Stevens, deputy director of the National Foreign Assessments Center; Vince Heyman, chief of CIA's Operations Center; Dick Christenson, chief of CIA's Office of Regional and Political Analysis; John Blake, the deputy director for administration; Ernie Oney, the agency's chief Iranian analyst, and Anthony Lapham, CIA's general counsel. Several national intelligence officers for key regions like the Middle East have resigned or are now seeking other jobs.

Retirement incentives and limitations on future employability resulting from the new Ethics in Government Act have helped stimulate resignations. But CIA's mass exodus reflects the despair of intelligence professionals that Turner and the Carter administration ever will provide effective leadership and reform. Several of the departing officials told Turner candidly that they were

the Russians, missiles and diseases. His intelligence analysis tailored to their policies of the moment on Vietnam, SALT, Angola and Iran.

CIA's professionals stuck it out through investigation after investigation, and director after director who twisted their reporting to produce "intelligence-to please." They kept silent as post-mortem after post-mortem blamed "intelligence" for policymakers' unwillingness to hear the facts in crisis after crisis. By guilt through association, they shared the blame for the excesses of other CIA branches in special operations, drug experimentation and U.S. "internal security."

But Stansfield Turner's mismanagement of American intelligence has proved more than they could take.

Lots of Data, Little Analysis

TURNER has ignored analytic personnel needs to buy more technical collection assets — in spite of the fact that the intelligence community has long lacked the analysts needed to process its existing "take."

He has systematically hamstring or ignored human intelligence sources and resources. Human intelligence doesn't mean a cadre of clandestine operators, "hit men" or CIA burglars; simply put, it is intelligence produced by people, not machines — information based on personal contacts and observations, and even such mundane but vital work as a careful reading of the local and regional press.

We now have little real human intelligence capability in Turkey, a country that is economically and politically fragile, yet whose importance to NATO and the Mideast is pivotal and whose array of U.S. technical collection systems will play a crucial role in verifying Russia's compliance with a new strategic arms limitation agree-