

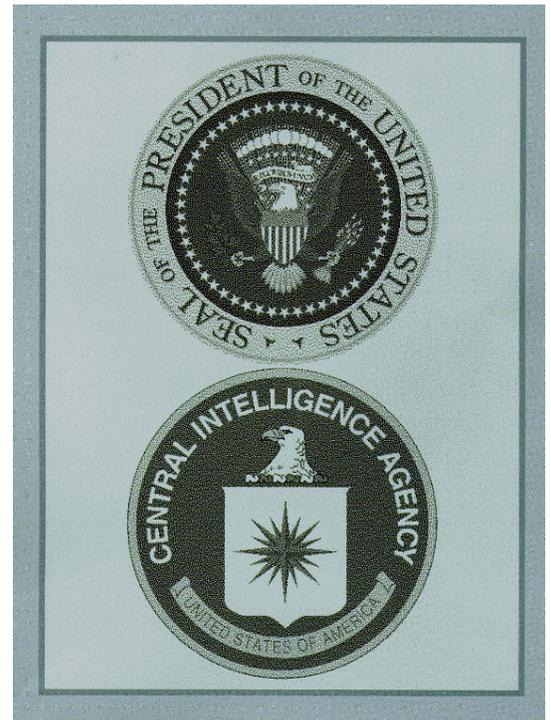
Our First Line of Defense: Presidential Reflections on US Intelligence

Preface

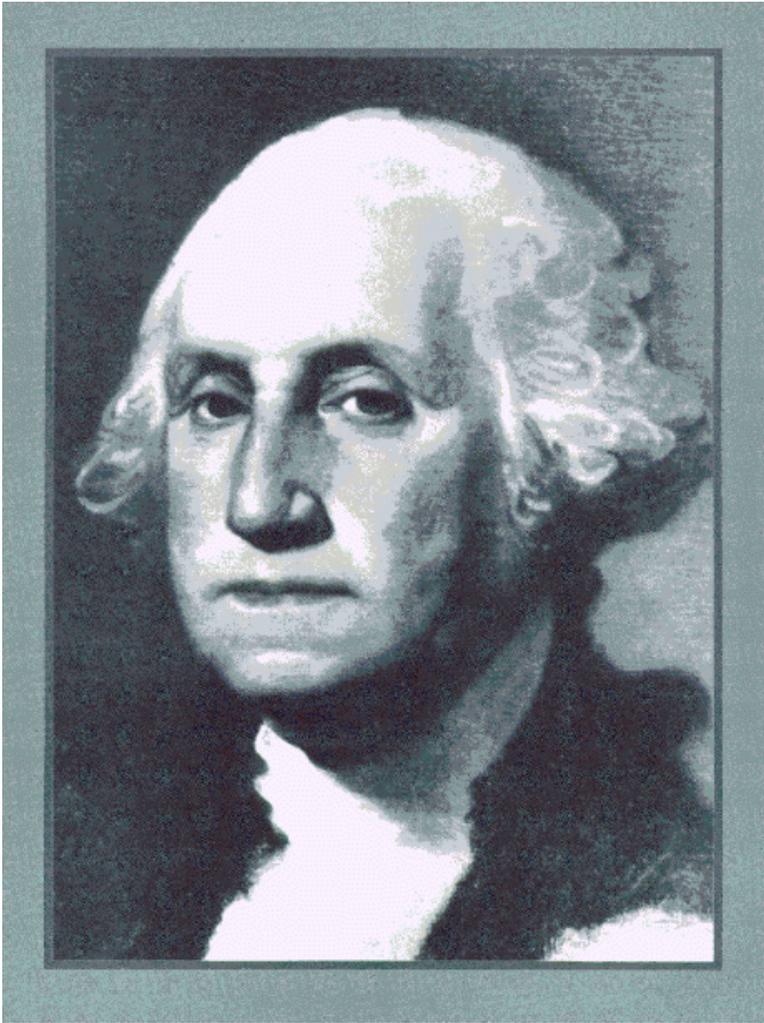
Until World War II, the conduct of foreign intelligence activities by the United States Government was sporadic, and most Americans were not aware of them. Presidents of the United States, who have always borne the responsibility for the national security, have made statements, particularly in recent years, that have both acknowledged the existence of US intelligence activities and revealed their importance in support of governmental policies and functions.

Selected Presidential statements dealing with US intelligence activities have been extracted for presentation in this pamphlet. Scott A. Koch of the CIA History Staff and Brian D. Fila of the Defense Intelligence Agency's Policy Support Directorate compiled the pamphlet, updating an earlier pamphlet the CIA's Office of Training produced. Teresa Purcell and Mark Hernandez of CIA's Cartography, Design, and Publishing Division provided invaluable support. Ms. Purcell edited and polished the text, and Mr. Hernandez designed the cover and layout.

Although the statements of George Washington were written while he was the commanding general during the American Revolution, they are significant enough to warrant inclusion here. Major wars marked the terms of both Presidents Lincoln and Wilson, but neither appears to have addressed intelligence. President Wilson limited his comments to the presence of German spies in the United States.



George Washington, 1789-97



There was no centralized intelligence organization in any modern conception of the word during the American Revolution. Both the Americans and British employed agents to secure information on troop deployments and strengths, and there were officers specifically charged with intelligence functions, although almost without exception these functions were added to officers' regular line duties. Thus, Maj. John Andre handled intelligence matters for Britain's General Clinton in New York and when Andre became Adjutant General of the British Armies in America, he continued to conduct certain special intelligence cases, including the defection of Gen. Benedict Arnold from West Point.

General Forman, an American line officer in New Jersey, was Washington's intelligence chief in that area for a time. In connection with his intelligence activities, General Forman wrote Governor Livingston of New Jersey in February 1782 as follows:

"I PRESUME YOUR EXCELLENCY is not unacquainted that I am at the particular request of General Washington employed in obtaining intelligence respecting the enemies movements at New York &c. By the Generals Letter to me of the 25 Inst. he

in a very pointed manner asks my particular exertions as affairs at this time demand the best Intelligence.”

General Washington kept closely informed on all intelligence matters and was perhaps the most able American intelligence officer prior to Gen. William Donovan, Director of the Office of Strategic Services during World War II. General Washington often levied intelligence requirements on his intelligence officers and then made his own estimates of the military situation based on the evidence they acquired. He directed what we now call psychological warfare campaigns and had a fine feel for intelligence activities.

“THE NECESSITY OF PROCURING good Intelligence is apparent & need not be further urged—all that remains for me to add, is, that you keep the whole matter as secret as possible. For upon Secrecy, Success depends in most Enterprizes of the kind, and for want of it, they are generally defeated, however well planned and promising a favourable issue.”

Gen. George Washington, Letter to Col. Elias Dayton, 26 July 1777

“I HAVE RECEIVED YOUR LETTER of the 4th, containing an apology for sending an agreeable piece of Intelligence which you have since discover’d to be false; mistakes of this kind are not uncommon and most frequently happen to those whose zeal and sanguineness allow no room for scepticism when anything favourable to their country is plausibly related.”

Gen. George Washington, Letter to Daniel Clymer, 11 November 1777

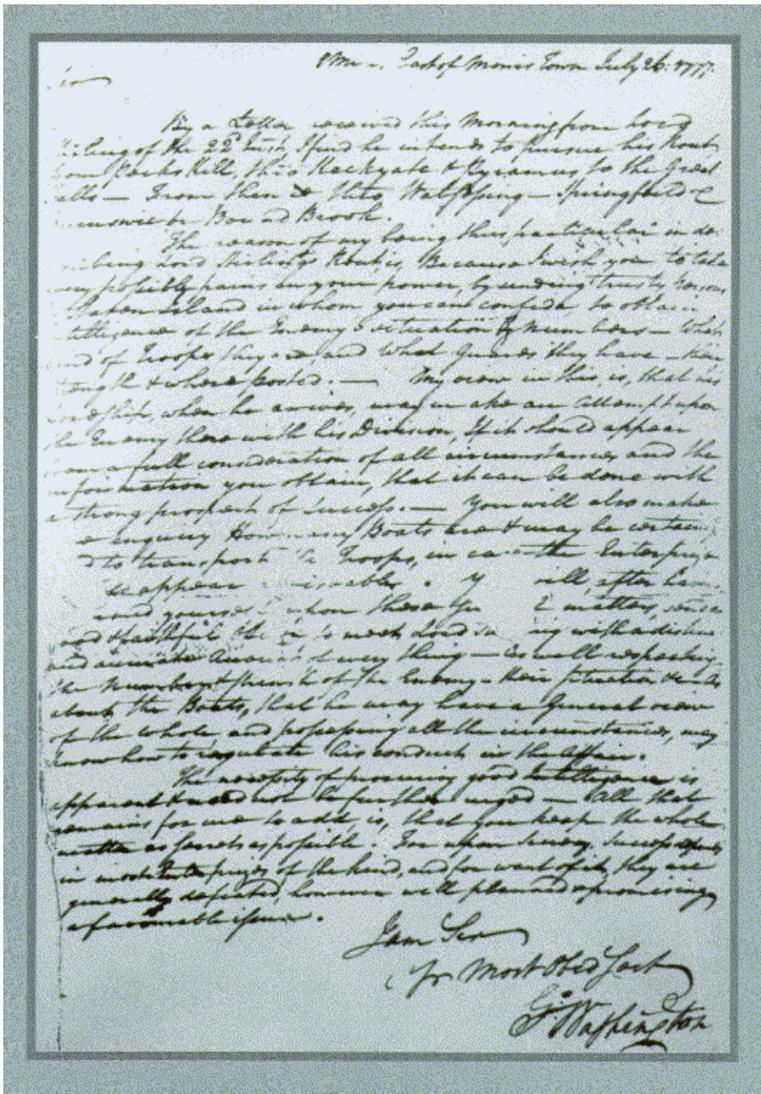
American authorities in New Jersey seized three of General Washington’s best spies under the misapprehension that they were British agents. These prisoners could not disclose their true role. Washington learned, however, of their capture and wrote the Governor of New Jersey for their release.

“UPON THESE CONSIDERATIONS I hope you will put a stop to the prosecution, unless other matters appear against them. You must be well convinced, that it is indispensibly necessary to make use of these means to procure intelligence. The persons employed must bear the suspicion of being thought inimical, and it is not in their power to assert their innocence, because that would get abroad and destroy the confidence which the Enemy puts in them.”

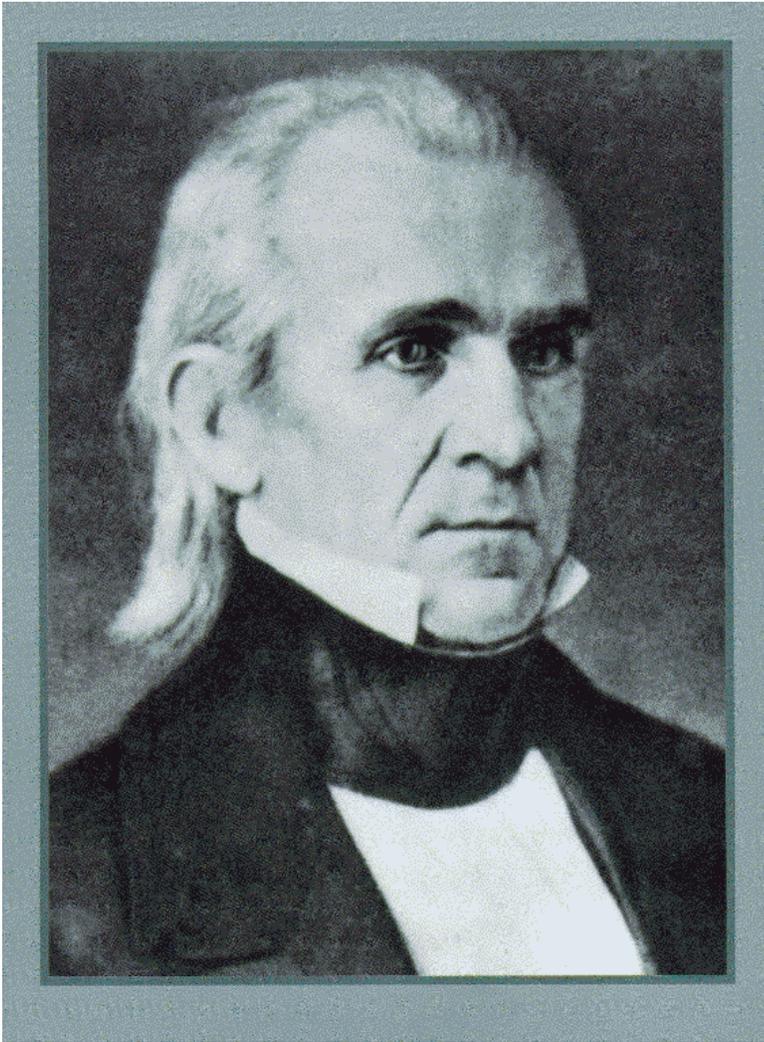
Gen. George Washington, Letter to Gov. William Livingston, 20 January 1778

"I THANK YOU FOR THE TROUBLE you have taken in forwarding the intelligence which was inclosed in your Letter of the 11th of March. It is by comparing a variety of information, we are frequently enabled to investigate facts, which were so intricate or hidden, that no single clue could have led to the knowledge of them in this point of view, intelligence becomes interesting which but from its connection and collateral circumstances, would not be important."

Gen. George Washington, Letter to James Lovell, 1 April 1782



James K. Polk, 1845-49



(Portrait)

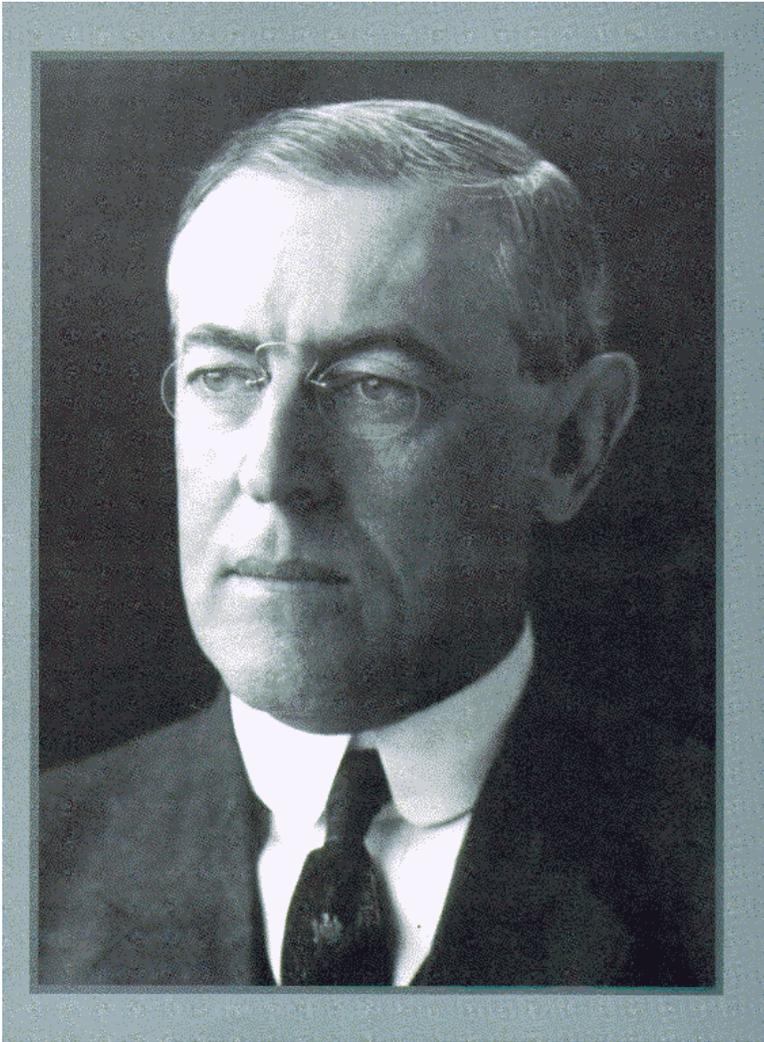
In 1846, certain members of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs raised a furor over the alleged misuse of foreign intercourse funds by Daniel Webster while he served as Secretary of State. Portions of these funds, known as Secret Service Funds, were available for unvouchered use on the certificate of the President that their expenditure had been for confidential purposes. A resolution of the House of Representatives requested President James K. Polk to furnish the House with all records of expenditures of these confidential Secret Service Funds during Webster's tenure as Secretary of State under Presidents Harrison and Tyler. In denying the request of the House of Representatives, President Polk wrote:

"THE EXPERIENCE OF EVERY nation on earth has demonstrated that emergencies may arise in which it becomes absolutely necessary for the public safety or the public good to make expenditures the very object of which would be defeated by publicity... . In no nation is the application of such sums ever made public. In time of war or impending danger the situation of the country may make it necessary to

employ individuals for the purpose of obtaining information or rendering other important services who could never be prevailed upon to act if they entertained the least apprehension that their names or their agency would in any contingency be divulged. So it may often become necessary to incur an expenditure for an object highly useful to the country; ... But this object might be altogether defeated by the intrigues of other powers if our purposes were to be made known by the exhibition of the original papers and vouchers to the accounting officers of the Treasury. It would be easy to specify other cases which may occur in the history of a great nation, in its intercourse with other nations, wherein it might become absolutely necessary to incur expenditures for objects which could never be accomplished if it were suspected in advance that the items of expenditure and the agencies employed would be made public.”

**President James K. Polk, Message to the House of Representatives,
20 April 1846**

Woodrow Wilson, 1913-21



World War I broke out during President Woodrow Wilson's first term, and the United States entered the war during his second administration. Wilson had little interest in or use for intelligence and found the idea of a national "secret service" abhorrent. To Wilson, "intelligence" was synonymous with "spy." After the Armistice in 1918, he would laugh at his own naiveté about intelligence, but did nothing to ensure that the modest American capability developed during the war would remain.

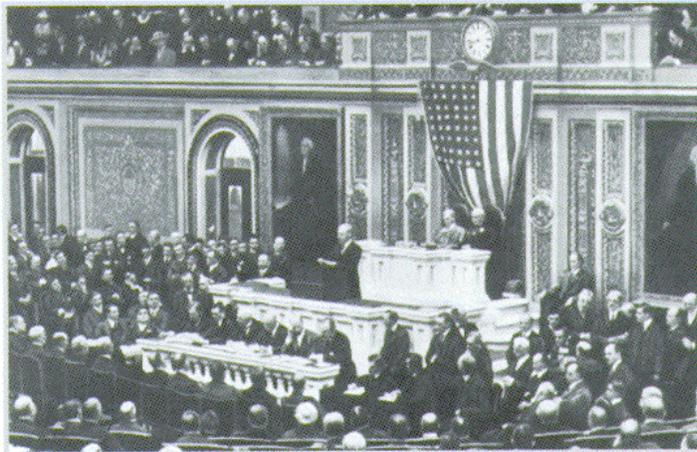
"LET ME TESTIFY TO THIS, MY fellow citizens, I not only did not know it until we got into this war, but I did not believe it when I was told that it was true, that Germany was not the only country that maintained a secret service. Every country in Europe maintained it, because they had to be ready for Germany's spring upon them, and the only difference between the German secret service and the other secret services was that the German secret service found out more than the others did! (Applause

and laughter) And therefore Germany sprang upon the other nations at unawares [sic], and they were not ready for it.

President Woodrow Wilson, Speech, 5 September 1919

“ONE OF THE THINGS THAT has served to convince us that the Prussian autocracy was not and could never be our friend is that from the very outset of the present war it has filled our unsuspecting communities and even our offices of government with spies and set criminal intrigues everywhere afoot against our national unity of counsel, our peace within and without, our industries and our commerce. Indeed it is now evident that its spies were here before the war began... That it means to stir up enemies at our very doors the intercepted note to the German Minister in Mexico City is eloquent evidence.”

President Woodrow Wilson, Address to Congress, 2 April 1917



President Woodrow Wilson delivers his War Message to Congress, 2 April 1917. The President asked for a declaration of war against Germany.

Library of Congress

Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1933-45



Franklin Roosevelt was the commander in chief during America's greatest war. Although the CIA was a postwar organization, Roosevelt recognized the importance of having a central office that could collate and distribute information. He appointed William J. Donovan the first head of the Office of Coordinator of Information, an organization that later evolved into the Office of Strategic Services (OSS).

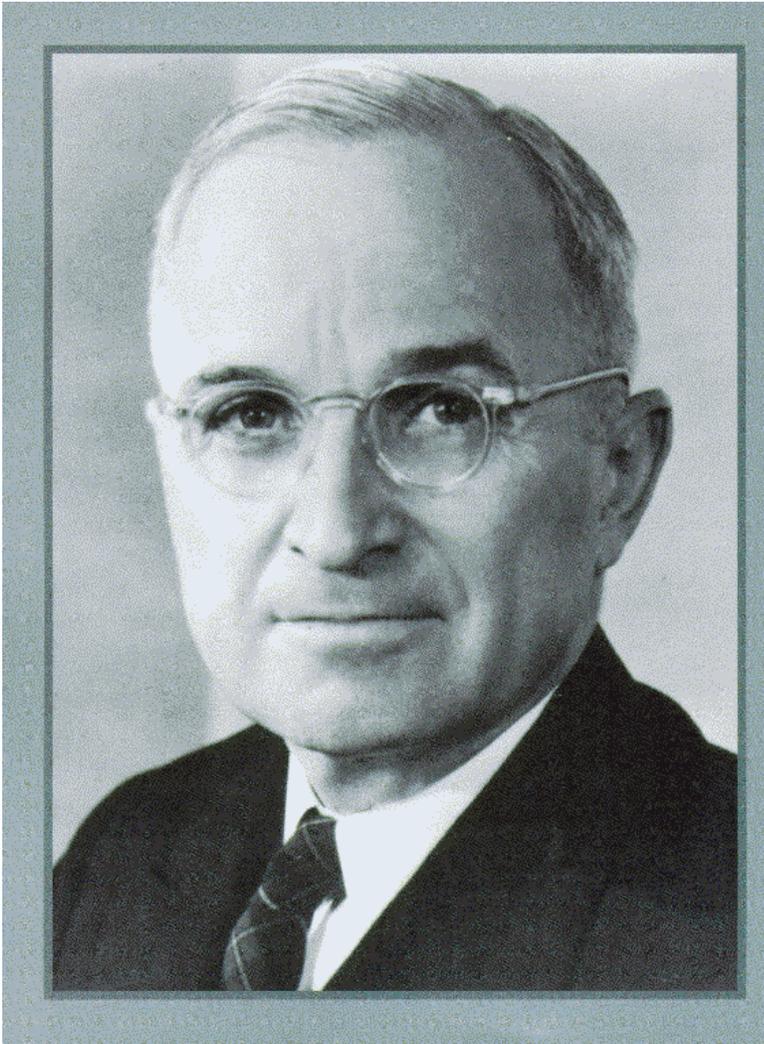
A week before Roosevelt died, he wrote a memorandum to then Maj. Gen. William Donovan authorizing him to continue planning for a postwar intelligence service.

"APROPOS OF YOUR MEMORANDUM of November 18, 1944, relative to the establishment of a central intelligence service, I should appreciate your calling together the chiefs of the foreign intelligence and internal security units in the various executive agencies, so that a consensus of opinion can be secured.

“It appears to me that all of the ten executive departments, as well as the Foreign Economic Administration, and the Federal Communications Commission have a direct interest in the proposed venture. They should all be asked to contribute their suggestions to the proposed centralized intelligence service.”

**President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Memorandum to Maj. Gen. William J. Donovan,
5 April 1945**

Harry S. Truman, 1945-53



President Truman was conscious of rivalry among US intelligence organizations both during and after World War II. He realized that reorganization was necessary and that a reorganization plan needed to be developed, from competing proposals, which would not exacerbate these rivalries. The following reflects President Truman's thinking on the subject prior to the establishment of the Central Intelligence Group in 1946 and ultimately of the Central Intelligence Agency in 1947.

"I CONSIDERED IT VERY important to this country to have a sound, well-organized intelligence system, both in the present and in the future. Properly developed, such a service would require new concepts as well as better trained and more competent personnel ... it was imperative that we refrain from rushing into something that would produce harmful and unnecessary rivalries among the various intelligence agencies. I told Smith (Director of the Bureau of the Budget) that one thing was certain—this

country wanted no Gestapo under any guise or for any reason.”

President Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs Vol I*

“A PRESIDENT HAS TO KNOW what is going on all around the world in order to be ready to act when action is needed. The President must have all the facts that may affect the foreign policy or the military policy of the United States... .

“Before 1946 such information as the President needed was being collected in several different places in the government. The War Department had an Intelligence Division—G-2—and the Navy had an intelligence setup of its own—the ONI. The Department of State, on the one hand, got its information through diplomatic channels, while the Treasury and the Departments of Commerce and Agriculture each had channels for gathering information from different parts of the world—on monetary, economic, and agricultural matters.

“During World War II the Federal Bureau of Investigation had some operations abroad, and in addition the Office of Strategic Services, which was set up by President Roosevelt during the war and placed under the direction of Gen. William J. Donovan, operated abroad to gather information.

“This scattered method of getting information for the various departments of the government first struck me as being badly organized when I was in the Senate. Our Senate committees, hearing the witnesses from the executive departments, were often struck by the fact that different agencies of the government came up with different and conflicting facts on similar subjects. It was not at first apparent that this was due to the uncoordinated methods of obtaining information. Since then, however, I have often thought that if there had been something like coordination of information in the government it would have been more difficult, if not impossible, for the Japanese to succeed in the sneak attack at Pearl Harbor. In those days the military did not know everything the State Department knew, and the diplomats did not have access to all the Army and Navy knew. The Army and the Navy, in fact, had only a very informal arrangement to keep each other informed as to their plans.

President Truman awards former DCI RAdm. Sidney Souers the Distinguished Service Medal for meritorious service to the US Government.



Harry S. Truman Presidential Library

“In other words, there had never been much attention paid to any centralized intelligence organization in our government. Apparently the United States saw no need for a really comprehensive system of foreign intelligence until World War II placed American fighting men on the continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa and on the islands of the Atlantic and the Pacific.

“The war taught us this lesson—that we had to collect intelligence in a manner that would make the information available where it was needed and when it was wanted, in an intelligent and understandable form. If it is not intelligent and understandable, it is useless.

“On becoming President, I found that the needed intelligence information was not coordinated at any one place. Reports came across my desk on the same subject at different times from the various departments, and these reports often conflicted. Consequently I asked Admiral Leahy if anything was being done to improve the system. Leahy told me that in 1944, at President Roosevelt’s direction, he had referred to the Joint Chiefs of Staff a plan for centralized intelligence work prepared by General Donovan. This plan, so Leahy told me, provided for an organization directly under the President and responsible only to him. The Navy, however, had worked out a counterproposal under which there would be a central agency to serve as an overall intelligence organization, but with each of the departments responsible for national security having a stake in it. Much of the original work on this project was done by Rear Admiral Sidney W. Souers, Deputy Chief of Naval Intelligence.

“Sometime later I asked Secretary of State Byrnes to submit his recommendations for a way to coordinate intelligence services among the departments, explaining that I had already asked Leahy to look into the subject but that I wanted the State Department’s recommendations since the State Department would need to play an important role in the operation.

“Secretary Byrnes took the position that such an organization should be responsible to the Secretary of State and advised me that he should be in control of all intelligence. The Army and the Navy, on the other hand, strongly objected. They maintained that every department required its own intelligence but that there was a great need for a central organization to gather together all information that had to do with over-all national policy. Under such an organization there would be a pool of information, and each agency would contribute to it. This pool would make it possible for those who were responsible for establishing policies in

foreign political and military fields to draw on authoritative intelligence for their guidance.

“In January 1946 I held a series of meetings in my office to examine the various plans suggested for a centralized intelligence authority.”

President Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs Volume II*

“WHETHER IT BE TREASON OR not, it does the United States just as much harm for military secrets to be made known to potential enemies through open publication, as it does for military secrets to be given to an enemy through the clandestine operations of spies... .

” ... I do not believe that the best solution can be reached by adopting an approach based on the theory that everyone has a right to know our military secrets and related information affecting the national security.”

President Harry S. Truman, News conference, 4 October 1951



President Truman presides over a meeting of the National Security Council on 19 September 1948. Former DCI RAdm. Sidney Souers is third from the left. DCI RAdm. Roscoe Hillenkoetter is fifth from the left. Secretary of State George C. Marshall sits to President Truman's right, and Secretary of Defense James Forrestal is next to Marshall.

“WHEN I BECAME PRESIDENT—if you don't mind me reminiscing a little bit—there was no concentration of information for the benefit of the President. Each department and each organization had its own information service, and that information service was walled off from every other service in such a manner that whenever it was necessary for the President to have information, he had to send to two or three departments to get it, and then he would have to have somebody do a little digging to get it... .

” ... And finally one morning I had a conversation with Admiral Leahy, and suggested to him that there should be a Central Intelligence Agency, for the benefit of the whole government

as well as for the benefit of the President, so he could be informed.

“And the Admiral and I proceeded to try to work out a program. It has worked very successfully. We have an intelligence information service now that I think is not inferior to any in the world.

“We have the Central Intelligence Agency, and all the intelligence information agencies in all the rest of the departments of the government, coordinated by that Central Intelligence Agency. This agency puts the information of vital importance to the President in his hands. He has to know what is going on everywhere at home and abroad, so that he can intelligently make the decisions that are necessary to keep the government running... .

” ... You are the organization, you are the intelligence arm that keeps the Executive informed so that he can make decisions that always will be in the public interest for his own country, hoping always that it will save the free world from involvement with the totalitarian countries in an all-out war—a terrible thing to contemplate.

“Those of you who are deep in the Central Intelligence Agency know what goes on around the world—know what is necessary for the President to know every morning. I am briefed every day on all the world, on everything that takes place from one end of the world to the other, all the way around—by both the poles and the other way. It is necessary that you make that contribution for the welfare and benefit of your government.

“I came over here to tell you how appreciative I am of the service which I received as the Chief Executive of the greatest nation in the history of the world.”

President Harry S. Truman, CIA Orientation, 21 November 1952

“TO THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE agency, a necessity to the President of the United States, from one who knows.

Harry S. Truman June 9, 1964”

Inscription on the photograph of President Truman, which he presented to CIA

Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953-61



President Dwight D. Eisenhower recognized the importance of intelligence from his days as Supreme Allied Commander in Europe during World War II. During the Eisenhower administration, technological advances enabled CIA to collect information previously unavailable. The U-2 reconnaissance aircraft and CORONA satellite reconnaissance programs both began under Eisenhower, permitting CIA to penetrate the Iron Curtain.

CIA began construction of its present headquarters complex in Langley, Virginia, in 1959. In a November ceremony, the President along with his Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles laid the cornerstone of the current Original Headquarters Building.

“AMERICA’S FUNDAMENTAL aspiration is the preservation of peace. To this end we seek to develop policies and arrangements to make the peace both permanent and just. This can be done only on the basis of comprehensive and appropriate information.

“In war nothing is more important to a commander than the facts concerning the strength,

dispositions, and intentions of his opponent, and the proper interpretation of those facts. In peacetime the necessary facts are of a different nature. They deal with conditions, resources, requirements, and attitudes prevailing in the world. They and their correct interpretation are essential to the development of policy to further our long-term national security and best interests. To provide information of this kind is the task of the organization of which you are a part.

“No task could be more important. “Upon the quality of your work depends in large measure the success of our effort to further the nation’s position in the international scene.

“By its very nature the work of this agency demands of its members the highest order of dedication, ability, trustworthiness, and selflessness—to say nothing of the finest type of courage, whenever needed. Success cannot be advertised: failure cannot be explained. In the work of intelligence, heroes are undecorated and unsung, often even among their own fraternity. Their inspiration is rooted in patriotism—their reward can be little except the conviction that they are performing a unique and indispensable service for their country, and the knowledge that America needs and appreciates their efforts. I assure you this is indeed true.

President Eisenhower looks on as DCI Allen Dulles lays the cornerstone of CIA's new headquarters building in Langley, Virginia, 3 November 1959.



“The reputation of your organization for quality and excellence of performance, ... is a proud one.

“Because I deeply believe these things, I deem it a great privilege to participate in this ceremony of cornerstone laying for the national headquarters of the Central Intelligence Agency. On this spot will rise a beautiful and useful structure. May it long endure, to serve the cause of America and of peace.”

President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Laying of cornerstone for CIA building, 3 November 1959

“I HAVE MADE SOME NOTES FROM which I want to talk to you about this U-2 incident... .

“The first point is this: the need for intelligence-gathering activities.

“No one wants another Pearl Harbor. This means that we must have knowledge of military forces and preparations around the world, especially those capable of massive surprise attacks.

“Secrecy in the Soviet Union makes this essential... .

” ... ever since the beginning of my administration I have issued directives to gather, in every feasible way, the information required to protect the United States and the free world against surprise attack and to enable them to make effective preparations for defense.

“My second point: the nature of intelligence-gathering activities.

“These have a special and secret character. They are, so to speak, ‘below the surface’ activities.

“They are secret because they must circumvent measures designed by other countries to protect secrecy of military preparations.

“They are divorced from the regular visible agencies of government which stay clear of operational involvement in specified detailed activities.

“These elements operate under broad directives to seek and gather intelligence short of the use of force—with operations supervised by responsible officials within this area of secret activities... .

“These activities have their own rules and methods of concealment which seek to mislead and obscure— ...

“Third point: how should we view all of this activity?

“It is a distasteful but vital necessity.

“We prefer and work for a different kind of world—and a different way of obtaining the information essential to confidence and effective deterrents. Open societies; in the day of present weapons, are the only answer... .

“My final point is that we must not be distracted from the real issues of the day by what is an incident of a symptom of the world situation today.”

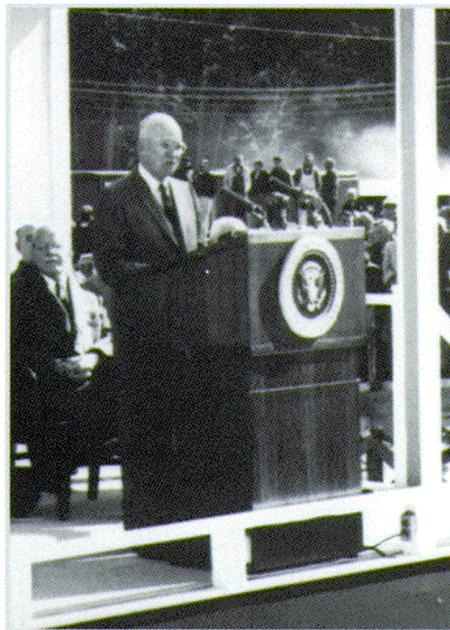
President Dwight D. Eisenhower News conference following Soviet downing American reconnaissance aircraft, 11 May 1960

” ... ACCORDING, AT THIS morning’s private session, despite the violence and inaccuracy of Mr. Khrushchev’s statements, I replied to him on the following terms: ...

“In my statement of May 11th and in the statement of Secretary Herter of May 9th, the position of the United States was made clear with respect to the distasteful necessity of espionage activities in a world where nations distrust each other’s intentions. We pointed out that these activities had no aggressive intent but rather were to assure the safety of the United States and the free world against surprise attack by a power which boasts of its ability to devastate the United States and other countries by missiles armed with atomic warheads. As is well known, not only the United States but most other countries are constantly the targets of elaborate and persistent espionage of the Soviet Union.”

President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Paris summit, 16 May 1960

President Eisenhower addresses participants in ceremonies laying the cornerstone for CIA’s new headquarters building.



Central Intelligence Agency

“DURING THE PERIOD LEADING up to World War II we learned from bitter experience the imperative necessity of a continuous gathering of intelligence information, ...

“Moreover, as President, charged by the Constitution with the conduct of America’s foreign relations, and as Commander-in-Chief, charged with the direction of the operations and activities of our Armed Forces and their supporting services, I take full responsibility for approving all the various programs undertaken by our government to secure and evaluate military intelligence.

“It was in the prosecution of one of these intelligence programs that the widely publicized U-2 incident occurred.

“Aerial photography has been one of many methods we have used to keep ourselves and

the free world abreast of major Soviet military developments. The usefulness of this work has been well established through four years of effort. The Soviets were well aware of it... .

“The plain truth is this: when a nation needs intelligence activity, there is no time when vigilance can be relaxed. Incidentally, from Pearl Harbor we learned that even negotiation itself can be used to conceal preparations for a surprise attack... .

” ... It must be remembered that over a long period, these flights had given us information of the greatest importance to the nation’s security. In fact, their success has been nothing short of remarkable... .

“I then made two facts clear to the public: first, our program of aerial reconnaissance had been undertaken with my approval; second, this government is compelled to keep abreast, by one means or another, of military activities of the Soviets, just as their government has for years engaged in espionage activities in our country and throughout the world.”

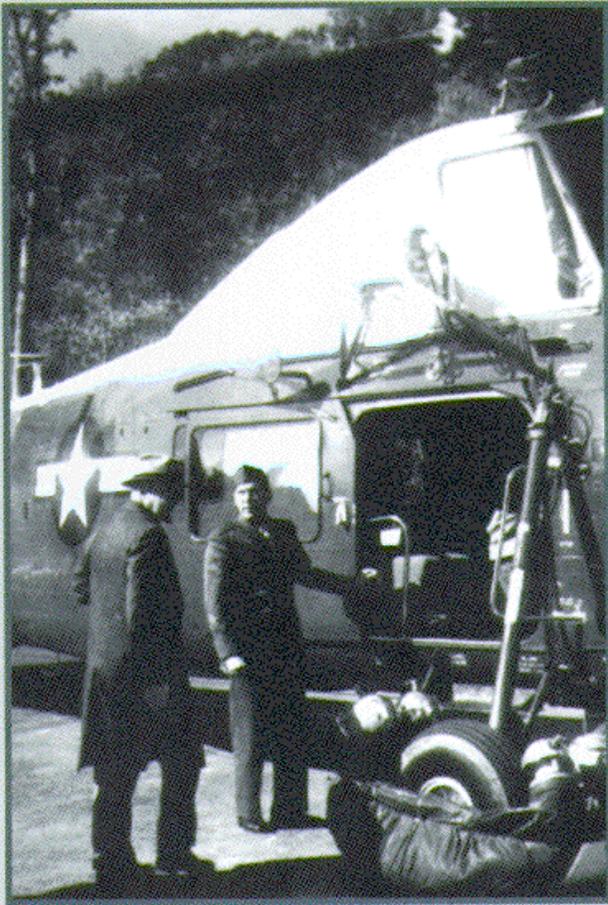
President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Television report after the Paris summit, 25 May 1960

“AS I THINK YOU KNOW, I WISH you and your associates in the Central Intelligence Agency well in the tremendously important job you do for our country. Upon the work of your organization there is an almost frightening responsibility; I know all members of the CIA will continue to do the best they can for all of us.”

President Dwight D. Eisenhower Letter to Mr. Allen W. Dulles, DCI, 18 January 1961

“”FOR: THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
An indispensable organization to our country.
Dwight D. Eisenhower”

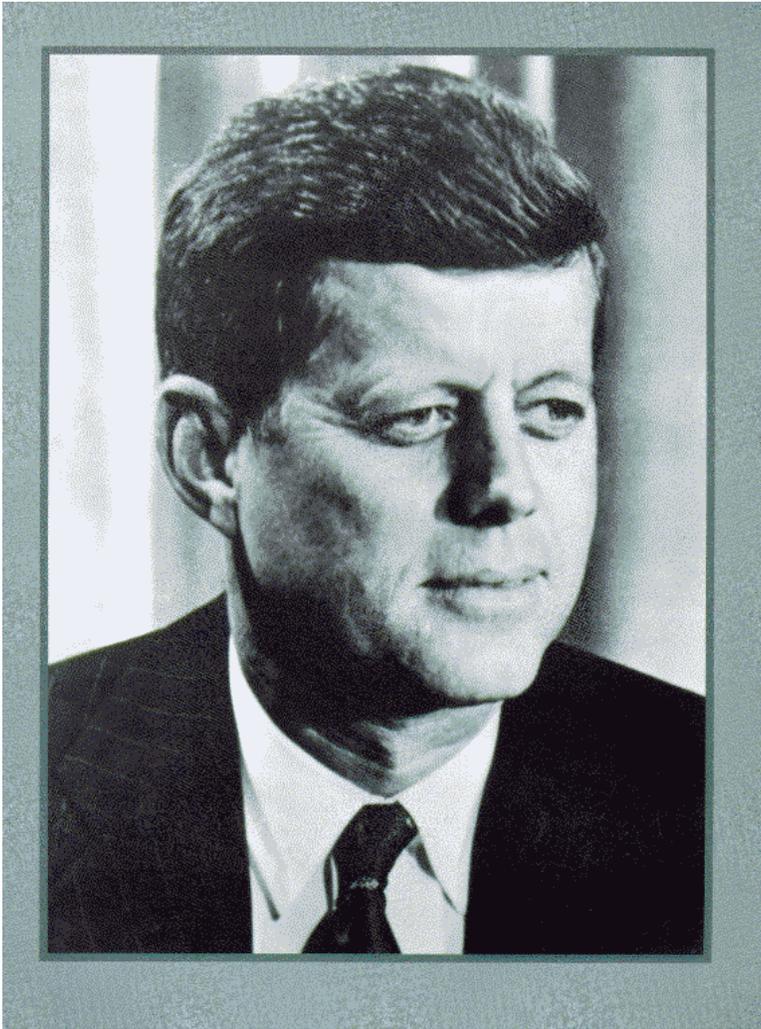
Inscription on the photograph of President Eisenhower, which he presented to CIA



Central Intelligence Agency

The President leaves CIA's new site.

John F. Kennedy, 1961-63



(Portrait)

John Kennedy was only 43 years old when he gave his inaugural address as the 35th President of the United States. His tragically short administration faced two major crises in which CIA played a prominent part: the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961 and the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962. DCI Allen Dulles lost his job after the former; CIA under his successor John McCone never shone brighter than it did in the latter.

“I WANT, FIRST OF ALL, TO EXPRESS my appreciation to you all for the opportunity that this ceremony gives to tell you how grateful we are in the government and in the country for the services that the personnel of this Agency render to the country.

“It is not always easy. Your successes are unheralded—your failures are trumpeted. I sometimes have that feeling myself. But I am sure you realize how important is your work, how essential—it is and how, in the long sweep of history, how significant your efforts will be judged.

“So I do want to express my appreciation to you now, and I’m confident that in the future you will continue to merit the appreciation of our country, as you have in the past.”

President John F. Kennedy, CIA Headquarters, 28 November 1961

” ... IT IS MY WISH THAT YOU serve as the government’s principal foreign intelligence officer, and as such that you undertake, as an integral part of your responsibilities, the coordination and effective guidance of the total United States foreign intelligence effort. As the government’s principal intelligence officer, you will assure the proper coordination, correlation, and evaluation of intelligence from all sources and its prompt dissemination to me and to other recipients as appropriate. In fulfillment of these tasks I shall expect you to work closely with the heads of all departments and agencies having responsibilities in the foreign intelligence field... .

“As directed by the President and the National Security Council, you will establish with the advice and assistance of the United States Intelligence Board the necessary policies and procedures to assure adequate coordination of foreign intelligence activities at all levels.”

President John F. Kennedy, 16 January 1962

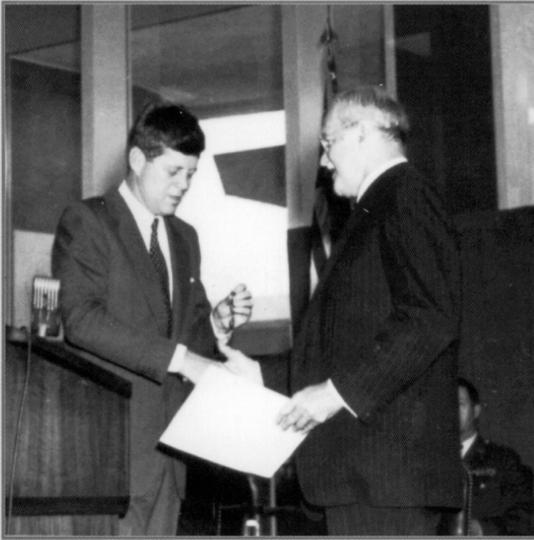
“I wish to express to you, the members of the United States Intelligence Board, and to the individual members of the intelligence agencies my deep and sincere appreciation for your outstanding services to our Nation—and the Free World—during the recent international crisis.

“In the course of the past few months I have had occasion to again observe the extraordinary accomplishments of our intelligence community, and I have been singularly impressed with the overall professional excellence, selfless devotion to duty, resourcefulness and initiative manifested in the work of this group. The fact that we had timely and accurate information, skillfully analyzed and clearly presented, to guide us in our judgments during this crisis is, I believe, the greatest tribute to the effectiveness of these individuals and agencies. The magnitude of their contribution can be measured, in part, by the fact that the peace was sustained during a most critical time.

“It is, of course, a great source of strength to me to know that we have such dedicated and skilled men and women in the service of our Nation in these times of peril. Although I cannot personally commend each member of the intelligence community for their individual efforts, I would like you to convey to them, through the members of the United States Intelligence Board, my personal word of commendation, my deep admiration for their achievements, and the appreciation of a grateful Nation.”

President John F. Kennedy, Letter of commendation to John A. McCone, DCI, 9 January 1963

” ... We have worked very closely together in the National Security Council in the last two months attempting to meet the problems we faced in South Viet-Nam. I can find nothing, and I have looked through the record very carefully over the last nine months, and I could go back further, to indicate that the CIA has done anything but support policy. It does not create policy; it attempts to execute it in those areas where it has competence and responsibility... . I can just assure you flatly that the CIA has not carried out independent activities but has operated under close control of the Director of Central Intelligence, operating with the cooperation of the National Security Council and under my instructions.



*President Kennedy
awards the National
Security Medal to DCI
Allen Dulles, 1961.*

Central Intelligence Agency

“So I think that while the CIA may have made mistakes, as we all do, on different occasions, and has had many successes which may go unheralded, in my opinion in this case it is unfair to charge them as they have been charged. I think they have done a good job.”

President John F. Kennedy, News conference, 9 October 1963

Lyndon B. Johnson, 1963-69



Lyndon Johnson succeeded the assassinated President Kennedy in November 1963. LBJ, as he was known to millions of Americans, wanted to focus on domestic policy. World events did not allow him to devote the time and attention to building the “Great Society” that he wanted. Throughout the US intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965, the war in Vietnam, the Seven-Day Arab/Israeli war of June 1967, and the efforts to reduce tension with the Soviet Union, the White House demanded and got CIA’s full attention and support.

” ... WE HAVE COMMITTED OUR lives, our property, our resources, and our sacred honor to the freedom and peace of other men, indeed to the freedom and peace of all mankind. We would dishonor that commitment, we would disgrace all the sacrifices that Americans have made if we were not every hour of every day vigilant against every threat to peace and freedom. That is why we have the Central Intelligence Agency in this country.

“The propose of this effort, like the purpose of all that we do, is to strive for an orderly, just, and peaceful world. In this effort more than in many others a high order of selflessness, of dedication, of devotion, is asked of men and women. The compensation of them comes not in fame, certainly not in rewards of salary, but the reward of the sure knowledge that they have made a contribution to freedom’s cause.

“For the leadership of this vital agency this nation has been very fortunate to have the services of outstanding Americans: Allen Dulles, John McCone, now today Admiral William F. Raborn.”

President Lyndon B. Johnson, Swearing-in ceremony of VAdm. William F. Raborn as DCI and Mr. Richard M. Helms as DDCI, 28 April 1965

“YOU KNOW IT IS MY HOPE THAT we can continue to build and strengthen the effectiveness of the Agency, making full utilization of the imaginative talent assembled in the organization. I hope ... to assure and encourage all your employees to realize that their personal abilities and superior performance do not go unnoticed or unrecognized.

“Our intelligence must be unquestionably the best in the world. You have my full support in our effort to make it so.”

President Lyndon B. Johnson Letter to VAdm. William F. Raborn, DCI, 29 July 1965



*The President reads his
daily CIA briefing while
Mrs. Johnson and
grandchild look on.*

(Photo)

“THE INTEREST OF NATIONAL defense and security require sustained effort on the part of the Intelligence Community to support me and other officials having policy and command responsibilities... . Efficient management and direction of the complex activities which make up the total foreign intelligence effort are essential to meet day-to-day national requirements and to ensure the development and application of advanced means for the collection, processing, analysis, estimating and reporting of intelligence information.”

President Lyndon B. Johnson, Memo to VAdm. William F. Raborn, DCI, 19 October 1965

“IN 2-1/2 YEARS OF WORKING with these men I have yet to meet a ‘007.’ I have met dozens of men who are moved and motivated by the highest and most patriotic and dedicated purposesmen who are specialists in economics, and political science, and history, and geography, and physics, and many other fields where logic and analysis are crucial to the

decisions that the President of their country is called upon to make. Through my experience with these men I have learned that their most significant triumphs come not in the secrets passed in the dark but in patient reading, hour after hour, of highly technical periodicals.

*President Johnson at the
swearing-in of VAdm.
William F. Raborn
(USN, Ret.) as DCI,
28 April 1965.*



“In a real sense they are America’s professional students; they are unsung, just as they are invaluable.”

President Lyndon B. Johnson, Swearing-in ceremony of Mr. Richard M. Helms as DCI, 30 June 1966

“YOUR COUNTRYMEN ... cannot know of your accomplishments in the equally crucial business of the Central Intelligence Agency. For it is the lot of those in our intelligence agencies that they should work in silence—sometimes fail in silence, but more often succeed in silence.

“Unhappily, also, it is sometimes their lot that they must suffer in silence. For, like all in high public position, they are occasionally subject to criticism which they must not answer.

“Secrecy in this work is essential. Achievements and triumphs can seldom be advertised. Shortcomings and failures often are advertised. The rewards can never come in public acclaim, only in the quiet satisfaction of getting on with the job and trying to do well the work that needs to be done in the interests of your Nation.

“The best intelligence is essential to the best policy. So I am delighted that you have undertaken, as far as security permits, to tell the public that it is well served by the Central Intelligence Agency.

“I am glad that there are occasions from time to time when I, like my predecessors in this office, can also express my deep confidence in the expert and the dedicated service of the personnel of the Central Intelligence Agency.”

President Lyndon B. Johnson, Presentation of the National Security Medal to VAdm. William F. Raborn, 17 August 1966

“THIS IS A DAY WHEN YOU should all be proud—especially those among you who have been a part of the Agency since its founding.

“Twenty years ago, this country had no broad-scale professional intelligence service worthy of the name. Today, it has a strong and vital one—the best in the world.

“Twenty years ago, you began with a vague assortment of functions and a varied assortment of people. Your purposes were not well understood inside the Government, and barely understood at all outside. Since that time, you have become a dedicated and disciplined core of professionals, with clearly defined responsibilities.

“Those responsibilities are vast and demanding. You give us information on which decisions affecting the course of history are made. Your product must be as perfect as is humanly possible—though the material you must work with is far from perfect.

“You must keep pace with developments in a tremendously complex society, a society which, as Mr. Helms has said, ` gropes for answers to challenges its founding fathers could never have conceived.

“You have built a solid foundation in these past twenty years. America relies on your constant dedication to the truth—on your commitment to our democratic ideal. I believe our trust is well placed.”

Richard M. Nixon, 1969-74



Richard M. Nixon's forte was foreign policy. When he entered the White House in 1969, he initially distrusted CIA. He soon came to appreciate the Agency's work as he dealt with Vietnam, the thaw in relations with Communist China, and the start of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) in 1970. President Nixon visited CIA's headquarters in March 1969.

"... GOING BACK DURING THE eight years I was Vice President, I sat on the National Security Council and there I learned to respect the organization, its Director and its reports that were made to the Council, and through the Council to the President of the United States... .

"And in a sense, then, I look upon this organization as not one that is necessary for the conduct of conflict or war, or call it what you may, but in the final analysis as one of the great instruments of our government for the preservation of peace, for the avoidance of war, and for the development of a society in which this kind of activity would not be as

necessary, if necessary at all.

“It is that that I think the American people need to understand, that this is a necessary adjunct to the conduct of the Presidency. And I am keenly aware of that. I am keenly aware of the fact that many of you at times must have had doubts, perhaps you have not, but perhaps there may have been times that you have had doubts about your mission, the popularity of what you do in the country, and I want to reassure you on that score... .

“I realize that in this organization the great majority of you are not in the kind of covert activities which involve great danger, but I also know that some of your colleagues have been involved in such activities and are involved in such activities.

“I know, too, that there will be no Purple Hearts, there will be no medals, there will be no recognition of those who have served far beyond the call of duty because by definition where the CIA is concerned your successes must never be publicized and your failures will always be publicized.

“So that makes your mission a particularly difficult one. It makes it difficult from the standpoint of those who must render service beyond the call of duty. And I recognize that and I am deeply grateful for those who are willing to make that kind of sacrifice... .



Central Intelligence Agency

*President Nixon
greet employees at
CIA headquarters,
7 March 1967.*

“So, finally, I would simply say that I understand that when President Truman in 1964 sent a message to the CIA, he put an inscription on it which, as I recall, went something like this: To the CIA, an organization which is an absolute necessity to any President of the United States. From one who knows.

“I know. And I appreciate what you do.”

President Richard M. Nixon CIA Headquarters 7 March 1969



The President and CIA employees.

Central Intelligence Agency

“THIS ORGANIZATION, THE **CIA**, has a distinguished record of being bipartisan in character. It is a highly professional group. It will remain that in this Administration”

President Richard M. Nixon, Swearing-in ceremony of General Cushman as DDCI, 7 May 1969



The President and DCI Richard Helms.

Central Intelligence Agency

“... I HAVE ORDERED THE Central Intelligence Agency, early in this Administration, to mobilize its full resources to fight the international drug trade, a task, incidentally, in which it has performed superbly. “Let me interject here a word for that much maligned agency. As I have often said, in the field of intelligence we always find that the failures are those that are publicized. Its successes, by definition, must always be secret, and in this area there are many successes and particularly ones for which this agency can be very proud.”

**President Richard M. Nixon Department of State, Washington, DC
18 September 1972**

Gerald R. Ford, 1974-77



Gerald Ford became President after Richard Nixon resigned in August 1974. Ford's experience as a member of the intelligence subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee gave him a deep appreciation of the value of intelligence.

Fundamental changes in the way CIA operated occurred during the Ford administration. Congressional oversight of CIA and its operations tightened as a result of the Church Committee hearings in 1975, which investigated alleged CIA misconduct.

"IN THE WORLD IN WHICH WE live, beset by continuing threats to our national security, it is vital that we maintain an effective intelligence and counterintelligence capability. This capability is fundamental in providing the safeguards that protect our national interests and help avert armed conflict. The Central Intelligence Agency has had a notable record of many successes in this field, but by the nature of its operations, such successes and achievements cannot be divulged publicly.

“It is essential in this republic that we meet our security requirements and at the same time avoid impairing our democratic institutions and fundamental freedoms. Intelligence activities must be conducted consistently with both objectives.”

Statement of President Gerald R. Ford, 4 January 1975

President Ford and DCI-designate George Bush prepare to enter CIA's auditorium for Bush's swearing-in, 30 January 1976.



“IN A WORLD WHERE INFORMATION is power, a vital element of our national security lies in our intelligence services. They are essential to our nation’s security in peace as in war. Americans can be grateful for the important, but largely unsung contributions and achievements of the intelligence services of this nation.

“It is entirely proper that this system be subject to Congressional review. But a sensationalized public debate over legitimate intelligence activities is a disservice to this nation and a threat to our intelligence system. It ties our hands while our potential enemies operate with secrecy, with skill and with vast resources. Any investigation must be conducted with maximum discretion and dispatch, to avoid crippling a vital national institution.

“Let me speak quite frankly to some in this chamber and perhaps to some not in this chamber. The Central Intelligence Agency has been of maximum importance to Presidents before me. The CIA has been of maximum importance to me. The Central Intelligence Agency and its associated intelligence organizations could be of maximum importance to some of you in this audience who might be President at some later date.

“I think it would be catastrophic for the Congress or anyone else to destroy the usefulness by dismantling, in effect, our intelligence systems upon which we rest so heavily.”

President Gerald R. Ford Address before Congress, 10 April 1975

MR. SEVAREID. "MR. PRESIDENT, wouldn't the whole thing [keeping Congress informed about CIA's activities] be safer and clearer and cleaner if it was simply the law that the CIA gather intelligence only and engage in no covert political operations abroad?"

The President. "If we lived in a different world. I can't imagine the United States saying we would not undertake any covert activities, and knowing at the same time that friends, as well as foes, are undertaking covert activity, not only in the United States but elsewhere.

"That would be like tying a President's hands behind his back in the planning and execution of foreign policy. I believe that we have to have an outstanding intelligence gathering group, such as in the CIA, or in the other intelligence collection organizations in our Government. But, I also think we have to have some operational activity.

"Now, we cannot compete in this very real world if you are just going to tie the United States with one hand behind its back and everybody else has got two good hands to carry out their operations."

President Gerald R. Ford CBS News Interview, 21 April 1975

"AS CONFLICT AND RIVALRY persist in the world, our United States intelligence capabilities must be the best in the world. The crippling of our foreign intelligence services increases the danger of American involvement in direct armed conflict. Our adversaries are encouraged to attempt new adventures while our own ability to monitor events and to influence events short of military action is undermined. Without effective intelligence capability, the United States stands blindfolded and hobbled."

President Gerald R. Ford, State of the Union address, 19 January 1976

"GENERAL DOUGLAS MACARTHUR once said that in war there is no substitute for victory. Let me assure you that in peace there is no substitute for intelligence. The time is long overdue for the men and women of the American intelligence community to receive the praise and the gratitude of the Nation that you have so conscientiously served. I have and I will continue to give voice publicly to that gratitude.

"As every President since World War II, I depend on you as one of America's first lines of defense. Every morning, as a result of your efforts, an intelligence report is delivered to my desk which is complete, concise, perceptive, and responsible.

"As a result, I am fully aware of the tremendous effort, the tremendous teamwork that goes into it and all of the other intelligence reports that I receive that are so vital to the making of sound policy decisions on national security. And let me express my personal gratitude for this fine work."

President Gerald R. Ford Swearing-in ceremony of George Bush as DCI, 30 January 1976

" ... WE MUST MAINTAIN A STRONG and effective intelligence capability in the United States... . To be effective, our foreign policy must be based upon a clear understanding of the international environment. To operate without adequate and timely intelligence information will cripple our security in a world that is still hostile to our freedoms.

"Nor can we confine our intelligence to the question of whether there will be an imminent military attack. We also need information about the world's economy, about political and social trends, about food supply, population growth, and, certainly, about terrorism.

"To protect our security diplomatically, militarily, and economically, we must have a comprehensive intelligence capability. The United States is a peace-loving nation and our foreign policy is designed to lessen the threat of war as well as a recession. In recent years, we have made substantial progress toward that goal ...

"Yet, we also recognize that the best way to secure the peace is to be fully prepared to defend our interest... . A central pillar of our strength is, of course, our armed forces. But another great pillar must be our intelligence community—the dedicated men and women who gather vital information around the world and carry out missions that advance our interests in the world."

President Gerald R. Ford News conference, 17 February 1976

"IN CARRYING OUT MY Constitutional responsibilities to manage and conduct foreign policy and provide for the Nation's defense, I believe it essential to have the best possible intelligence about the capabilities, intentions and activities of governments and other entities and individuals abroad. To this end, the foreign intelligence agencies of the United States play a vital role in collecting and analyzing information related to the national defense and foreign policy."

President Gerald R. Ford Message to Congress, 18 February 1976

"I HAD TWO FUNDAMENTAL objectives [in the comprehensive programs for the reorganization of our intelligence community]:

"Number one, to strengthen the Central Intelligence Agency and the remainder of the intelligence community. Under no circumstances will my Administration, in any way whatsoever, hurt—and the last thing I would do would be to dismantle—the Central Intelligence Agency. It is a good, fine, excellently operated, totally necessary part of our Federal Government, and we are going to have, as we have had, the best intelligence community that any country could possibly have.

“Secondly, there were some abuses. Let’s be honest and frank. They were minor in total although serious where they were actually committed. Under the new organization with the new restrictions that I have applied, there will be no abuses.”

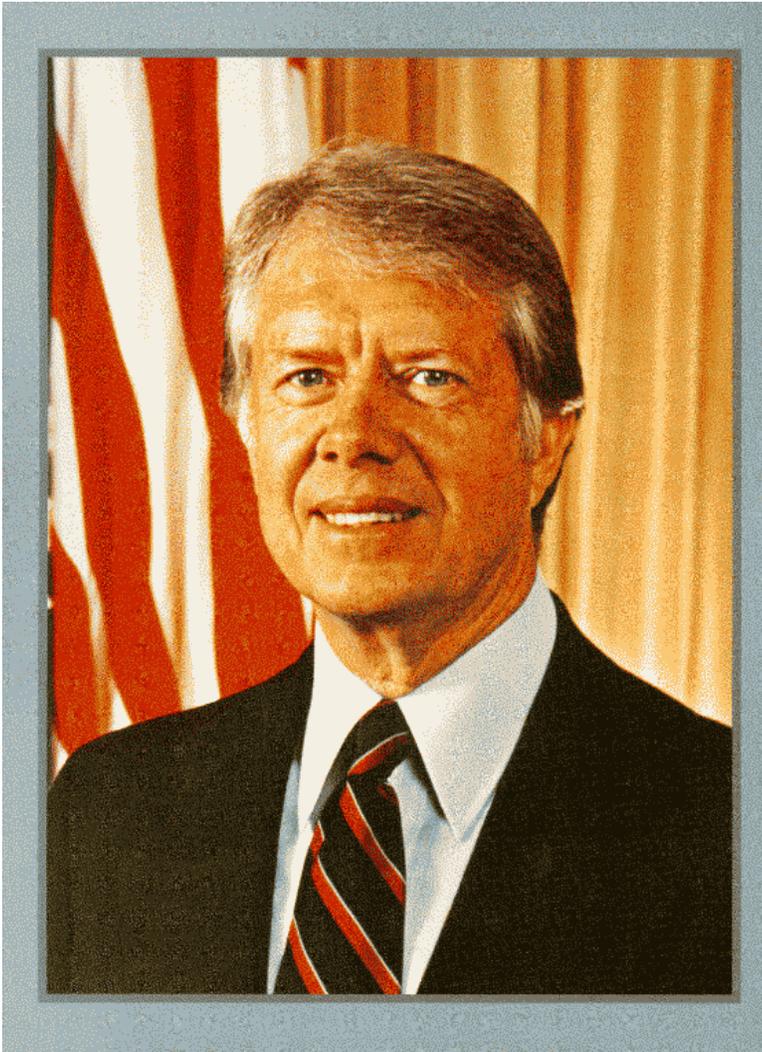
President Gerald R. Ford, Dover, New Hampshire, 20 February 1976

“THE INTELLIGENCE NEEDS OF the `70s and beyond require the use of highly sophisticated technology. Furthermore, there are new areas of concern which demand our attention. No longer does this country face only military threats. New threats are presented in such areas as economic reprisal and international terrorism.

“In developing the Nation’s offensive and defensive strategy to conduct foreign policy and provide for the national security, we must be able to deal with problems covering the broadest spectrum of activities.”

President Gerald R. Ford, 11 March 1976

Jimmy Carter, 1977-81



Intelligence issues occupied a great deal of President Jimmy Carter's attention. He and his Director of Central Intelligence Adm. Stansfield Turner worked to redefine the relationship between Congress and the Intelligence Community, and in Executive Order 12036 Carter gave his DCI increased authority to manage the Intelligence Community.

In 1979 Iranian militants seized the US Embassy in Tehran after the Shah fled and Ayatollah Khomeini declared Iran to be an Islamic republic. In December of the same year Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan. CIA gave the Carter administration extensive support in both crises.

"[BUT] WE HAVE GOT TO HAVE a good intelligence system in order to protect the security of our country. We sometimes relax too much in peacetime. We've got to establish this relationship on a permanent, workable basis while we are at peace. It's one of the best means to make sure we don't have war. And if we should ever be in danger in a time of

crisis, it's too late to build up an adequate intelligence community, including our worldwide system of information."

President Jimmy Carter Department of State, 24 February 1977

"[IT'S] DIFFICULT FOR SOMEONE in my position to distinguish between the appearance of things and the actual facts, the reality of them. And you do a superb job in trying to bring to me and others who make opinions and then make decisions about what our Nation should do in the pursuit of our own goals and purposes, in the enhancement of our own ideals and principles.

"I'd like to say in closing that I appreciate what you are, what you do, the high professionalism, training, education, experience that you bring to your job and which you demonstrate every day with your good work, the honesty and integrity that you present to me and to your other superiors, to the Congress, to the public for critical examination."

President Jimmy Carter, Central Intelligence Agency 16 August 1978

President Carter addresses CIA employees at Headquarters while DCI Adm. Stansfield Turner looks on.



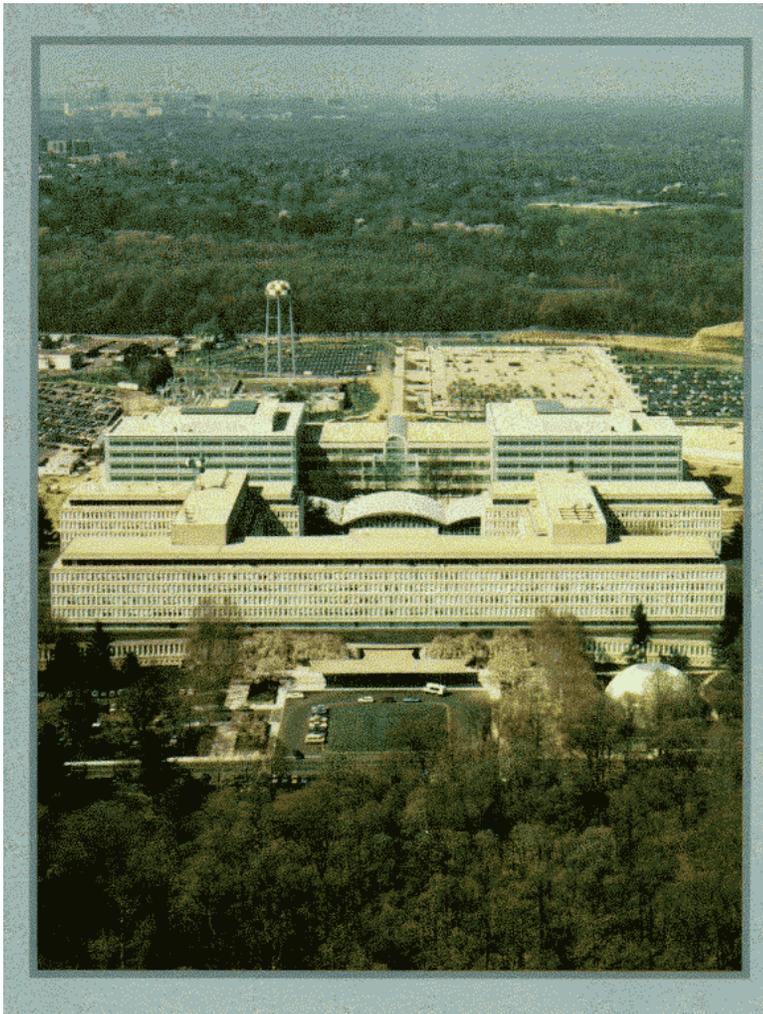
Central Intelligence Agency

"[IT] IS ESSENTIAL THAT I AND those who aid me in the formulation of our Nation's foreign policy make our decisions on the basis of accurate information about the capabilities and intentions of other countries and of forces that shape world events."

President Jimmy Carter, 14 October 1980

“OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS ARE critically dependent on a strong and effective intelligence capability. We will maintain and strengthen the intelligence capabilities needed to assure our national security. Maintenance of and continued improvements in our multi-faceted intelligence effort are essential if we are to cope successfully with the turbulence and uncertainties of today’s world.”

President Jimmy Carter, State of the Union address, 16 January 1981



Ronald Reagan, 1981-89



Covert action gained a new urgency under President Ronald Reagan and his Director of Central Intelligence William Casey. The United States met the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan with aid to the Afghan *mujahidin*. Reagan also directed CIA to support the anti-Communist Contras fighting the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua.

In December 1981, Reagan issued Executive Order 12333, which gave CIA the exclusive right to conduct covert action unless the President decided that another agency would be more appropriate to attain a specific objective.

During Reagan's second term, CIA expanded its headquarters complex in Northern Virginia. Like President Eisenhower did for the original building, President Reagan helped break ground for the addition in 1984.

"IT IS NOT ENOUGH, OF COURSE, simply to collect information. Thoughtful analysis is vital

to sound decisionmaking. The goal of our intelligence analysts can be nothing short of the truth, even when that truth is unpleasant or unpopular. I have asked for honest, objective analysis, and I shall expect nothing less. When there is disagreement, as there often is, on the difficult questions of our time, I expect those honest differences of view to be fully expressed.”

President Ronald Reagan, 4 December 1981

“WHETHER YOU WORK IN LANGLEY or a faraway nation, whether your tasks are in operations or analysis sections, it is upon your intellect and integrity, your wit and intuition that the fate of freedom rests for millions of your countrymen and for many millions more all around the globe. You are the trip-wire across which the forces of repression and tyranny must stumble in their quest for global domination. You, the men and women of the CIA, are the eyes and ears of the free world.”

President Ronald Reagan, 23 June 1982



*President Reagan and
DCI William Casey.*

Central Intelligence Agency

“[WE'RE] RIGHTLY REGARDED AS a candid and open people who pride ourselves on our free society. And yet our secret services, our spies and intelligence agencies—from Nathan

Hale to Midway, from OSS to CIA—have not written just a striking, stirring chapter in our history but have often provided the key to victory in war and the preservation of our freedom during an uneasy peace.”

President Ronald Reagan Remarks to former members of the OSS, 29 May 1986

“WE CAN NEVER LEGISLATE AN end to terrorism. However, we must remain resolute in our commitment to confront this criminal behavior in every way—diplomatically, economically, legally, and, when necessary, militarily. First-rate intelligence remains the key element in each of these areas. We will continue to improve our ability to predict, prevent, and respond to threats of terrorism with an expanded intelligence-gathering capability.”

President Ronald Reagan, 27 August 1986



President Reagan signs the Intelligence Identities Protection Act, 23 June 1982. Left to right behind the President are Sen. John Warner (R. VA), Rep. C.W. Bill Young (R. FLA), Rep. Romano L. Mazzoli (D. KY), Sen. Jeremiah Denton (R. AL), Sen. Strom Thurmond (R. SC), Sen. John H. Chafee (R. RI), and DCI William Casey.

(Photo)

“[UNFORTUNATELY], MANY OF your successes can only be celebrated in private. But those of us in the executive branch and the Congress know about these gallant efforts and recognize, for example, verifying arms reduction agreements and the continued expansion of freedom must rest on a solid intelligence foundation. So, we have a responsibility to assure the American people that they have the best intelligence service in the world, and that it is staffed by honorable men and women who work within the framework of our laws and our shared values.

“[But] our liberty, our way of life, requires eternal vigilance. The United States cannot survive in the modern world without a vigorous intelligence agency, capable of acting swiftly and in secret.”

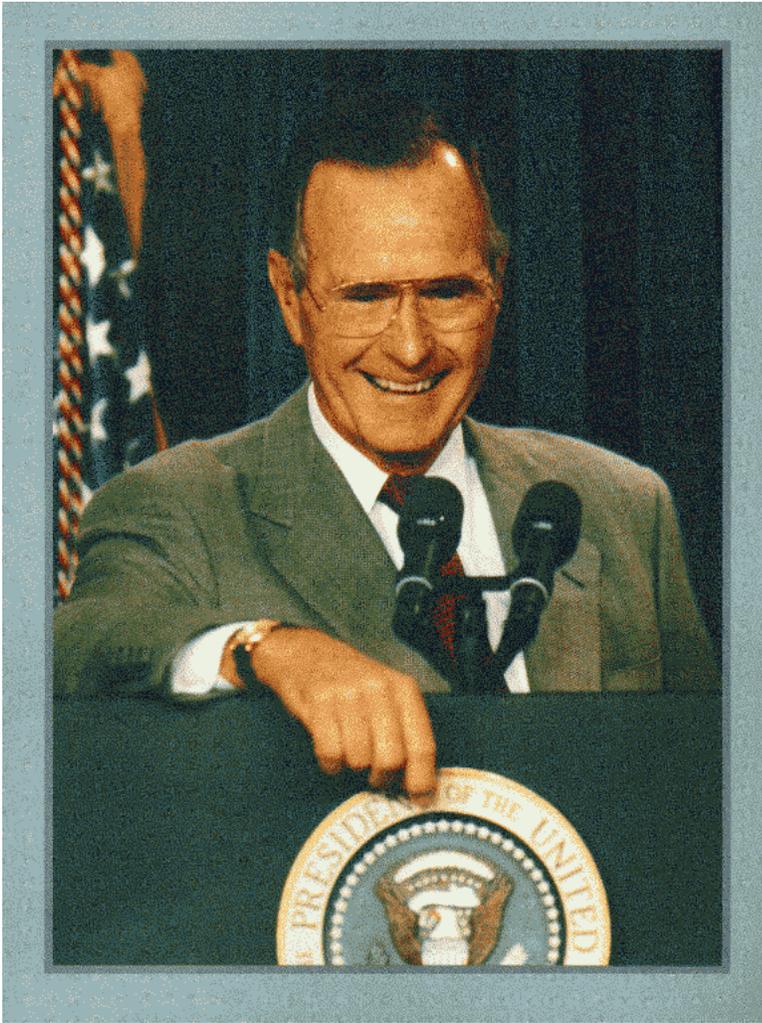
President Ronald Reagan Swearing-in ceremony of William H. Webster as DCI, 26 May 1987



Central Intelligence Agency

President Reagan helps break ground for the addition to CIA's Headquarters, 24 May 1984.

George Bush, 1989-93



George Bush is the only former Director of Central Intelligence to become President. His experience as DCI gave him a keen understanding of the intelligence process and product.

With the demise of the Soviet Union, Bush declared that a “New World Order” had emerged, perhaps less dangerous than when the US and USSR had nuclear weapons targeted on one another, but dangerous nonetheless. The war against Iraq and the US intervention in Somalia made this point clear. Throughout his visits to CIA headquarters, President Bush emphasized that intelligence is still a vital commodity in the post-Soviet world.

“A STRONG NATION REQUIRES a strong intelligence organization.”

President George Bush, News conference, 8 May 1991



One of CIA's Presidential briefers, Charles Peters, briefs President Bush at the White House. From the President clockwise are Peters, DCI Judge William Webster, Chief of Staff to the President John Sununu, Assistant to the President and Deputy for National Security Affairs Robert M. Gates, and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Gen. Brent Scowcroft, USAF (Ret.).

“BUT I AM CONFIDENT THAT history will honor the “cold warriors” of the Agency, of CIA: The men and women who struggled in the shadows, sent messages over the airwaves, smuggled forbidden books and magazines, all to help pierce the Iron Curtain. History will praise the secret strategies and operations, the personal valor and organizational excellence that gave our intelligence community success in its cold war mission.

“[T]he challenge of the excellent men and women in Langley and elsewhere in the intelligence community, is to move beyond the cold war to the complex problems of the 21st century. Tomorrow’s intelligence community will need to consolidate and extend freedom’s gains against totalitarianism. Intelligence will enhance our protection against terrorism, against the drug menace. Intelligence will help our policymakers understand emerging economic opportunities and challenges. It will help us thwart anyone who tries to steal our technology or otherwise refuses to play by the competitive rules. It will help us seek peace and avert conflicts in regions of dangerous tension.

“[I] am absolutely convinced—and I have a responsibility, I think, to the American people to see that this is true—but I am absolutely convinced that we have the finest intelligence service in the world. It is second to none. And as President of the United States of America I intend to keep it that way, to support it, to strengthen it, and to honor those who serve with such selfless dedication.”

President George Bush Remarks to former members of the OSS, 23 October 1991

*President Bush and
DCI Judge William
Webster in Webster's
office at CIA
Headquarters.*



Central Intelligence Agency

“WE NEED A STRONG intelligence community to consolidate and extend freedom’s gains against totalitarianism. We need intelligence to verify historic arms reduction accords. We need it to suppress terrorism and drug trafficking. And we must have intelligence to thwart anyone who tries to steal our technology or otherwise refuses to play by fair economic rules. We must have vigorous intelligence capabilities if we’re to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. And so, this is truly a life-or-death mission.

In sum, intelligence remains our basic national instrument for anticipating danger, military, political, and economic. Intelligence is and always will be our first line of defense, enabling us to ward off emerging threats whenever possible before any damage is done. It can also be a means of anticipating opportunities.”

President George Bush, Swearing-in ceremony of Robert Gates as DCI, 12 November 1991



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An informal Presidential briefing. From President Bush clockwise are CIA Presidential briefer Charles Peters, Vice President Dan Quayle, Secretary of State James Baker, Chief of Staff to the President John Sununu, Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney, Assistant to the President and Deputy for National Security Affairs Robert M. Gates, and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Gen. Brent Scowcroft, USAF (Ret.).



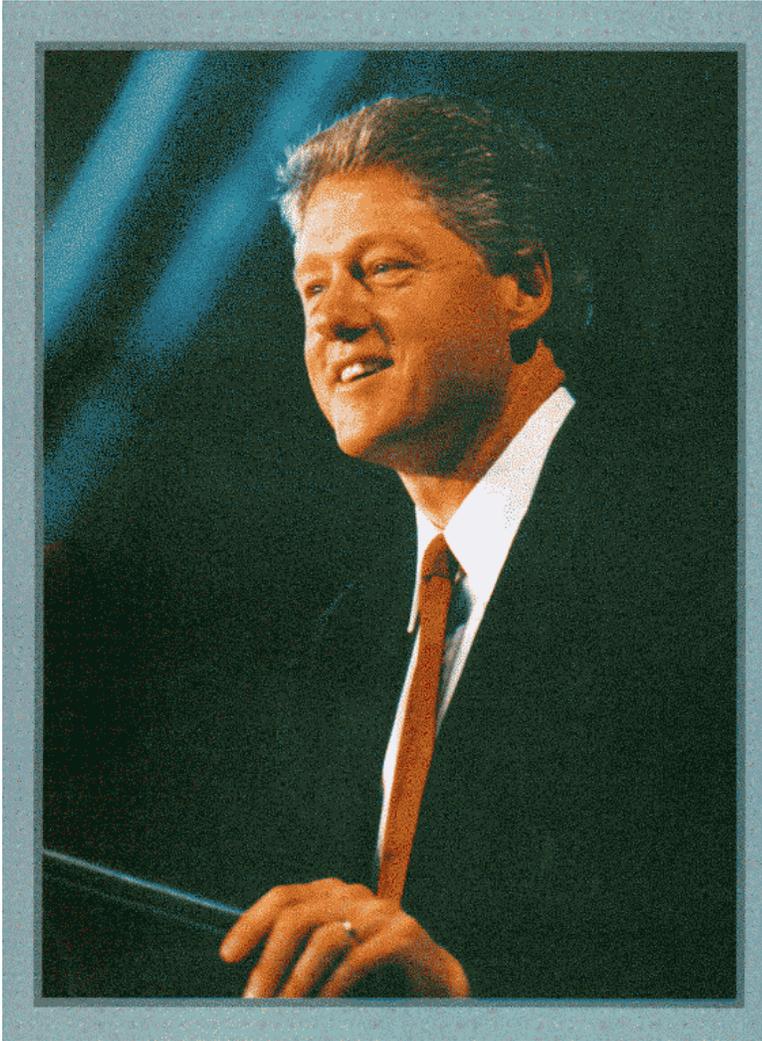
President Bush and DCI Robert M. Gates.

[AND] I THINK THAT THE WORK of this Agency and of the intelligence community through the years really probably will never get the credit that it deserves for effecting these changes [in the fall of the former Soviet Union], for your role in bringing about these changes and having Presidents hopefully make informed decisions on the world we face.”

President George Bush, Central Intelligence Agency, 8 January 1993

William J. Clinton, 1993-2001

*Content updated on April 21, 2009



President Clinton is the first President to begin his administration in the post-Soviet world. Like his predecessor George Bush, President Clinton recognizes that world events still have the capacity to harm US interests even if the threat of nuclear war is dramatically reduced. To protect American interests and promote the peaceful resolution of disputes, he has sent US troops to Haiti to restore democracy and to Bosnia as peace-keepers.

The President has visited CIA twice. Each time he has expressed his admiration for, trust in, and thanks to the men and women of CIA for the work they do.

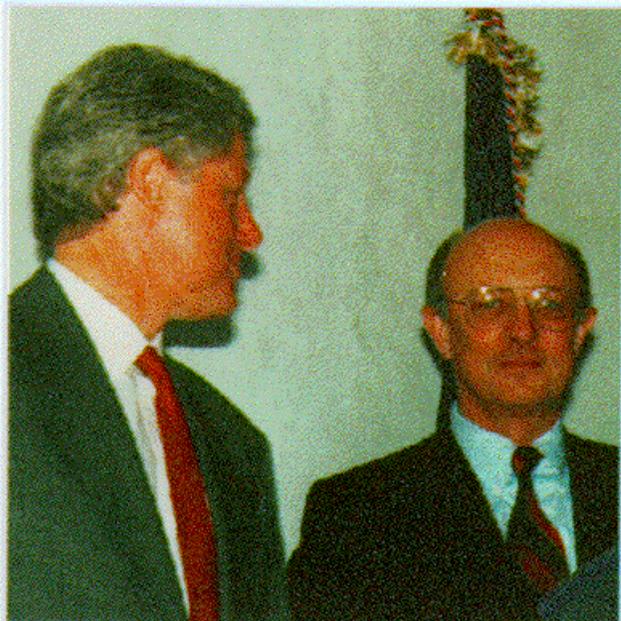
“[EVERY] MORNING THE President begins the day asking, ‘What happened overnight? What do we know? How do we know it?’ Like my predecessors, I have to look to the intelligence community for the answers to those questions. I look to you to warn me and,

through me, our Nation of the threats, to spotlight the important trends in the world, to describe dynamics that could affect our interests around the world.

“Those activities are particularly important now. The end of the cold war increases our security in many ways. You helped to win that cold war, and it is fitting that a piece of the Berlin Wall stands here on these grounds. But even now, this new world remains dangerous and, in many ways, more complex and more difficult to fathom. We need to understand more than we do about the challenges of ethnic conflict, militant nationalism, terrorism, and the proliferation of all kinds of weapons. Accurate, reliable intelligence is the key to understanding each of these challenges. And without it, it is difficult to make good decisions in a crisis or in the long-term.”

President William J. Clinton, Central Intelligence Agency, 4 January 1994

“INTELLIGENCE REMAINS A critical element of our national power and influence. For over 40 years bipartisan support for the work performed by U.S. intelligence has been essential to the creation of an intelligence capability that is second to none. While the world has changed in dramatic ways, our need to retain the advantage that U.S. intelligence provides our country remains constant.



Central Intelligence Agency

President Clinton and DCI R. James Woolsey.

“With the end of the cold war we must renew and reinvigorate this bipartisan support. The foundation for this support must begin with a thorough assessment of the kind of intelligence community we will need to address the security challenges of the future. Our objective is to strengthen U.S. intelligence, to ensure it has the management, skills, and resources needed to successfully pursue our national security interests through the next decade and beyond. It is an effort to which I attach the highest personal priority.”

President William J. Clinton, 2 February 1995

“[THE] COLD WAR IS OVER, BUT many new dangers have taken its place: regional security threats; the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; terrorists who, as we have seen, can strike at the very heart of our own major cities; drug trafficking and international crime. The decisive advantage United States intelligence provides this country is, therefore, as important as it has ever been.

“As President, I’ve had the opportunity to appreciate just how important that intelligence is to our national security. Most Americans never know the victories our intelligence provides or the crisis it helps us to avoid, but they do learn about its occasional setbacks. And as we prepare our intelligence community to face new challenges, we must not forget its many successes.”

President William J. Clinton, Announcing the nomination of Michael Carns to be DCI, 8 February 1995



President Clinton and DCI John Deutch lay a wreath at CIA's memorial for employees giving their lives for the United States.

“IN THE YEARS SINCE [THE National Security Act created CIA], the men and women of the CIA and its sister agencies have done more than most Americans will or can ever know to keep our Nation strong and secure and to advance the cause of democracy and freedom around the world.

“Today, because the cold war is over, some say that we should and can step back from the world and that we don’t need intelligence as much as we used to, that we ought to severely cut the intelligence budget. A few have even urged us to scrap the central intelligence service. I think these views are profoundly wrong. I believe making deep cuts in intelligence during peacetime is comparable to canceling your health insurance when you’re feeling fine.

“Every morning I start my day with an intelligence report. The intelligence I receive informs just about every foreign policy decision we make. It’s easy to take it for granted, but we couldn’t do without it. Unique intelligence makes it less likely that our forces will be sent into battle, less likely that American lives will have to put at risk. It gives us a chance to prevent crises instead of forcing us to manage them.”

President William J. Clinton, Central Intelligence Agency, 14 July 1995

The Presidents' Directors of Central Intelligence, 1946-96

President	Director of Central Intelligence
Harry S. Truman	RAdm. Sidney W. Souers, USNR 23 January-10 June 1946 Lt. Gen. Hoyt S. Vandenberg, USA (Army Air Forces) 10 June 1946-1 May 1947 RAdm. Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter, USN 1 May 1947-7 October 1950 Gen. Walter Bedell Smith, USA 7 October 1950-9 February 1953
Dwight D. Eisenhower	Gen. Walter Bedell Smith, USA 7 October 1950-9 February 1953 Allen W. Dulles 26 February 1953-29 November 1961
John F. Kennedy	John A. McCone 29 November 1961-28 April 1965
Lyndon B. Johnson	John A. McCone 29 November 1961-28 April 1965 VAdm. William F. Raborn, Jr., USN (Ret.) 28 April 1965-30 June 1966 Richard M. Helms 30 June 1966-2 February 1973
Richard M. Nixon	Richard M. Helms 30 June 1966-2 February 1973 James R. Schlesinger 2 February 1973-2 July 1973 William E. Colby 4 September 1973-30 January 1976
Gerald R. Ford	William E. Colby 4 September 1973-30 January 1976 George Bush 30 January 1976-20 January 1977
Jimmy Carter	Adm. Stansfield Turner 9 March 1977-20 January 1981
Ronald Reagan	William J. Casey 28 January 1981-29 January 1987 Judge William H. Webster

26 May 1987-31 August 1991

George Bush

Judge William H. Webster

26 May 1987-31 August 1991

Robert M. Gates

6 November 1991-20 January 1993

William J. Clinton

R. James Woolsey

5 February 1993-9 January 1995

John M. Deutch

Since 10 May 1995
