

# Valediction

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*On November 28, 1961, Allen Welsh Dulles was presented the National Security Medal by the President. These pages are taken from a transcript of the ceremony and from a USIB resolution of the same date.*

## **VALEDICTION**

### **The President:**

Mr. Dulles, Mr. McCone, and members of the Central Intelligence Agency. I want to first of all 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 about myself.) But I am sure you realize how important 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 am confident that in the future you will continue to merit the appreciation of our country as you have in the past.

I am also particularly grateful because this ceremony gives us all an opportunity to pay tribute to an outstanding public servant. Allen Dulles' career as a citizen of this country and one who has made his vast resources, personal resources, available to this country stretches all the way back to the administration of President Woodrow Wilson. I know of no other American in the history of this country who has served in seven administrations of seven Presidents, varying from party to party, from point of view to point of view, from problem to problem; and yet at the

end of each administration each President of the United States has paid tribute to his service, and also has counted Allen Dulles as their friend.

This is an extraordinary record, and I know that all of you who have worked with him understand why this record has been made. I regard Allen Dulles as an almost unique figure in our country. I know of no man who brings a greater sense of personal commitment to his work, who has less pride in office than he has. And therefore I was most gratified when we were permitted today to come out to this Agency to present this award to him in your presence. I would like to read the citation.

Allen Welsh Dulles is hereby awarded the National Security Medal--He has every other decoration, and so we wanted to give him this one--as principal intelligence advisor to the President of the United States. Mr. Dulles has fulfilled the responsibilities of his office with unswerving purpose and high dedication. His ten years of service in the Central Intelligence Agency have been the climax of a lifetime of unprecedented and devoted public service. Beginning in the first world war and stretching through the administration of seven Presidents, the outstanding contributions that Mr. Dulles has made to the security of the United States have been based upon a profound knowledge of the role of the intelligence officer, a broad understanding of international relations, and a naturally keen judgment of man and affairs. The zestful energy and undaunted integrity of his service to his country will be an enduring example to the profession he has done so much to create.

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**Mr. Dulles:**

Mr. President, distinguished guests, and members of the Central Intelligence Agency. I am deeply touched and deeply grateful for the words of the President and for the honor he has bestowed upon me.

It is almost eleven years to a day that I came down to Washington at the behest, I might almost say the order, of Walter Bedell Smith, a very great general and a very great man and my predecessor. I was then practicing the law. Bedell called me up and said, "You have written a report on how this Agency should be run, you and a few others, and you had better come down here." Mr. President, that was eleven years ago; and I am still here. It was in part the fascination of the work, the opportunities for service, and the indulgence and kindness of three Presidents, including President Kennedy, that have kept me on.

The Agency was then young, in its infancy. It is still fairly young; but, Mr. President, I feel that I can assure you that we have here today a corps of well trained men and women devoted to their country, to their service, and, Mr. President, to you as their Commander in Chief. I feel proud of them, and I have been proud to have served with them and to visit them in all the corners of the earth where they are working in the national interest. They are now looking forward to serving their new chief, John McCone, my old friend.

To the Agency personnel here, a word of thanks. We have known good times and bad and, as the President has just said, our successes are unsung and our failures are advertised. I commend you to your new chief--and I can do that with assurance--and I have commended him to you.

Mr. President, as I close my work here I turn over my duties to Mr. McCone. I want to thank you for your constant support, help, and encouragement, for your understanding of the needs and the problems and the possibilities of this Agency. I know I am leaving my work in good hands. I believe the future of this Agency and service to the country is one that is assured. And as I receive this medal I receive it, Mr. President, not really in a personal capacity, but I receive it for all of you, because I know that in giving it to me he is giving it in a sense to all of the personnel of the Agency. My thanks, Mr. President.

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### **The U.S. Intelligence Board:**

Allen Welsh Dulles has made a unique contribution to intelligence. For a period longer than any other man he presided with distinction over the destiny of the foreign intelligence activities of the United States Government. Director of Central Intelligence since early 1953, he served concurrently as Chairman of the Intelligence Advisory Committee and the United States Communications Intelligence Board, later becoming first Chairman of the newly established United States Intelligence Board.

During the era of his leadership the intelligence community made notable progress. A single Board was created to guide the national intelligence effort. Within the community a greater measure of unity was realized, closer integration developed and more effective over-all coordination achieved. The quality of the coordinated intelligence produced at nearly all levels of the community improved materially. Most

importantly, this period saw intelligence become an increasingly significant component of the decision-making process for national policy.

Mr. Dulles played a vital role in all of these developments, not only by virtue of his position as Chairman of USIB but also through the effectiveness of his leadership and the force of his personality. Mr. Dulles' contribution to the community and the cause of intelligence has been extraordinary in other ways. Through his lifetime interest in intelligence, service under several Presidents and reputation for integrity he has long enjoyed the confidence and respect of statesmen and world leaders, both at home and abroad. Perhaps no American has done more than he to enhance the stature of intelligence as a profession.

But those who worked closely with Allen Dulles will probably remember best the impressive personal qualities which he brought to his profession. A man of broad interests and long experience in foreign affairs, he combined a penchant for scholarship with a sound instinct for the practical. Articulate, objective and fair-minded, he encouraged honest dissent without sacrificing principle or personal convictions. We note that his unusual talent for intelligence estimating, first apparent when he published an appraisal of the Boer War situation at the age of eight, has long since been duly recognized by Presidents, Prime Ministers and Kings.

In sum, throughout his career Allen Dulles epitomized the qualities of an ideal intelligence officer. His colleagues on the United States Intelligence Board, his country and the Free World will long remain in his debt.

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