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INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY TO U.S. INTELLIGENCE: THE COLD WAR AND BEYOND

BODY:

Statement of the
 Director of Central Intelligence
James Woolsey
 Before the
 Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence
 US House of Representatives
 H-405, The Capitol
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INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY TO U.S. INTELLIGENCE:
THE COLD WAR AND BEYOND

I appreciate the opportunity to address this Committee on the issue of increased accessibility to CIA documents and resources. Let me begin my remarks by bringing you up to date on an issue that I know is of key importance to this committee: CIA **declassification** and release of the documents related to the assassination of President Kennedy.

-- We have worked hard -- and successfully -- to meet the August 22 Congressional deadline for the **declassification** and release of the documents in our possession: as of that date we transferred 125,000 pages to the National Archives. In addition, some 20,000 pages compiled by the House Assassinations Committee have been temporarily withheld pending approval from the Congress to transfer them to the Archives. Another 7,000 pages contain information from the FBI and other agencies and are being coordinated with them prior to release.

-- We withheld the remaining 10,000 pages pending further review, and we expect to declassify and release 80-90 percent of them within the next month, operating under the presumption that every document is to be released if at all

possible. A small percentage will be withheld under those terms of the JFK Assassinations Records Act which protect information such as agents' names, privacy, and foreign relations.

-- In addition, we are processing 73 reels of microfilm containing the equivalent of 150,000 pages. The microfilm contains a good deal of duplicative material as well as materials such as personnel or security files that may not be releasable because of irrelevancy or privacy considerations. We plan to ask the Presidential Review Board to determine which portions should be released to the Archives and which should be withheld.

Mr. Chairman, the declassification of the JFK assassination records should not be viewed in isolation, but as paralleling CIA's major initiative to increase public accessibility to its documents and resources. This program addresses not only how we are dealing with past intelligence records, but how we will deal with accessibility to CIA analysis and documents in the future. I would like to take the opportunity of this hearing to discuss this effort in greater detail, beginning first with declassification of Cold War records.

-- I have approved a new initiative to release under a "block review" analyses and national intelligence estimates on topics of special historical value that are thirty years or older. This means that for these records we will be doing away with the painstaking, line-by-line review in favor of scanning documents so that they may be declassified at greater speed. More than 350 estimates and thousands of analytical papers fall into this category. Some of the work we will be declassifying in this manner addresses major -- indeed seminal -- events in the Cold War: the Greek-Turkish crisis of 1947, the Korean War, and our deepening involvement in Vietnam in the early 1960s.

I have also directed review for declassification of significant Cold War covert actions more than 30 years old. These include the following:

activities in support of democracy in France and Italy in the 1940s and 1950s;

support to anti-Sukarno rebels in Indonesia in 1958;

support to Tibetan guerrillas in the 1950s and early 1960s;

operations against North Korea during the Korean War; and,

operations in Laos in the 1960s.

In reviewing these actions for declassification, we are building on the steps my predecessor took in announcing plans to declassify records on the Bay of Pigs operation, the coups against President Arbenz of Guatemala and against Prime Minister Mossadeq in Iran, and operations in the Dominican Republic and the Congo.

-- We are also completing declassification work begun in 1992 of more than 500 National Intelligence Estimates on the Soviet Union, spanning the period 1947 to 1983. Two hundred seventy-seven of these were transferred to the National Archives last week. Scholars, researchers and the public at large will be able to see and to judge the analyses and the efforts the Intelligence Community made over the course of nearly four decades to meet the challenge of what Winston Churchill once called, "A riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma," the nature, motives and policies of the Soviet Union.

Let me note one crisis in particular which deserves special mention. For decades Berlin stood at the heart of the battle in the Cold War, and then on one spectacular day in November nearly four years ago, it stood as the symbol of the Cold War's end and of freedom's triumph.

On a personal note, I feel a particular kinship with the struggles that the courageous citizens of Berlin went through during those years and with the East-West crises that centered there. My first real exposure to the Cold War was working in a West German Red Cross refugee camp as a volunteer in Berlin, just a few yards from the sector dividing line, the summer before the 1961 crisis when the wall went up.

We will be declassifying our files on the dramatic events in Berlin during the height of the Cold War. It is even the case that researchers in the United States will also be able to benefit from files discharged by the Russian Intelligence Service -- the successor organization to the KGB -- which is also undertaking research efforts over the intelligence activities of the 1950s and early 1960's in Berlin.

These steps I have outlined are only part of the story. I intend also to release next year the first unclassified history of the CIA. More will come as we expand our efforts to increase the accessibility of our work to the American people.

Mr. Chairman, these initiatives are part of a broad program we are undertaking, one driven by three considerations:

First, the initiatives are designed to support the President's goal of changing the way we handle intelligence information -- its protection, classification and release. To further the President's objectives, Secretary Aspin and I have joined together to establish the Joint Security Commission. This effort is far broader than assessing classification, and we will be reporting on it to you at another time, but improved accessibility is one of its major goals. The Commission's mandate is indeed immense: to examine all security practices and procedures within the entire intelligence community and the Department of Defense, including classification rules, personnel security procedures and industrial security practices.

The second reason for these initiatives is to help serious scholars and researchers understand recent history as completely as we can. To remain confident as we face the future we must learn from our past, and that learning must be based on information that is both accurate and as comprehensive as possible. Just as revelations about intelligence required the history of World War II to be rewritten, so too the information we have may require a rewriting of critical events in the Cold War. The events of the last four years have rendered obsolete much of the language of our generation -- the language of containment, of confrontation, of cold war with the Soviet Union -- and with it the need to keep much of this information classified. Scholars and historians have researched and written a great deal on the key events of the Cold War. It is time that we contribute to their work and to our collective understanding of this extraordinary period in history.

But declassifying Cold War records is more than helping historians -- it goes to the very fabric of our democratic system. Thus, the third consideration in launching our initiative is the fact that our society is an open one -- and indeed, its openness is one of its strengths. Thomas Jefferson once wrote, "I would rather be exposed to the inconveniences attending too much liberty than those attending too small a degree of it." We work for the American people. When the protection of certain information is no longer required, then we owe it to our citizens to work hard to disclose as much of that information as we can, consistent with our mission -- warts and all.

At the same time, let me add a word of caution.

As these documents make their way into the National Archives and into the hands of historians and researchers some of the material will remain classified, even thirty years after the fact. This is not because we are arbitrarily setting limits to accessibility, it is because we are honoring two fundamental principles:

The first principle is that we will never betray the trust of people who provide us with critical help, whether during the bleak hours of the Cold War or today. I am bound by statute to protect their identities from public disclosure, and I intend to honor this obligation. For many of these people the United States was not and is not defined by the force of arms but by the strength of ideas: of the rule of law, of democratic principles, of individual rights. For them the liberties we Americans secured at birth were but hopes and dreams. For those in the East who dared to imagine the fall of the Berlin Wall, and for those who helped us to make it happen, the best way to express our gratitude for their heroism is to respect their dignity and their privacy. The choice to speak out and acknowledge their cooperation with us must be theirs, not ours. We owe them that loyalty, and we will not betray it. Ever.

The second principle which guides us is that we will not disclose any information which could jeopardize the nation's security. Our intelligence assets and capabilities are precious commodities -- we invest heavily to develop and maintain them -- and there are those who would benefit from that information to the detriment of our security. Whether we are discussing the technical systems such as satellites that collect information or the means we create to sort and provide access to the information collected, we must ensure that today's and tomorrow's adversaries do not invite themselves into our deliberations over how to conduct intelligence. We cannot call a national "town meeting," put an electronic fence around the United States and have a frank discussion with the American people about programs, budgets, or other such intelligence issues and expect the contents of such a discussion to remain within the family. When we divulge information about intelligence sources and methods, directly or indirectly, it will be available instantaneously and worldwide -- to our adversaries -- with all the consequences of that disclosure.

Mr. Chairman, I want to take the opportunity of this session to go beyond discussing records or new procedures for declassification. To me and to my colleagues, greater accessibility does not end with an accounting of the past, it encompasses how we will act in the future.

We live in a world full of hope, one that will enable intelligence to assist policymakers in tackling new challenges.

-- In a hopeful world we can turn our attention to help with the environment. We have established an Environmental

Task Force that gives a group of distinguished scientists access to CIA data and imagery to help us assess how to use intelligence for the study of such phenomena as global warming and depletion of rain forests.

-- In a hopeful world we can look beyond man-made crises and tackle those wrought by nature. We are providing disaster relief support to FEMA and DMA through the release of satellite imagery in appropriate form.

-- And in a hopeful world, we can strengthen the hand of the international community in its efforts to ensure the peace and to alleviate suffering on a mass scale. We are making our intelligence assets and analysis available in support of humanitarian missions, as part of multilateral coalitions, and in support of U.N. peacekeeping operations. The fact remains, before you can have a successful operation like Provide Comfort, you need to have the successful capability to provide information.

However, we also live in a world where hope has to coexist warily with danger. To be blunt, some things don't change: intimidation, coercion, violence, and terror are still viewed by some leaders, groups, and countries as acceptable -- even desirable -- tools for advancing their particular agendas. Some things change fitfully: witness the painful road to political and economic reform in the Russian Federation and throughout the former Soviet Union. Indeed, in March I had the opportunity to outline before this committee some of the critical issues facing the intelligence community. We do not need to search for new missions. They are there waiting for us: proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, drug trafficking, unfair economic competition, and regional, ethnic and national conflicts often generated by historical animosities and fueled by religious extremism.

As I have said in the past, I find little order in this new world. As the President and his Administration work with the members of this committee and their colleagues in the Congress and with our friends and allies overseas to shape the world we will leave to our children, we in the Intelligence Community have to be prepared to do our part to see that threats to the peace do not undermine our national security. And that means that we have to maintain vigorous and vigilant intelligence.

In *Democracy in America*, de Tocqueville wrote that "foreign politics demand scarcely any of those qualities which a democracy possesses." One of the deficiencies he had in mind was our inability to conduct the affairs of state in secret. With all due respect to his insight into America and into democracy, de Tocqueville underestimated our capacity to provide for the nation's security while hewing faithfully to democratic principles and practices.

We can both provide increased accessibility and keep secret -- we and the Congress together -- that for which secrecy is essential to security.

-- We can provide greater accessibility by having an ongoing exchange with this Committee and with the Congress. Since entering office in February, I have testified 14 times either in open or closed session; I have had 77 meetings with members of Congress, either individually or with small groups; and there have been over 850 meetings between Intelligence Community analysts and Members of Congress or their staffs on issues spanning our global foreign policy agenda.

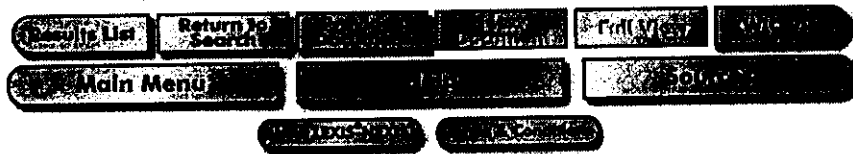
-- We can provide greater accessibility by speaking out publicly to convey to the American people our mission and our work. Since February, I have addressed 16 public groups in academia, scientific, think tank, and private sector organizations to discuss the role of intelligence in the future. Over 100 CIA officers have made appearances before academic, government, professional and civic organizations this year, while members of the Agency's Office of Public Information have addressed over 100 nongovernment organizations.

-- We can provide greater accessibility by strengthening ties to the academic institutions and scholars whose insight and analyses we need and welcome. The mistrust of government engendered by the Vietnam War limited and, in some cases, severed outright the healthy give and take between some of the best of our American academic institutions and our Intelligence Community. In my view, both suffered. Recently, Professors Joe Nye and Ezra Vogel of Harvard have joined the Intelligence Community to manage our key process of producing national estimates. This continues a tradition dating back to William Langer of Harvard who created the Board of National Estimates in 1950. Since 1987, CIA and Harvard have cooperated in a project that provides invaluable assistance to the Intelligence

Community and to Policymakers by critically examining the relationship between intelligence and policy and serving as an independent check on our procedures and analyses. This Friday, Ernest May of Harvard will deliver the keynote address at a CIA-sponsored symposium on teaching intelligence in colleges and universities. Over 200 academics from around the country will be attending. I look on Harvard's involvement as a model for future work with scholars and institutions throughout the country.

Mr. Chairman, in his first inaugural address Thomas Jefferson listed as one of the principles of democratic government, "the diffusion of information." I think I can speak for the members of the Intelligence Community when I say that our effort to provide greater accessibility to past records of intelligence, and to the current and future work of the Intelligence Community will do justice to Jefferson's principles. Our test will be to demonstrate that we can sustain and nurture a dialogue with the American people as we do our part to defend the interests and ideals of the nation.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH



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