
Additional Views of Senator John Warner

IN the spring of 1994, when I drafted the legislation creating this Commission, the Intelligence Community was “under siege” from certain Members of Congress and others in the wake of the Aldrich Ames spy case and the revelations surrounding the NRO Headquarters controversy. Members of Congress were advocating “slash and burn” of the intelligence budget. One even proposed the abolition of the CIA, preferring to merge its functions into other government agencies. It was clear that a “cooling off” period was essential. Time was needed to ensure that our vital intelligence capabilities were not sacrificed as an overreaction to the problems—though very serious—of the day.

My goal in initiating this Commission, and that of other Members of the Senate Intelligence Committee who joined me in this effort, was to provide for a thorough, deliberative, and non-partisan evaluation of the Intelligence Community. Long overdue was an examination of the roles, missions and capabilities of U.S. intelligence agencies in the post-Cold War era. I envisioned a non-partisan Commission, composed of highly qualified members from all sectors, united by a willingness to question the “status quo” and an unfettered desire to make recommendations—when needed—to provide for a more effective, efficient and well-focused intelligence capability for the United States.

A “well done” is owed to this Commission, for it met head-on, and responsibly, the challenges raised by the Congress.

The recommendations contained in this report deserve consideration by the President, the leadership of the Congress, all affected Executive Branch departments and agencies, and, of course, the relevant congressional committees.

While I support the vast majority of the report’s recommendations, I must voice my opposition to that recommendation which proposes “new legislative authority to permit ‘right-sizing’ of certain intelligence agencies” (see Chapter 9). This authority to involuntarily separate certain members of the Intelligence Community workforce would be granted not to achieve “down-sizing” goals—for those goals are already being met. Instead, this recommendation is put forth as a way to “right-size” intelligence agencies—to change the skill mix of the workforce. In my view, this is not an appropriate way to treat loyal and dedicated employees, many of whom perform their duties with a daily measure of personal risk.

As a Member of this Commission and a Member of Congress, I will oppose any legislative proposal which provides for involuntary reductions-in-force which are not required to meet overall “down-sizing” goals. Why should such extraordinary authority be given to the Director of Central Intelligence and the Secretary of Defense when it has not been granted to other government departments or agencies during this period of down-sizing the Federal Government?

The civilian personnel workforce of the Intelligence Community has already been subjected to large-scale reductions in recent years. In 1992, the Congress mandated a reduction of 17.5 percent in Intelligence Community civilian personnel, to be achieved by

the end of Fiscal Year 1997. The Executive Branch subsequently extended this approximately three percent per year reduction to Fiscal Year 1999, which will result in a 23 percent cut to Intelligence Community civilian personnel as compared to the Fiscal Year 1991 baseline.

The personnel reductions already scheduled for the Intelligence Community are almost twice that recommended by the National Performance Review as the target for government-wide reductions in civilian personnel. That Review recommended a reduction of 12 percent, to be achieved by the end of Fiscal Year 1999.

Given the large cuts in personnel already taking place at intelligence agencies, I believe it is unfair to now subject this segment of the federal workforce to yet another reduction—this one potentially drastic, arbitrary and involuntary.

A more equitable way to achieve the restructuring recommended in the Commission report is to provide for additional “early outs” and “buy outs” targeted at particular job skills, much as is being utilized in other government agencies. With the exception of involuntary reductions because of poor performance, “right-sizing” of the Intelligence Community should be accomplished only through voluntary reductions. In addition, in order to achieve the desired skill mix required by our changing intelligence needs, employees should be provided with increased educational and training opportunities to enable them to better serve their agencies.

Although this might not be the most expeditious way to achieve the desired result, it is the one which most closely keeps faith with the people who have served this nation so admirably, and it will go a long way to ensuring a supply of talented and dedicated personnel in the future. We should remember that high morale has a direct correlation to high productivity and a willingness to accept personal risk.

Sound intelligence is the very foundation of our national security. As the report correctly states, “People remain the Intelligence Community’s most vital resource.” We should not squander that resource.