CONSOLIDATED NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE CENTERS: THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON THE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF AMERICA'S NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY

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This thesis examined the suitability of creating regionally and functionally aligned National Intelligence Centers to consolidate the foreign intelligence collection and analysis capabilities of America's intelligence community. It assessed the functional limits of intelligence consolidation by proposing a theoretical model that departed significantly from the largely decentralized community framework in existence since 1947. Research focused on official studies and community literature that specifically addressed the potential impacts of consolidation. Interviews with IC leadership and policymakers focused on identifying consensus regarding the advantages and disadvantages of IC consolidation. Research found significant resistance within the IC to consolidated centers for three main reasons. First, a widespread belief remains that true competitive analysis can only be achieved in a "stovepiped" system that preserves unique agency cultures and perspectives at the most senior levels. Second, executive branch departments require highly tailored intelligence that might be jeopardized by consolidation. Third, there is considerable disagreement regarding the proper size and role of the ODNI, especially whether it should produce analytical products or merely coordinate the community's efforts. Potential recommendations for consolidation on a lesser scale were identified, to include the creation of a National Intelligence Service for analysts and consolidation of some IC-wide support functions.

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

CONSOLIDATED NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE CENTERS: THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON THE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF AMERICA'S NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY, by Major Andrew Ries, 145 pages.

This thesis examined the suitability of creating regionally and functionally aligned National Intelligence Centers to consolidate the foreign intelligence collection and analysis capabilities of America's intelligence community. It assessed the functional limits of intelligence consolidation by proposing a theoretical model that departed significantly from the largely decentralized community framework in existence since 1947. Research focused on official studies and community literature that specifically addressed the potential impacts of consolidation. Interviews with IC leadership and policymakers focused on identifying consensus regarding the advantages and disadvantages of IC consolidation.

Research found significant resistance within the IC to consolidated centers for three main reasons. First, a widespread belief remains that true competitive analysis can only be achieved in a "stovepiped" system that preserves unique agency cultures and perspectives at the most senior levels. Second, executive branch departments require highly tailored intelligence that might be jeopardized by consolidation. Third, there is considerable disagreement regarding the proper size and role of the ODNI, especially whether it should produce analytical products or merely coordinate the community's efforts. Potential recommendations for consolidation on a lesser scale were identified, to include the creation of a National Intelligence Service for analysts and consolidation of some IC-wide support functions.

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ACRONYMS

9/11	11 September 2001
CI	Counterintelligence
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
COCOM	Combatant command
CSI	Center for the Study of Intelligence (part of CIA)
DCI	Director of Central Intelligence
DH	Defense human intelligence
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DI	Directorate of Intelligence
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DNI	Director of National Intelligence
DO	Directorate of Operations (became the National Clandestine Service)
DOD	Department of Defense
DOE	Department of Energy
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
GEOINT	Geospatial intelligence
HPSCI	House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence
HR	Human resources
HUMINT	Human intelligence
IC	Intelligence community
IMINT	Imagery intelligence
INR	Bureau of Intelligence and Research (Department of State)
INTs	Collection disciplines (e.g., HUMINT)

IRTPA	Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act
IT	Information technology
MASINT	Measures and signatures intelligence
MI6	Secret Intelligence Service (Britain)
NCPC	National Counterproliferation Center
NCR	National Capital Region
NCS	National Clandestine Service
NCTC	National Counterterrorism Center
NGA	National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency
NIC	National Intelligence Council; also the thesis' proposed acronym for National Intelligence Centers
NID	National intelligence director (unofficial)
NIE	National intelligence estimate
NIO	National intelligence officer
NIPF	National Intelligence Priorities Framework
NIS	National intelligence strategy; National Intelligence Service (unofficial)
NRO	National Reconnaissance Office
NSA	National Security Agency
NSC	National Security Council
NSS	National security strategy
ODNI	Office of the Director of National Intelligence
PDB	President's daily brief
PDDNI	Principal deputy director of national intelligence
PPBE	Planning, programming, budget, and execution
PR	Public relations

SIGINT	Signals intelligence
SIS	Secret Intelligence Service (Britain)
SSCI	Senate Select Committee on Intelligence

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> Whatever he does and however he does it, the Director will be held responsible by the NSC, Congress, and the country for any failure to produce all intelligence pertaining to the national security. If he can do this only by requesting cooperation, the task is hopeless.
>
> — Lawrence Houston,
> Counsel, CIA, 1948

This thesis examines the suitability of creating regionally and functionally aligned National Intelligence Centers (NIC) to consolidate the foreign intelligence collection and analysis capabilities of America's intelligence community (IC). The intent is to explore the functional limits of intelligence consolidation by proposing a theoretical model that departs significantly from the largely decentralized intelligence framework operating today, while still considering the unprecedented scale and global focus of America's national security systems.

Though the IC has been assessed continuously since 1947, such examinations have usually been conducted through fairly restrictive lenses, seeking to correct apparent deficiencies while largely preserving the existing system. Such prudence is expected given the limited time and resources of policymakers and intelligence professionals within the Beltway, where a host of constraints requires them to maximize the bang for their buck in improving a system that is in perpetual motion anticipating threats and protecting America.

These endless, cautious assessments of America's IC have produced countless minor, but few major changes since the start of the Cold War. As a result, the current arrangement of the IC appears at best to remain ad hoc; at worst it appears poorly suited

for responding to the complex and rapidly changing global threats that America faces in the 21st century. Intuitively, consolidation of the IC would help to streamline intelligence authorities, eliminate interagency competition, and break down redundant analytical and collection stovepipes, all of which seems especially appealing as the future size and role of America's defense and intelligence institutions are increasingly scrutinized in the coming years.

Regardless of the outcome of that debate, there is real value in continuing to explore the ideal arrangement of the IC, especially the degree of its consolidation and centralization. Such exploration should be done with care, so that it does not become even more distracting or frustrating to the community, which has had more than its share of experience with recommendations, reorganization, and reform. That being said, the old adage "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" is eminently ill-suited to an institution that is America's first line of defense against rapidly evolving threats in an ever-changing world. Constantly improving the efficiency, effectiveness, flexibility, and responsiveness of the IC is essential to protecting our Nation's interests, and should be the objective of both intelligence professionals and intelligence consumers. This thesis explores one potential method of doing so.

Obviously any attempt at major governmental reform is a daunting task. Success requires an ideal convergence of timing (usually in the wake of real or perceived failures) and political support, often jointly with both Congress and the executive branch. Given these inherent complexities, this thesis does not attempt to measure the intense bureaucratic resistance that reorganizing the IC would generate, or to quantify the political will necessary to overcome it. Our Nation has tackled organizational challenges

of similar complexity throughout its history, as demonstrated by the *National Security Act of 1947*, the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986, and the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2002. If further study determines that creating centralized national intelligence centers is of great value, America simply cannot afford to let the scale of the problem limit our determination to overcome it.

Background

The *National Security Act of 1947* created both the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI), who was charged with managing both the CIA and the entire IC. The Act also dramatically reorganized the military services, unifying them under the newly established Department of Defense (DOD). Even then, the idea of a civilian director of intelligence within the executive branch threatened the authority of the military services, which had historically executed most foreign intelligence activities, and which had retained much of that capability even after the creation of the CIA.

Ironically then, the groundbreaking unity of the DOD in 1947 enabled it to stymie any similar unification of the IC from the outset. The DCI, though firmly established as the community's lead intelligence advisor to policymakers, was the director of the IC in name only. In the decades since, the number and size of America's intelligence agencies grew significantly, while the DCI lost a long series of related battles within Washington over the scope of the "Central" Intelligence Agency's control.

As acting DCI in April of 1992, Robert Gates stated, "The way American intelligence works, both the details of its structure and the dynamics of the relationships, tend to be poorly understood, even by many who have spent time in its midst."[1] It is

understandable that the byzantine, secretive nature of the IC would discourage policymakers from intervening; they are accountable to their constituents, have numerous competing demands, and understandably prefer to focus their attention on policy initiatives that are both manageable and explicable to the public. Additionally, policymakers have been rightly hesitant to shake the Community too hard, for fear of getting it wrong and degrading America's sensor-net worldwide.

Despite these challenges, the IC has been endlessly scrutinized by America's elected leaders, including (by the ODNI's own count) 20 significant official studies initiated by Congress, the executive branch, or jointly.[2] The 9/11 Commission was one of the most recent and memorable examples, though it was unique neither in the invasiveness of the inquiry nor the scale of the recommended reforms. Importantly, this number does not include the many internal studies initiated by the community itself, or the numerous other official studies that were of limited scope.

Regardless of origin, most studies identified a litany of deficiencies and recommended improvements, which have been only sporadically implemented with varying degrees of success. In general, the most substantial reports identified a number of recurring themes including a lack of community jointness or corporateness, vertically stovepiped collection and analysis within agencies, and widespread redundancies and inefficiencies community-wide.

The vast number and complexity of these studies (and their subsequent recommendations) have necessitated additional studies just to analyze the analysis, which is perhaps fitting given the complexity of the community itself. The CIA's Center for the Study of Intelligence (CSI) completed one such report in 2005, noting that the most

influential official studies to date have tended towards centralization of power within the IC (specifically within the DOD and DCI) and, "The need for a Director of National Intelligence has been a recurring theme in intelligence reform studies."[3]

For better or worse, this popular recommendation was finally implemented by *The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act (IRTPA) of 2004*, which created the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI). With this new addition, today's IC includes seventeen separate agencies and components reporting to six different cabinet departments (Defense, Energy, Homeland Security, State, and Treasury) and the DNI, which is technically of Cabinet-level rank, yet is conspicuously absent from the White House's list of Cabinet-rank positions.[4]

This decentralized model has proven challenging for the fledgling ODNI, which has struggled to expand its limited authorities while also competing for legitimacy and relevancy with the other intelligence agencies, especially the CIA. If knowledge truly is power within the Beltway, the largely decentralized structure of the IC appears to make the DNI's job extremely difficult.

More worryingly, the ODNI's well-intentioned attempts at coordination may complicate an already confusing and redundant structure if not very carefully implemented and synchronized community-wide. For instance, the original "Mission Manager" concept, as outlined in Intelligence Community Directive (ICD) 900,[5] created functional and country-specific national-level intelligence "managers," which separately coordinate (and ostensibly place additional demands on) the collection and analysis efforts of the intelligence agencies and components, many of which already claim to execute those same coordinated, all-source missions on behalf of their directors or

department secretaries. The directive itself is somewhat confusing, as it references several positions with overlapping duties, and offers little in the way of direct guidance regarding lead and supporting status or dispute resolution. This may have been intentional, and the professionalism of senior intelligence officers is not disputed, yet it seems exceedingly risky to create layers of bureaucracy in an already fragmented system, and then simply implore that people sort out the details amongst themselves as they go.

The ODNI is currently in the process of refining this system. Acting DNI James Clapper stated at the 2010 National Geospatial Symposium, "What we're putting together is a single standard organizational template that combines the best features of NIOs (National Intelligence Officers) and Mission Managers into what we're calling National Intelligence Managers."[6] General Clapper proceeded to indicate a target of 15-20 National Intelligence Managers (NIMs), although there is no guarantee that number will not grow in the future.

The intent of the NIMs is to facilitate management and coordination of the IC on priority issues, and apparently to mitigate the redundancies that existed between NIOs and Mission Managers, though that overlap should have been obvious before ICD 900 was originally implemented. DNIs certainly understand better than anyone the confusion and friction inherent in the IC, and they are right to not allow fear of making things worse to prevent them from executing their legislated mandate to improve management of the community. Yet these latest initiatives do highlight the dangers inherent in strengthening centralized control without also implementing some manner of consolidation.

The CSI report also noted, "Much of the change (to the IC) since 1947 has been more ad hoc than systematically planned."[7] As critiques of the old DCI confirmed, layers

of additional bureaucracy that lack the requisite structure and authorities are of questionable value. Thus, the creation of NIMs is not mentioned here as a criticism, only as evidence that changes to improve coordination are currently being implemented, and that they largely add to the existing model, rather than fundamentally reimagining its organization and operation.

The underlying theory behind this thesis is that erring on the side of such marginal, incremental reforms during the past 60 years has had little noticeable impact on the daily functioning of the community. A discrepancy apparently remains between past studies' assessments of the magnitude of the problem (and the need for robust reform), and the relatively minor reforms that have largely taken place to date.

Though the creation of the DNI was an important step, it appears to be more an evolution of the old DCI model rather than an innovative or remarkable change. Thus, though the DNI's authorities were increased, and the Director of the CIA now focuses solely on running that agency, these efforts appear to have fallen well short of fundamentally re-aligning the IC for the 21st century. Put simply, reform has largely failed to date because the scale of the proposed reorganization has not matched the scale of the IC's disorganization.

One potential solution to this apparent dilemma is to reorganize the IC so that its major operations, both in collection and analysis, are organized according to the regional and functional issues they are working, rather than as traditionally organized according to the individual collection modalities or departmental consumers.

Consolidated national intelligence centers appear to offer an ideal solution for two reasons. First, the idea is not new; eight centers currently exist under the ODNI, though

the National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC) is by far the largest and most well established. These centers were specifically authorized by the IRTPA, which stated, "The Director of National Intelligence may establish one or more national intelligence centers to address intelligence priorities, including, but not limited to, regional issues."[8] The legislation further specifies that the centers will maintain primary responsibility for "providing all-source analysis of intelligence based upon intelligence gathered both domestically and abroad," and will also "have primary responsibility for identifying and proposing to the Director of National Intelligence intelligence collection and analysis and production requirements."[9]

Second, the ODNI already possesses much of the centralized organization and staff necessary for supervising consolidated centers, though growing that capability would certainly be required. In practice, however, the existing centers function largely in addition to existing community efforts, rather than as consolidated replacements for them. For instance, when the NCTC was created it was manned by taking out of hide either from agency billets (save the director's position) or by mandating detailees to the NCTC; however, the agencies' parallel functions, such as CIA's Counterterrorism Center (CTC), largely remained. This is because the legislation outlined above failed to provide the DNI the sweeping budgetary and personnel authorities necessary to create robust centers as proposed in this thesis. This glaring legislative contradiction mirrors more substantial contradictions regarding the role of the ODNI overall, which will be discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters.

Unfortunately, as the main purpose of consolidated NICs as proposed in this thesis is unity of effort, these obvious limitations make it nearly impossible to evaluate

the full potential of consolidated centers by studying the composition and missions of the existing centers. As such, the theoretical model used in this thesis builds on the current concept of national centers by re-envisioning them as consolidated replacements for the many stovepiped agency functions, rather than merely an additional supervisory layer atop them.

Assumptions

In 1992, DCI Robert Gates stated, "Changing intelligence structure and relationships must be done with care. As we proceed, we first must try to do no harm. Second, we must try to ensure that improvements either outweigh or warrant the costs in resources and the impact on people."[10] In keeping with his cautionary advice, this thesis attempts to document community opinions regarding the suitability of consolidation for future consideration by policymakers, without seeking to make any specific recommendations regarding future executive branch or legislative reform.

However, in order to focus on one particular aspect of America's intelligence community, it was essential to either identify and accept community consensus on some IC issues, or to identify personal assumptions that were accepted as a means of limiting the scope of this work. These assumptions have been carefully considered, and are based on research conducted on this topic to date; however, it is possible that one or more will be proven false during the more detailed research to be addressed in the following chapters. That would not nullify their value, as it would have been impossible to conduct this research without them. As such, the following assumptions contributed to both the selection of this thesis and the limitations on its scope.

1. Organizational reform of the IC is necessary. This is the single most important assumption driving this thesis. Assessing or even defining failure of the IC would require a book unto itself. Though not unanimous, the consensus of numerous official studies to date is that the IC's effectiveness is hampered by cultural and organizational deficiencies, and could be greatly improved.

2. The DNI is here to stay. Creation of the DNI was not without controversy, and some within America's national security community undoubtedly remain skeptical of its value. This thesis relies partly on the assumption that the DNI will remain in existence, maintain its existing authorities, and likely seek to expand them in the future. Consolidated centers as proposed in this thesis could not exist without an empowered DNI.

3. Organizational, cultural, and bureaucratic resistance by the intelligence agencies and departmental intelligence components will be strong and united. First, organizational leaders within Washington rarely divest themselves of power and influence willingly. Second, diverse organizational cultures rarely share or integrate voluntarily, especially with their historic competitors. Third, bureaucracies are highly resistant to change, in direct proportion to the scale of the attempted change. Resistance to consolidation may also emanate from very relevant, mission-focused (and less territorial) considerations, but basic organizational and bureaucratic dynamics must be considered.

4. Political will to implement these theoretical changes to the IC is a separate issue, and will not be addressed. This thesis focuses on the anticipated impact of consolidated centers on the functioning of the IC. As policymakers are the primary

consumers of intelligence, their perspectives regarding the potential value of consolidation is essential. However, measuring the political environment and capital required for implementation is a secondary consideration, and a moot one in the event that consolidation is not regarded as suitable.

5. The scope of this proposal is enormous, but still enables a broad canvassing of primary and secondary sources to identify consensus- or lack thereof- regarding key aspects of the proposed model. There is value in determining and documenting the anticipated impact of dramatic consolidation within the IC, to inform future studies, academic research, commissions, or legislation that might explore reform along similar lines.

6. The specific details of implementation can wait. Any responsible organizational change requires detailed planning in areas like human resources, infrastructure, and information technology (IT) management. This thesis focuses on the broad advantages, disadvantages, and implications of consolidated NICs, to determine if more detailed planning in these areas is warranted.

7. Domestic intelligence can be addressed separately. Though the creation of NICs would impact domestic intelligence, it primarily affects foreign intelligence collection and analysis. Organization of the domestic IC is incredibly important, and the borders separating the two are increasingly porous. However, domestic intelligence encompasses different issues, such as integration with domestic law enforcement, and can be analyzed separately.

Research Questions

This thesis attempts to answer the primary research question: "How would consolidation of foreign intelligence collection and analysis capabilities into national intelligence centers affect the efficiency and effectiveness of the intelligence community?" In order to avoid unhelpful generalizations about the usefulness of consolidation writ large, a fairly detailed theoretical model of consolidation has been developed and presented in chapter 4, following the literature review.

The purpose of that model is to facilitate more focused discussion on the underlying strengths and weaknesses of a tangible concept, rather than allowing discussions to remain in the more philosophical or inconsequential realm, e.g., "consolidation could be good if it is not overdone." Hopefully this more detailed, albeit theoretical approach will help to identify specific views on consolidation while allowing research to break free from the limitations of the existing IC design.

In addition to the theoretical model being proposed, the following list of secondary research questions will provide additional focus for both the literature review and subsequent interviews. The secondary research questions are:

1. Have existing efforts by the DNI, specifically the NCTC, National Counter Proliferation Center (NCPC), and NIMs, already achieved the same level of consolidation as this proposed NIC structure?
2. How would this organizational model affect the efficiency and effectiveness of traditional agency-specific collection modalities, including their methods and personnel?

3. What would be the impact on the agencies' unique cultures, especially relating to competitive analysis?
4. How would NICs affect the agencies' ability to provide administrative support (hiring, firing, training, doctrine, etc.) to the IC?
5. Would consolidated NICs be more or less responsive to intelligence consumers, especially the departments that would lose their dedicated analytical components, e.g., the Department of State and Department of Energy?
6. How would NICs affect the relationship and communication between collectors and analysts?
7. How would NICs affect the community's ability to respond and adapt to emerging and evolving threats in the 21st century?
8. How would NICs affect the IC's ability to support military operations and overall military strategy?

Scope and Significance

The scope of this thesis is admittedly large. Its true value does not rely on definitively answering each secondary research question, or in providing an accurate organizational blueprint for reform of the IC, but rather in contributing a focused piece of research to the already substantial existing dialogue about America's intelligence community.

In that light, there is great value in assessing the current configuration and effectiveness of the IC by considering it from an alternative, theoretical perspective. As discussed earlier, most of the changes to the IC to date have been largely incremental,

with the creation of the ODNI being arguably the most dramatic organizational change to date. Instead of continuing to ask, "How do we make what we have better?" it is worth asking "What would the ideal American intelligence system look like, and why?" Perhaps more significant change has not been considered simply because it is too difficult, or perhaps there are far better reasons for the historically tepid interest in more sweeping reform. Either way, there is value in exploring and documenting these reasons.

Competition for resources within any system of government can be fierce, and battles within the Beltway are notoriously vicious. This is not due to nefariousness or selfishness, but rather because organizational leaders usually believe fervently in the missions of their organizations, especially when our national security is at stake, and they are not inclined to see requisite capabilities sapped on their watch. This routine inclination to defend or increase resources, combined with hectic schedules and the inherently political nature of senior positions in government, precludes most senior intelligence leaders and their primary customers at the cabinet level from writing about, or being quoted at length regarding, dramatic reform.

Yet, imaginative and/or radical theoretical models like the one proposed in this paper have surely been discussed at some length in backrooms throughout our government, even if they have not always been recorded in books or journals. This thesis attempts to do just that, by capturing a broad community consensus on this particular issue, to help inform future analysis and research regarding the organization and efficiency of the IC.

Understandably, candid analysis of this theoretical model may necessitate either complete or partial anonymity on the part of the interviewees. As such, the validity of this

thesis' findings relies upon access to a broad but relevant body of primary source interviewees with direct experience as intelligence professionals, intelligence consumers, or ideally both. The ability to identify consensus amongst their individual inputs, or even a clear lack of consensus, will be equally useful in evaluating the potential suitability of consolidating the IC.

Finally, before proceeding, it is important to emphasize one last time that the focus of this thesis is the exploration of consolidation in principal, not the affirmation or refutation of the specific model being used in this paper to facilitate that discussion.

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[1]Robert Gates, "Statement on Change in CIA and the Intelligence Community," 1 April 1992, http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB144/document%2018.pdf (accessed 13 February 2011).

[2]National Intelligence University, "Reforming Intelligence: The Passage of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act," Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Langley, VA, http://www.dni.gov/content/IRTPA_Reforming-Intelligence.pdf (accessed 24 March 2011), 1.

[3]Michael Warner and J. Kenneth McDonald, *US Intelligence Community Reform Studies Since 1947* (Langley, VA: Center for the Study of Intelligence, 2005), 35.

[4]White House, "The Cabinet," http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/cabinet (accessed 18 May 2011).

[5]Office of the Director of National Intelligence, ICD-900, *Mission Management* (Langley, VA: ODNI, December 2006), 2.

[6]James Clapper, "Remarks at 2010 Geospatial Intelligence Symposium" (New Orleans, LA, 2 November 2010), http://www.dni.gov/speeches/Clapper_GEOINT_2010.pdf (accessed 21 April 2011).

[7]Warner and McDonald, v.

[8]U.S. Congress, Senate, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, "Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004," Washington, DC: 17 December 2004, http://intelligence.senate.gov/laws/pl108-458.pdf (accessed 5 May 2011), 118 STAT. 3676.

[9]Ibid., 118 STAT. 3677.

[10]Gates, "Statement on Change," 2.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Unfortunately relatively little literature exists that assesses the merits of IC consolidation on the scale considered in this thesis, or that directly addresses the potential advantages of consolidation in any form for the efficiency and effectiveness of the IC. However, a considerable amount of literature does evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of a centralized versus decentralized IC structure, specifically regarding management and coordination of the community by DCI and DNIs. Further, a seemingly limitless amount of existing literature addresses the disadvantages of IC consolidation, and argues in favor of largely preserving the status quo.

This apparent preference to focus on the details of centralized authority vice consolidation is especially true after the 9/11 attacks, due to the considerable congressional attention given to the specific authorities which would be conferred on the post of National Intelligence Director (NID), which eventually became the DNI. There is still some value in these sources, in that arguments regarding centralized authority indirectly address the fundamental, underlying aspects of the IC that have traditionally driven arguments against consolidation.

Thus, rather than summarizing the considerable volume of information on the concept of centralized authority, this review attempted to focus more narrowly on the literature which specifically discusses centralization as it relates to consolidation. As such, the review is sparser than past reviews of IC reform in general, partly because so many excellent reviews of that nature have already been conducted, and partly because so

little has been written about consolidation akin to the model being considered in this thesis.

Considering these limitations, the literature is divided into five main themes, all of which relate specifically to the idea of consolidated centers within the IC: (1) competitive analysis; (2) stovepipes; (3) tailored intelligence; (4) corporateness; and (5) defense intelligence. The first three (competitive analysis, stovepipes, and tailored intelligence) are inter-related and essential components of any study of consolidation because conventional wisdom within the IC maintains that they cannot be preserved with any degree of usefulness in a centralized or consolidated model.

The fourth, corporateness, is an important concept because much of the literature to date addresses the need for more corporateness within the IC, while continuing to argue against any manner of consolidation. Fifth, a discussion of defense intelligence is necessary for any assessment of consolidation due to the enormous size of the DOD, combined with its unique needs for support during wartime. Since the creation of the IC in 1947, defense intelligence continues to have a unique and pervasive impact on both the form and function of the IC, and warrants special consideration.

It is worth noting that there are many other considerations that do not fit neatly into these categories. Though not all of them will be reviewed, one essential component to analyzing the potential affects of consolidation is to consider that some problems with the current functioning of the IC might have little to do with its form. Devoting attention to that possibility should reveal whether such problems are best corrected in the existing model or in a consolidated one. Regardless of whether the currently decentralized

organization of the IC is to blame for such ailments, it is essential to consider whether consolidation would hinder or help attempts to address them in the future.

As one example of this potential dilemma, a comprehensive Center for the Study of Intelligence (CSI) report on analytical pathologies within the IC stated that there is much more to intelligence reform "than merely streamlining the organizational chart." The study "Recognizes the failures of the IC during the past several decades," but indicates that such failures occur "Not just at the level of the community as a whole, but at four distinct levels, as well as in the complex interrelationships, both vertical and horizontal, among them." The study proceeds to define these levels as (1) the national security community, which includes such problems as misdirected priorities and poor communication and coordination; (2) the IC, including such other problems as poor quality control, technical standards and infrastructure, and inadequate management; (3) individual analytic units and organizations, such as dysfunctional behaviors or practices tolerated within either the collection or analysis arms of individual agencies; and (4) individual analysts, including problems like inadequate training or experience and misguided incentives and rewards.[1]

This is excellent work, and few would dispute the logic of the argument that there are systemic inefficiencies that can be addressed at all levels to make the IC function better. However, dissecting failures at the national security community level, for instance the lack of a coherent, long-term national strategy since the end of the Cold War, might be impossible without also considering the organization of the IC. Perhaps the creation of a long-term national security strategy would require a more joint, inter-agency approach

at the national level. In turn, that might require (or at least lead to) the creation of a more joint, integrated IC to inform a more joint, integrated United States Government.

Certainly America's political system and national security strategy (or lack thereof) has a profound and complicated affect on the form and function of the IC, yet it is addressed here primarily to note that analyzing the suitability of any organizational reform of the IC cannot be responsibly considered without also considering the many other factors that are inextricably linked. This hopefully explains why some of the literature is included in this chapter, even if at first glance it does not seem directly relevant to the central question.

Finally, though this thesis does not include a detailed review of organizational or systems theory in general, it is important to note that no assumptions were made on the part of the author that the form of an organization automatically follows function, though such ideals are held in high regard by many architects, engineers, and probably a great number of organizational leaders. Similarly, no assumptions were made that changes to form would automatically provide commensurate changes (either positive or negative) to function. Only a detailed analysis of the complex, inter-related issues specifically relevant to the performance of the peculiar system that is the IC could inform such conclusions.

Competitive Analysis

In his comprehensive book on American intelligence, Mark Lowenthal explains that the United States "developed the concept of competitive analysis" in order to protect different analytical perspectives from being silenced by particular parochial views, so that "proximate reality is more likely to be achieved."[2] As such, competitive analysis is

planned redundancy; the definitive, theoretical solution to groupthink, although Lowenthal himself admits that in practice this does not always happen. He uses as an example the pre-war assessment of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs, stating that, regardless of the different opinions of the agencies regarding particular aspects of the existing intelligence, "These differences did not appreciably alter the predominant view with respect to the overall Iraqi nuclear capability."[3]

Phyliss Oakley, former head of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) noted that past discussions to create a DNI-like "intelligence czar and a unified intelligence center," would "lose the competitiveness that's been an important element of its successes until now. . . . It seems to me that whatever structure is set up, the principle of competitive analysis, as well as a system in which people can argue and disagree, needs to be preserved. And those people need to be heard by the national security advisor or the president."[4]

Former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld apparently agrees; he stated before Congress in 2004 that a key to improving analysis of the threat environment was "Conducting 'competitive analysis' within the offices of the NID and within and among departments and agencies, based on all-source intelligence, seeking to avoid 'group think' as recommended by the 9/11 Commission."[5] Though the need to preserve dissenting opinions at the most senior levels is unassailable, it seems neither intuitive nor obligatory that dissenting analysts' opinions would be silenced in a more integrated system.

One potentially negative impact of competitive analysis is that the underlying agency mechanisms and culture needed to preserve a healthy competition of analyses at

the policy level might indirectly foster more insidious and unhealthy side effects. The CSI found in an ethnographic study on analytic culture within the IC, "It is even more difficult for an intelligence agency to change its official position once it has made its judgments known to those outside of the organization."[6]

This requirement for agencies to essentially endorse a particular analysis which will compete against others' leads to a fear that "changing the official product line will be seen outside of its context—the acquisition of new information, for instance—and that it will be perceived by the policymakers as an example of incompetence or, at least, of poor performance on the part of the intelligence agency." Though this may be true, it is understandable that the agencies' leadership would be hesitant to risk "the threat of a loss in status, funding, and access to policymakers, all of which would have a detrimental effect on the ability of the intelligence agency to perform its functions."[7]

A pessimist might conclude that bureaucratic, cultural, and organizational realities nudge agencies towards self-preservation rather than delivering honest or unpopular analyses. A more fair conclusion is that agencies believe wholeheartedly in the importance of their mission, and that they err on the side of safe assessments to avoid having future support for those missions re-directed elsewhere. Unfortunately, even the purest of intentions are not enough if the IC's organization delivers competitive analysis that is more safe and less accurate or insightful.

Certainly consolidated centers would eliminate much redundancy, which would decrease the number of competing analyses at the agency level; indeed, it might drop from several to only one. However, the delivery of a consensus opinion by a consolidated

center would not necessitate the exclusion of any dissenting opinions held by analysts along the way, even at the most senior levels within the government.

Just as those opinions are maintained in the President's Daily Briefs (PDB) and National Intelligence Estimates (NIEs), there is no reason to conclude that a deliberate intelligence process within a center would silence dissension. In fact, it might enable analysts to champion more unpopular or out-of-the-box ideas, without fear of tarnishing their agency's name. In this manner, it might create more of a "team" attitude within the IC on regional and functional issues, for both the successes and failures.

Another aspect to consider regarding competitive analysis is the increased sharing of intelligence at all levels within the IC in recent years. This might improve the quality of analysis across the board, but it also means that in theory ideas compete against each other at far more junior levels than was prevalent during the height of stovepipes and competitive analysis during the Cold War. Though this is likely a very positive change, it may also call into question the validity, or at least the relative value, of preserving existing redundancies in the name of truly competitive analysis.

Thomas Fingar stated that "Some of the transformational tools, techniques that you've heard about from others and will hear about–intellipedia, A-Space, and so forth–have crossed a threshold. . . . To be not something that is sort of novelty–for many not something that is viewed as zero-sum. . . . But becoming tools that they have found useful. They see value in this."[8] The sort of virtual, collaborative interaction embodied by A-space is a venue through which raw intelligence and analytical opinions can be shared, compared, and inevitably fused. It seems inevitable that this type of prolific sharing will blur the lines separating the analyses of the different agencies throughout the product

generation pipeline, even at the most senior levels. It will be increasingly difficult to determine where and when opinions were formed, or which bits of data and analyses formed them.

Likewise, there are diverse opinions regarding the ability to preserve competitive analysis in a joint or purple IC. On this subject, Fingar commented, "There are serious differences of view among the leadership across the community as to whether having purple analysts . . . bringing them into the community, giving them a sense of a community, and then specialized training, acculturation into an agency is the way to go." He summarized the alternate path as reflecting a "community agency" where analysts would "understand the values, the mission, the practices of this agency before you go out into the larger sea of people because then you can contribute to understanding."[9]

This difference of opinion between the value of building specialized agency knowledge (analysts) first, or developing confidence and understanding in each other as corporate analysts first, is representative of the larger identity crisis that is apparently afflicting the IC regarding traditional agency-specific cultures and the traditional competitive analysis they were designed to foster.

Stephanie O'Sullivan, in her written pre-hearing questions after being nominated as the Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence (PPDNI) wrote, "The IC is working to increase collaboration to ensure diverse perspectives and a broad range of substantive knowledge is brought to bear on intelligence issues. I believe National Intelligence Managers will be in a position to advance rigorous tradecraft and broad community collaboration to address key analytic challenges."[10]

It is interesting that active, continuous collaboration and the sharing of perspectives is valued on the most important analytic challenges, but not in the daily, routine operation of the IC. After all, today's low priority country can become tomorrow's key challenge, as the recent democratic uprisings in the Middle East have shown. As O'Sullivan noted, "Indicators of long-term problems are, at times, evident in near-term developments. This argues against a wall or a sharp separation between near and long-term analyses and favors pro-active interaction."[11] Intuitively, this also argues against the current practice of encouraging integration and collaboration only after crises have reached a high enough priority to warrant a NIM. It also questions whether collaboration driven by the NIMs on the most important missions has effectively sidelined the importance of true competitive analysis where it would allegedly be needed most.

Dr. Amy Zegart provides another example of why competitive analysis, though it is intended to offer different perspectives at the most senior levels, may by its very nature discourage forming the right opinion by the IC as a whole. She writes, "Data collected in subunits can lead every subunit to the same evidence-based hypothesis, even when the aggregation of data across subunits suggests the exact opposite belief. Called Simpson's paradox, this problem is well known among statisticians and occurs when associations between variables in smaller datasets become inverted once the data are combined."[12]

This apparently suggests that attempts to preserve decentralized units (agencies) within the IC, with the ultimate goal of ensuring true competitive analysis may also prevent the IC from putting the right pieces together to reveal problems that are less developed, or have not yet been discovered. This has been a frequent theme in studies of

IC reform to date; it is worth questioning whether the openness, integration, and sharing that is increasingly demanded from many policy makers is compatible with attempts to preserve traditional competitive analysis. If not, policymakers should carefully reconsider their core expectations regarding both the decentralized operation of the IC, and the organizational model that supports it.

Stovepipes and Parochialism

Lowenthal succinctly defines collection stovepipes as the "existence of end-to end processes, from collection through dissemination" that exists in each of the collection modalities, both technical, including geospatial intelligence (GEOINT), signals intelligence (SIGINT), and measures and signals intelligence (MASINT) and non-technical, primarily human intelligence (HUMINT).[13] In theory, this means that raw, collected information is processed, analyzed, and produced as finished intelligence without necessarily leaving an agency. Lowenthal continues to explain that a secondary effect of stovepiped collection is that the agencies compete for resources (and the author would add prestige) based on the accuracy and relevancy of their intelligence products.

The preservation of stovepipes has received far less support from the IC in recent years than the need for competitive analysis and tailored intelligence. This may entail more of a semantic shift for many, out of mere political necessity, rather than a re-evaluation of core IC business practices. Stovepipes, after all, carry an extremely negative connotation, and have frequently been the target of both executive branch and congressional ire. However, even given this resistance, some support for stovepipes does remain.

The current DNI, General James Clapper, appears to agree. In a speech in 2010 he stated that he has, "sermonetted about the term 'stovepipes,' which is often used pejoratively. But stovepipes are good . . . and a great strength of our system, because they are the reservoirs, the harbors for our trade professionals."[14] He continues by explaining that certain unique skills are required to perform unique functions (i.e., SIGINT or GEOINT), and that he looks to "the agencies and their directors as a functional manager lead for the broader communities… to ensure that tradecraft is nurtured (and) protected in advance. And that's very crucial."[15]

Unfortunately, though General Clapper's comments do not necessarily endorse stovepipes on quite the same scale as during the Cold War, their persistence does continue to cause some discomfort within the IC. In the opinion of Dr. Amy Zegart, this debilitating sense of parochialism was one primary cause for an unwillingness and inability to effectively share intelligence and coordinate efforts, which hampered intelligence efforts leading up to the attacks on 9/11. She quotes one senior defense intelligence official as noting, "We don't have much of a sense of loyalty to the Community. We see ourselves as employees of agencies."[16]

Thus, there appears to be an inherent contradiction in the need to maintain adequate separation between the agencies, which is required to preserve their unique culture and distinct tradecraft, and the repeated attempts at forcing more jointness, mutual understanding, and integration. Though they are not necessarily mutually exclusive, it is impossible to increase one without in some way diminishing the other. For instance, recent attempts at improved synchronization and coordination, including the creation of the ODNI's National Intelligence Managers and the A-space for virtual collaboration, are

explicitly designed to ensure that intelligence flows laterally, not just vertically up traditional stovepipes. As with competitive analysis, it is questionable that, given recent initiatives like these and the recent demands for increased corporateness and unity of effort writ large, the term stovepipe has any place in the modern IC lexicon.

Lowenthal identifies one lingering negative effect of stovepipes in the section of his book entitled "The Opacity of Intelligence," when he explains that analysts continue to have little confidence in either their understanding of collection mechanisms or their ability to direct them. He concludes by noting that current efforts by the ODNI, such as Mission Managers (now NIMs), "likely improves coordination at the top, but does not solve the problem of too many analysts not having a complete or useful understanding of the collections system."[17] This need to develop a complete, useful understanding of the IC-wide collection system would be anathema to traditional, Cold War interpretations of both competitive analysis and closed agency stovepipes.

As such, it is understandable that there would be an active debate regarding the validity of stovepipes in a 21st century IC. Appropriately, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence's (HPSCI) own study on that subject, aptly abbreviated IC21, noted in 1996, "The three technical collection activities (SIGINT, IMINT and MASINT) should stop being separate and competing agencies. They represent parts of a larger whole and should be managed as such . . . This would improve the synergy between collection and analysis, improve the all-source nature of analysis, and clarify blurring between different types of analysis and reporting."

The study further questioned the maintenance of existing stovepipes by suggesting, "There are no compelling substantive reasons for the (CIA's) Directorate of

Operations (DO) to be part of the same agency as the analytic Directorate of Intelligence (DI)." The study proceeds to assert that this was, "Largely the product of historical accident and the bureaucratic aggressiveness of DCI Walter Bedell Smith . . . Indeed, there is a certain 'apples and oranges' aspect to attempting to manage both of these functions within one agency."[18] Though this specifically addresses the allegedly accidental proximity of HUMINT collection and the IC's premier all-source analysis agency, it also calls into question the validity of maintaining stovepipes in order to preserve unique analytical cultures (and subsequently perspectives and opinions).

Regarding the idea of information sharing, in essence breaking down the stovepipes, Fingar stated in his speech, "Can you have too much information sharing? The short answer is no . . . There are materials that need to be protected that do not need to be . . . shared with everybody . . . Most information in the community, the vast majority, should be available . . . to, say, everybody in the intelligence community with the right tickets."[19] Assuming that the tickets he refers to are the appropriate clearances and a need to know, there are few if any barriers that should be separating analysts and collectors from collaborating as teams on substantive issues, vice working in relatively isolated and competing stovepipes.

Again, true to its name the IC21 study noted back in 1996 the need for improving collection synergy in order to combat the complex, dynamic issues of the 21st century. It found, "There is still very little collection synergy among the intelligence collection stovepipes. As national security requirements become increasingly complex and demanding (transnational issues, short timelines), all-source collection management will be critical to future success.[20]

Interestingly, the CSI's study on curing analytic pathologies noted that the issue is not necessarily one of stovepipes (or at least not only of stovepipes) as it is the outdated modes of collection themselves. It notes, "Remote technical collection and targeted human access were appropriate means of penetrating denied areas and obtaining critical intelligence against a bureaucratized, centralized, and rigid superpower adversary that exhibited strongly patterned behavior. The problem presented by many of the new threats . . . however, is not that of accessing denied areas but of penetrating 'denied minds.'"[21]

The study proceeds to note that information which eventually drives finished intelligence is still treated within the old "hierarchy of privilege" that emphasized "secrets" and was more appropriate for a bureaucratized superpower adversary who threatened us with large military forces and advanced weapons systems. It remains to be seen whether a significant shift away from traditional, technical collection modalities towards more modern, unconventional modalities, such as increased use of open-source information and cyber exploitation, will be appropriate in a decentralized system of traditional three-letter agencies.

Though comments such as these are specifically critical of the collection modalities themselves, they do seem to indirectly cast doubt on the IC's ability to even perceive the nature and scale of 21st century problems, let alone their ability to implement the kinds of radical changes and updates necessary to better posture the IC to handle them. Decentralized organization may facilitate competitive analysis and stovepipes, but it also inhibits any type of unified, relatively rapid adjustment of the IC to meet new challenges. If the collective stock in those traditional concepts is declining in

favor of more modern, corporate methods, it stands to reason that consolidation will be increasingly attractive to policymakers.

Consumer Relationships and Tailored Analysis

Closely related to the concept of competitive analysis and the stovepipes that preserve them at the most senior levels is the demand for unique, tailored intelligence by the various departmental consumers. In this way, each department, and often separate branches within departments, have almost complete control over their own intelligence agencies (or components), allowing them to recruit and train personnel and direct collection and analysis to suit their own needs. Though this does allow them considerable control, it also contributes to the perception (whether accurate or not) of divided loyalties, bureaucratic turf-wars, cultural divides, and poor sharing overall within the IC.

This free market approach to intelligence, which prioritizes tailored intelligence driven by individual consumer demand, is a fundamental reason for the current organization of the IC. Thomas Fingar explained it best by writing, "The notional 'model' for the analytic enterprise was more like Radio Shack's networking of widely dispersed affiliates located near their customers than Wal-Mart's distribution of standardized goods through megastores located far from people previously served by neighborhood shops."[22]

This historically unwavering dedication to the prioritization of individual department needs has apparently come with a steep price: the relative decline in the ability of the IC to piece together emerging threats across the globe in the form of anticipatory intelligence. At a CSI conference in 2003 one participant remarked, "We

force fit analysis into the existing functions . . . (We developed) incredible specialization, but it was absolutely anathema to contextual analysis."[23]

Before continuing on a detailed analysis of the literature as it relates to this apparent paradox between form and function, it is worth briefly considering a related concept that affects both. Mark Lowenthal writes in his seminal work on the IC that two schools of thought have existed historically within the United States regarding consumer-producer relationships. The "distance school argued that the intelligence establishment should keep itself separate from the policy makers to avoid the risk of providing intelligence that lacks objectivity and favors or opposes one policy choice over others." In contrast, the proximate group maintained, "Too great a distance raised the risk that the intelligence community would be less aware of policy makers' needs and therefore produce less useful intelligence."[24]

Lowenthal's view on the consumer-producer relationship is a common one, in that "Policy makers do more than receive intelligence; they shape it. Without a constant reference to policy, intelligence is rendered meaningless."[25] Which is exactly the point; there must be a continuous dialogue so that consumers can tell the producers what information they need, what intelligence they question, and what issues they want prioritized. Communication goes both ways, as producers should inform consumers on their capabilities, limitations, and any emerging issues or threats that consumers may not be aware of.

In keeping with the general contradictions identified regarding consolidation of the IC, Robert Gates appeared to give conflicting opinions as acting DCI. On one hand, he stated that the, "hitherto loose configuration (of the IC) must become more tightly

knit"[26] and that the "intel community must change dramatically."[27] Yet, in his "Statement on Change" in 1992, Gates remarked, "I have tried to preserve the decentralization of the community that I and others within the executive branch believe is essential to ensure responsiveness to the very diverse needs of the users of intelligence."[28]

Gates went on to indicate the effort to strengthen centralized coordination and management of the community by the DCI. These efforts included the creation of an Open Source Coordinator, moving the National Intelligence Council from Langley to reinforce its objectivity, and improved coordination between the CIA and DOD. Though these reforms certainly had some success, it did not create the tightly knit, dramatically altered IC that would have been necessary to appease those seeking broader reform, including the creation of the ODNI in 2004. This is not to single out Gates' efforts as insufficient, only to note that the language and emotion regarding significant reform of the IC has rarely been matched by actual change.

In arguing against consolidation, though not against improved coordination, Secretary of State Colin Powell wrote in 2004 that he required from his INR, "Global coverage, all the time . . . expert judgments on what is likely to happen, not just an extrapolation of worst case scenarios . . . tailored intelligence support responsive to, and indeed able to anticipate my needs."[29] These remarks are indicative of the consensus amongst policy makers, that they can only receive the intelligence they need from specialized intelligence components that they control.

Though the individual agencies may be responsive to and trusted by their departments, it seems questionable that every agency is getting the sort of expert, tailored intelligence they need to be well-informed in the post-9/11 world. For instance, a report

by the CSI on analytical pathologies within the IC noted, "Specific cultural knowledge is a skill and the foundation for forecasting the behavior and decision making of foreign actors. . . . Ethnocentrism is a normal condition, and it results in analytic bias." It proceeded to identify potential solutions to this dilemma, suggesting, "The analytic community and intelligence researchers need to develop tools and techniques to combat analytic ethnocentrism. I believe that using cultural diversity as a strategy to combat ethnocentrism has much to recommend it."[30]

Calls for increased cultural diversity and awareness amongst IC professionals are certainly logical, considering that global threats are far more diverse than the Soviet threat faced during the Cold War. It remains to be seen whether cultural experts in every regional and functional area can be simultaneously maintained in all 16 intelligence agencies (or even a fraction of them), not to mention among the ODNI's NIOs and NIMs; this is apparently required if the IC is to retain traditional competitive analysis while also providing tailored intelligence of the type consumers are accustomed to. However, this seems increasingly improbable even in today's budget environment, let alone if the IC were to face draw downs of any significance in the future.

Even giving current funding levels, the events unfolding in the world seemingly refute the ability of individual agencies, even with a strong central authority attempting to drive synchronization, to achieve the efficiencies necessary to produce experts in all of the rapidly developing regional and functional problem sets of the post-Cold War world, while also improving its production of anticipatory intelligence. The CSI's conference report entitled "Intelligence For a New Era in American Foreign Policy" noted, "Confronted with these changes in the global threat environment, intelligence must

radically revise the perspectives and procedures that served it well in the bipolar world of the Cold War."[31] Summarizing the opinions of the senior IC professionals and policymakers present, the report noted that the IC "has failed to develop the flexibility and resources to cope," and that, "A major weakness of the IC is its difficulty in providing strategic intelligence."[32]

CSI conference participants also identified several key causes for these failures, one of which was the weak authorities of the DCI, which has been (partially) remedied by the creation of the ODNI shortly afterwards. However, the report also noted that some participants saw "a more fundamental problem in the Community's organization on the basis of collection disciplines," and that its current design "encourages individual collection disciplines to focus on the information they collect best, rather than that which is most crucial to meeting priority needs."[33] Finally, it noted that another product of the current organization of the IC "is the obstacle it presents to the crucial efforts to achieve the goal of analytical fusion."

It appears that many of these issues are symptoms of the lack of any one place within the IC where division of labor and the fusion of analysis can occur on an issue by issue basis, at least in the daily grind of analytical work, and separate from NIEs. Instead, as Thomas Fingar wrote, "At the end of the day, each analyst is responsible for identifying and interpreting information germane to the interests of his or her customers that might affect their understanding of the situation and ability to achieve their objectives."[34]

Putting the highly specialized needs of customers first certainly gives the appearance of serving their individual needs, but it may not serve the Nation as well

collectively. NIMs will achieve this to a degree, but only on crucial issues that have already been identified and prioritized. There is little they will accomplish in providing strategic, anticipatory intelligence on the next crisis, or in maintaining a sufficient baseline of fused intelligence on the wide range of intelligence issues from which those crises will spring.

This does not suggest that some tailored analysis is not necessary, but it should be more appropriately weighted against the broader, more strategic analysis that is needed to inform national strategy, not just singular departmental decision-making and policy development. One germane report to the DCI in 1969 on the organization of the IC found, "The interests of policy makers at the national level of the government in certain kinds of information are usually similar and often identical . . . all have a more or less equal interest in important political events and economic developments . . . and in the strategic military capabilities of our adversaries." However, the report proceeded to note, "Some officials in certain departments . . . have a peculiar and individual need for information and analytical research on topics of little real concern to others in the Government."[35]

One final consideration regarding tailored analysis is the recognition that ultimately, the IC's organization and products should be adapted to meet the needs of its primary customer, the president. Commenting on the role of the DNI in the Obama administration, General Hayden referenced a *Washington Post* story sourced to White House officials that discussed the president's "'invaluable go-to person' on many intelligence questions. Except they weren't writing about the new DNI nominee; they were writing about John Brennan." That Brennan, as a Deputy National Security Advisor,

might supersede the DNI as the president's "invaluable" intelligence advisor may trouble some within the IC, but perhaps it is understandable given the community's unwieldy, fragmented nature.

The *Post* story proceeded to note, "There is no denying that Brennan has used his knowledge of the intelligence community to direct or question specific offices without always informing the involved agency head, let alone the DNI."[36] Though such actions may undermine the morale of the IC, they are not incorrect, if the president feels they are necessary. Just as various presidents have maintained widely disparate expectations of and relationships with senior military leadership, so too they might with the IC. This thesis does not suggest that there is a one-size-fits-all solution to IC organization for any one administration any more than there is for the continually evolving global threats and national security strategies. It does suggest that senior policymakers should carefully consider whether the priorities in organization and effort that have largely persisted since 1947 are those that best serve their interests going forward.

Corporateness vs. Consolidation

As noted earlier, all of the concepts outlined thus far are inextricably linked, in that none can be significantly modified without altering the functioning of the others, or the form of the IC, or both. To date, this is precisely what has been attempted, in that reform efforts have largely attempted to increase central authority and drive greater integration and unity of effort, without actually consolidating the various activities or sacrificing competitive analysis and tailored intelligence. This section specifically addresses these apparently contradictory ideas of dramatically increasing corporateness

and coordination within the IC without making commensurate reductions to its decentralization.

In addressing the IRTPA of 2004, General Hayden wrote "Once you cut through the empty and emotionally charged criticisms of 'Cold War mentalities,' 'stovepipes,' and 'bureaucratic turf,' it was pretty clear that the Hill was attempting to recalibrate for the intelligence community the critical balance that any complex organization needs- the balance between freedom of action for the parts and unity of effort for the whole." He continues to explain that the 'parts' of the IC must be allowed enough autonomy to prevent "inaction, inflexibility, hesitation, and lost opportunities." On the other hand, he noted that too little "unity of effort means that individual excellence is not synchronized, harmonized, exploited, or leveraged."[37]

Thomas Fingar wrote that the ODNI has purposely maintained the federated model, which "deliberately eschewed institutional consolidation and the formation of country and/or issue specific centers" because it was determined that the advantages of "rationalizing organization charts" in order to facilitate collaboration "would be worth less than the probable loss of insight and trust resulting from proximity to particular customers."[38]

In keeping with these comments, there have been very few arguments made in favor of greater consolidation of the IC, though numerous efforts have sought greater centralized control via the ODNI. As ranking member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) in 2008, Senator Christopher Bond stated, "Strong DNI central direction and authority is required for efficient management of the substantial resources of the IC. Without it, each agency could go its own way, creating its own data centers, its

own networks, its own financial and personnel systems, on and on, resulting in gross inefficiencies, making collaboration and information-sharing even more difficult."[39] It remains to be seen whether any central authority will be capable of herding such a diverse and numerous IC, but it is certainly understandable that this would be attempted before more comprehensive reform measures, especially since consolidation cannot occur without it.

A key point worth mentioning early is the relationship between intelligence reform and the defense reorganization of the 1980's. The IC21 study noted that, "Throughout the IC21 process we were struck by the success of the Goldwater-Nichols reforms of the Defense Department in 1986. . . . Key to the success of Goldwater-Nichols was a central unifying concept: 'jointness,' the idea that the individual services had to improve cooperation and that a stronger JCS was a major means towards this end."[40]

The study later noted that "If the IC is going to achieve the goal of true 'corporateness,' and if the DCI is going to function as a true CEO, then he should have a greater say in the selection of his 'corporate team'–the heads of the other major intelligence components."[41] The specific recommendation was for DCI concurrence with the Secretary of Defense's appointments, instead of the other way around. This was understandable when the DCI served concurrently as the Director of the CIA. With an objective, cabinet-level DNI, it seems plausible that this recommendation could be taken a step further, requiring the cabinet secretaries' concurrence with the DNI's choices to head the 16 major intelligence agencies and components.

However, as Admiral Mike McConnell stated during congressional testimony in 2008, "Often said, the intelligence community needs legislation like the Goldwater-

Nichols Act of the 1980s for DOD. I would note Goldwater-Nichols worked and is working well today. But it was for a single department with all decision authority flowing to the Secretary of Defense. We do not have a Department of Intelligence."[42] This is an important distinction, as the defense reorganization targeted only one cabinet-level department, whereas intelligence reform affects nearly all of them. Further, the organization and operation of the military is infinitely more comprehensible to policymakers than the arcane and highly complex IC.

Regarding increased coordination, Dr. Fingar noted in his speech in 2008, "Part of what we need to convey from day one is that we are an integrated enterprise, that when you touch whatever your particular contact or normal or integrated intelligence unit is, you've touched the community writ large." Such an approach speaks of a certain unity of purpose that has been traditionally lacking in the IC, yet he sees promise, noting, "We're not all the way there but we're a long way toward where we need to be."[43]

Similarly, in considering the options for improved coordination within the IC, the IC21 study concluded that the ideal solution was to "attempt to strengthen the central aspects of the IC without losing those facets of individual intelligence service that remain vital. It is the strong conclusion of IC21 that . . . attempting to buttress stronger central features while retaining important independent functions, is the right answer."[44] As discussed earlier, recommending that coordination and integration should be improved, while also preserving the individualism and independence of the agencies, seems at best to be overly optimistic, and at worst naive. Tradeoffs would be an understandable suggestion, but suggesting that reforming the IC is a non-zero sum game, where

efficiencies can be increased without also addressing the fundamental inefficiencies that were implemented by design, is difficult to comprehend.

As Phyllis Oakley noted, "It may seem paradoxical, but the only thing we need as much as competitiveness among agencies is coordination. . . . Having a joint coordination center might have helped (prevent 9/11), but having an overarching czar wouldn't have solved that problem . . . the real coordination isn't going to come from the top, it has to be encouraged at a lower level, among analysts."[45] Such a suggestion is indeed paradoxical, and has routinely left the IC perplexed, attempting to determine exactly how to encourage coordination at lower levels, when by design the agencies are competing, stovepiped, and tailored to support primarily their own departments.

After recognizing that past Directors of the CIA had to spend an inordinate amount of time supervising collection activities, at the expense of supervising the analytical component, the IC21 study noted, "(The DO) should be made into a separate service and brought under the DCI's direct control. This single Clandestine Service (CS) should include those components of the Defense HUMINT Service (DHS) that undertake clandestine collection as well."[46] Though controversial, and never implemented, at least this recommendation attempted to grapple with inherent contradictions by suggesting tangible reforms, regardless of their actual merit.

The IC21 study made yet another recommendation for consolidation, this time regarding functions, in noting, "Personnel systems should not be identical, and unique skills are required. However, community-wide standards for appraisals, common pay-bands, and a centrally managed personnel security and career development program are essential elements for reducing duplication and facilitating lateral movement within the

community, thus promoting jointness and improving morale."[47] Though consolidation of some functions, such as personnel and infrastructure support, is considerably less drastic than the consolidation considered in this thesis, such changes would be a necessary component of consolidation, and are important considerations.

As Melanie Gutjahr suggested in *The Intelligence Archipelago,* consolidation of some intelligence functions would not necessarily mean abolishing the individual agencies and components. She argued, for instance, "A 'strong central intelligence factory' should produce analysis for the country with much smaller departmental structures free to track critical issues and ensure alternative analysis is allowed to flourish."[48] In such a model, consolidated centers might track the bulk of intelligence issues, and produce the vast majority of national intelligence, to include PDBs and NIEs. The departmental components, though likely reduced in size, could continue to deliver tailored analysis, while contributing their analysis and opinions to the centers.

One of the strongest indictments of the current system seems to be that it embraces competitive analysis, tailored intelligence, and the requisite agency stovepipes at the expense of the kinds of community-wide analytical cross-training and expert mentorship that are required to tackle the widely disparate and rapidly changing threats of the modern world. In its report on analytical pathologies, the CSI found that intelligence analysis remains a "craft culture," operating within a guild structure and relying on an apprenticeship model that it cannot sustain. It specifically noted, "Like a guild, each intelligence discipline recruits its own members, trains them in its particular craft, and inculcates in them its rituals and arcana. These guilds cooperate, but they remain distinct entities."[49]

Though recognizing that reliance on past successful practices is "pragmatic," the study found that "Unfortunately, the US Intelligence Community has too few experts—either analytic 'masters' or journeymen—left in the ranks of working analysts to properly instruct and mentor the new apprentices in either practice or values."[50]

It is important to note that this report found significant deficiencies not only within the agencies, but that, "It is clear that serious problems in the existing organizational structure of the intelligence community are reflected in poor prioritization, direction, and coordination of critical collection and analysis activities."[51] Clearly, fixing the "many problems that are more fundamental and deep-seated existing inside the organizational 'boxes' and within the component elements of the intelligence agencies themselves"[52] is equally important. Yet, fixing these things may be impossible without more dramatic change. Attempting one without the other may explain why so many marginal reform efforts have failed to date.

Interestingly, the report offers one explanation for this, in that outsiders who attempt to correct problems within the IC are confronted with the difficulties of "the community's compartmentation, security restrictions, and intrinsic opaqueness."[53] These structural defense mechanisms, though valid from a counter-intelligence perspective, combine with the vastly complicated nature of the IC's inner-workings to ensure that "traditional organizational analysis that concentrates on structure is doomed to failure… An appreciation of the distinction between a complicated system and one that is complex and adaptive is important for accurate diagnosis and effective solutions."[54]

Though the inherent difficulty for external actors to understand the IC helps to partially explain unsuccessful attempts at reform, the words and actions of the

community leadership will serve as the most accurate bellwethers of shifting beliefs and the possibility of more dramatic consolidation (or other reform) in the future. In pre-hearing questions by the SSCI, subsequent to her nomination as PDDNI, Stephanie O'Sullivan wrote in February, 2011, "I do not believe that additional legislation is needed to strengthen DNI authorities at this time . . . by focusing on mission integration and issues of common concern, developing a workforce with increased community experience, and coordinating and managing the needs and requirements of the IC agencies through budget development and resource allocation, the DNI can leverage his existing statutory authorities with maximum effect."[55]

Though her language seems disappointingly unambitious, it is understandable that DNIs would not serve as the venues for dramatic change within the IC, as they currently lack the personnel and budgetary authorities to truly control the agencies' priorities, let alone select or remove their directors. They also appear to lack a presidential mandate for change, and so must carefully avoid raising the ire of the cabinet secretaries, many of whom enjoy more prestige within the United States Government, and corresponding access to customer number one. However, it is also questionable how enthusiastic career professionals from agencies like the CIA and INR will be to voluntarily and fundamentally change the system they grew up in. It is plausible that many remain resistant to the dramatic change sought by some within Congress, and determined to allow only incremental change on their watch.

In addressing the "highest priority management challenges facing the ODNI," O'Sullivan quoted the National Intelligence Strategy (NIS) as setting "the vision for an IC that is integrated, agile, and exemplifies American values." However, she continued to

confidently proclaim the ability to unify intelligence in the existing system, stating, "The IC can improve effectiveness through increased mission integration. Under the leadership of the national intelligence managers and IC functional managers, we can provide the best unified intelligence to national policy and decision makers."[56] Similarly, O'Sullivan highlighted the need for an integrated planning, programming, budgeting and evaluation (PPBE) system, responsible and more effective intelligence sharing, and the promotion of a professional, high-quality workforce, yet provided no compelling ideas for achieving this community-wide without increased authorities.

O'Sullivan was not being considered as the DNI, only the principal deputy, so one can assume that her answers reflect General Clapper's beliefs as well as her own. Either way, it is telling that she avoided language regarding the preservation of competitive analysis and collection stovepipes, at least directly. Perhaps this was merely politically astute of her, as Congress has been beating the drum of IC integration for decades. Or, perhaps, it indicates a very subtle shift amongst IC professionals towards more integration and central control. If the latter, her strong support for the NIMs, which she recognized as the "principal substantive advisors for intelligence related to designated countries, regions, topics, or functional issues . . . responsible for end-to-end intelligence mission integration within their area of responsibility," is a positive sign and a step in the direction of stronger integration, if not quite consolidation.

It will likely remain difficult to gauge real interest within the IC for integration (and possibly consolidation) so long as senior intelligence professionals are torn between their loyalties to their career agencies and the DNI, as well as the desires of their executive branch bosses and congressional overseers.

A somewhat less controversial concept than the DNI's authorities is the strain on the IC caused by the ongoing wars. In response to a question on that subject, O'Sullivan wrote that, "Multiple competing priorities on the IC do require us to make some tradeoffs in how extensively we can support the many national security requirements that exist . . . The IC workforce is also stretched thin in many areas, as a result, we must surge collection and analysis on emergent crises from time to time."[57]

Clearly, some surging to meet the demands of crises will always be necessary, yet the stretched IC work force may be more a function of the new global environment, including terrorism, rather than merely a short-term effect of the wars. If so, it may be necessary for the IC to re-evaluate its prioritization of competitive analysis, tailored intelligence, and the redundancy it necessitates. Doing so might enable the IC to achieve far more efficiency, integration, and deliver more sophisticated and persistent analyses of the host of global issues, not just the most pressing issues of the day.

Defense Intelligence

As mentioned earlier, defense intelligence poses a unique challenge to any efforts at centralization or consolidation of the IC due to its enormous size, corresponding influence within the Beltway, and its requirements for immediate, prioritized support during wartime. However, existing literature does not appear to rule out the concept of IC consolidation, to include the defense intelligence agencies.

In testimony before the HPSCI prior to the creation of the DNI, General Clapper stated, "I believe the NID should manage at least three agencies—CIA, NSA, NGA and, perhaps NRO (National Reconnaissance Office) . . . This does not mean that our support to military operations would in any way be compromised. In fact, I would assert it would

be even better than it is today."[58] It is remarkable that the General would make these comments while serving as director of the NGA, which speaks volumes about the potential for increased centralization in the future.

As acting Secretary of Defense in 2004, Donald Rumsfeld was somewhat less enthusiastic than his subordinate director, stating that before consolidating the technical defense intelligence agencies under the future ODNI, "We should be certain that it would help resolve the intelligence-related problems and difficulties we face and not create additional problems . . . we wouldn't want to place new barriers or filters between the military combatant commanders and those agencies when they perform as combat support agencies."[59] Senator Hart was somewhat more direct regarding potential consolidation, when he stated, "Every past proposal . . . has foundered on the refusal of the Pentagon to give up an inch of control of its own intelligence budget."[60]

Though this was historically accurate, there are signs that the winds are shifting in favor of some consolidation. General Clapper remarked in late 2010, "One thing I am doing, I've secured at least a conceptual agreement with the Secretary of Defense to take the National Intelligence Program out of the defense budget . . . I mention that because I think that's . . . one specific way that we'll accrue more authority actually is through ODNI, and the oversight and the execution of that funding."[61] It remains to be seen just how much consolidation of the combat support agencies would be beneficial (or tolerated), yet plans like General Clapper's should help to answer questions, like Rumsfeld's above, that have traditionally been raised on this issue.

Another potential for IC consolidation was considered by the IC21Study that noted that consolidation of SIGINT, IMINT, and MASINT activities "Can be done

without putting at risk the unique services they perform for the military during time of war. Maintaining the designation of a 'combat support agency,' which currently applies to NSA, is appropriate."[62] Though this has apparently not been seriously, or at least publicly discussed in the intervening years, General Clapper's comments about control of those agencies by the DNI aside, it is likely more achievable now than it was 15 years ago, when that study was conducted.

O'Sullivan's remarks appear to support that notion. In answering pre-hearing questions from the SSCI, O'Sullivan wrote, "Experience shows that national and military customers often have the same or supporting requirements. The changing nature of warfare . . . requires recognition that military, foreign, and domestic intelligence efforts are intertwined."[63] This does not imply that the requirements are identical, or that the military's requirements will not dwarf the other departments' during wartime, only that the maintenance of traditional departmental and agency stovepipes may be an outdated model for dealing with 21st century challenges.

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[3]Ibid., 14.

[4]Melanie Gutjahr, *The Intelligence Archipelago: The Community's Struggle to Reform in the Globalized Era* (Washington, DC: Joint Military Intelligence College, May 2005), 83.

[5]Donald Rumsfeld, "Before the Senate Armed Services Committee," 17 August 2004, http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB144/document%2022.pdf (accessed 25 March 2011), 9.

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[7]Ibid.

[8]Thomas Fingar, "Remarks and Q&A by the Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Analysis and Chairman, National Intelligence Council," 4 September, 2008, http://www.dni.gov/speeches/20080904_speech.pdf (accessed 12 March 2011).

[9]Ibid.

[10]Stephanie O'Sullivan, "Pre-Hearing Questions For Stephanie O'Sullivan Upon Her Nomination to be Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence," http://intelligence.senate.gov/110203/osullivanpre.pdf (accessed 19 March 2001), 21.

[11]Ibid., 20.

[12]Amy Zegart, "Implementing Change: Organizational Challenges," in *Intelligence Analysis: Behavorial and Social Science Foundations,* ed. Baruch Fischhoff and Cherie Chauvin (Washington, DC, National Acadamies Press, 2010), http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id= 13062&page=3 (accessed 5 April 2011), 317.

[13]Lowenthal, 78.

[14]Clapper, 10.

[15]Ibid., 10.

[16]Amy Zegart, *Spying Blind: The CIA, the FBI, and the Origins of 9/11* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 67.

[17]Lowenthal, 79.

[18]House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI), "IC21: Intelligence Community in the 21st Century," Staff Study, United States House of Representatives, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996, 21.

[19]Fingar, "Remarks and Q&A."

[20]HPSCI, 23

[21]Cooper, 5.

[22]Thomas Fingar, "Analysis in the U.S. Intelligence Community: Missions, Masters, and Methods," in *Intelligence Analysis: Behavorial and Social Science Foundations,* ed. Baruch Fischhoff and Cherie Chauvin (Washington, DC, National Acadamies Press, 2010), http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id= 13062&page=3 (accessed 5 April 2011), 6.

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[24]Lowenthal, 15.

[25]Ibid., 181.

[26]Douglas Gartoff, *Directors of Central Intelligence as Leaders of the U.S. Intelligence Community, 1946-2005* (Langley, VA: Center for the Study of Intelligence, 2005), https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/books-and-monographs/directors-of-central-intelligence-as-leaders-of-the-u-s-intelligence-community/dci_leaders.pdf (accessed 16 March 2011), 196.

[27]Gates, "Statement on Change," 4.

[28]Ibid., 19.

[29]Colin Powell, "Written Remarks Before the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee," 13 September 2004, http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB144/36112pf.htm59 (accessed 22 April 2011).

[30]Cooper, 84.

[31]CSI, "Intelligence for a New Era," 1.

[32]Ibid., 1

[33]Ibid., 7.

[34]Fingar, "Analysis in the U.S. Intelligence Community," 12.

[35]Central Intelligence Agency, "Report to the DCI on the Organization of the CIA and the Intelligence Community," http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB144/document%203.pdf (accessed 26 February 2011), 3.

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[39]U.S. Congress, Senate Hearing, "Senate Select Committee on Intelligence: DNI Authorities and Personnel Issues," 14 February 2008, http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2008_hr/021408transcript.pdf (accessed 4 April 2011), 4.

[40]HPSCI, 7.

[41]Ibid., 11.

[42]U.S. Congress, Senate Hearing, 2.

[43]Fingar, "Remarks and Q and A."

[44]HPSCI, 9.

[45]Gutjahr, 83.

[46]HPSCI, 20.

[47]Ibid., 78

[48]Gutjahr, xxii.

[49]Cooper, 6.

[50]Ibid., 6.

[51]Ibid., 7.

[52]Ibid., 7.

[53]Ibid., 9.

[54]Ibid., 9.

[55]O'Sullivan, 4.

[56]Ibid., 12.

[57]Ibid., 35.

[58]Gutjahr, 80.

[59]Rumsfeld, 9.

[60]Gutjahr, 82.

[61]Clapper, 13.

[62]HPSCI, 24.

[63]O’Sullivan, 34.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The primary research question addressed in this thesis is: How would consolidation of foreign intelligence collection and analysis into national intelligence centers affect the efficiency and effectiveness of the IC? The secondary research questions used to focus the research were:

1. Have existing efforts by the DNI, specifically the NCTC, NCPC, and NIMs already achieved the same level of consolidation as this proposed structure?
2. How would this organizational model affect the efficiency and effectiveness of traditional agency-specific collection modalities, including methods and personnel?
3. What would be the impact on the agencies' unique cultures, especially relating to competitive analysis?
4. How would NICs affect the agencies' ability to provide administrative support (hiring, firing, training, doctrine, etc.) to the IC?
5. Would consolidated NICs be more or less responsive to intelligence consumers, especially the Departments that "lost" their dedicated analytical components, e.g., State-INR?
6. How would NICs affect the relationship and communication between the collection and analysis functions?
7. How would NICs affect the community's ability to respond and adapt to evolving and emerging threats in the 21st century?

8. How would NICs affect the IC's ability to support military operations and overall military strategy?

As the literature review indicated, there was considerable existing research related to both the primary and secondary research questions in general, but little that addressed the specific, tangible impacts of consolidation on the scale presented in this thesis, regardless of the exact model of such consolidation.

There appears to be three primary reasons for this lack of data. First, it is inherently difficult to identify, let alone quantify the benefits and costs of any theoretical model until it has been put into place, tried, and evaluated. Second, the inherent political realities and sensitivities of reforming the IC makes it exceedingly difficult for interviewees to focus on the potential suitability of the proposed consolidated model without also getting bogged-down in arguments over the political feasibility of enacting and implementing the requisite legislation in our government. Third, intelligence is inextricably linked to policymakers, making any commentary on the design of the IC a politically charged issue.

These three problems present unique challenges to the research of this subject. Each will be explored in more detail below, followed by a brief overview of the interview methodology being employed to overcome them.

Theoretical Models, Theoretical Problems

As the literature review indicated, there are strong feelings within the IC regarding consolidation and the related concept of centralized management and coordination. Questions about the general implications of consolidation are likely to get equally vague answers; good, bad, or indifferent, most would likely begin with "it

depends." To get beyond generalizations, the research methodology depends heavily on the contents of chapter 4, which lays out in relative detail the theoretical model being analyzed.

Clearly, responsible implementation of reform on this scale would necessitate massive government-wide studies conducted by teams of well-qualified professionals. Such research would dig deep on every issue, the conclusions would be considerably longer than this thesis in its entirety, and the details would be ironed out with painstaking thoroughness. Numerous official commissions and studies have attempted just that in the past, but have always focused on modifications to the existing structure of the community, rather than considering a fundamentally different arrangement. There are numerous excellent reasons for this, not least of which is the pragmatic need to identify workable solutions in a timeframe that is usually dictated by finite political will.

The goal of this thesis is considerably more limited, in that it does not seek to actually recommend and then implement specific reforms. Instead, it seeks to contribute to future recommendations by providing an alternative approach to analyzing the age old issue of IC consolidation. A not insignificant amount of time was spent considering how the execution of this theoretical model would work, but it was a self-limited exercise intended only to answer initial questions by interviewees regarding the general manner of consolidation being analyzed. For instance, it is important they knew where most collectors and analysts would be physically located, and whom they would report to, but not as important to count actual billets or to determine the exact support requirements. Thus, the goal was to quickly move discussion beyond the vague philosophical

discussion, stop it short of detailed sharp shooting, and focus instead on the heart of the issue, what the effects of consolidation of this scale would be.

Suitability versus Feasibility

Another problem that presents itself when analyzing a theoretical construct of this magnitude is the potential for interviewees to dismiss the exercise as impossible (or not feasible) and thus irrelevant. Put simply, if interviewees start thinking "this is never going to happen anyway," they may be unwilling to focus on the question at hand, which is, would it be suitable if it did happen?

If such partiality for pragmatism does exist, it is for good reason. The IC directly supports policy, so its form and function (and usually its products) are directly shaped by the needs and desires of the policymakers. This direct link ensures that everyone involved is painfully aware of how political winds affect the IC overall, and especially the difficulties inherent in rewriting legislation related to intelligence reform or shifting resources within the community. Though sweeping legislation like the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 is a relevant example of successful, substantial organizational reform within the United States Government, it is equally compelling as proof of just how rare such sweeping legislation is. It took considerable time and energy on the part of both the executive and legislative branches, caused bitter turf battles, and likely serves as a cautionary tale to some of just how narrow the margin is between the success and utter defeat of big ideas.

Beyond the inherent political difficulties of reforming such a decentralized community, there is also the reality that the IC is in constant motion, working daily worldwide to inform policymakers and keep our Nation safe. With limited time and

energy, and in the middle of ongoing operations, there is a natural tendency to focus within the realm of possible. Both intelligence professionals and policymakers are paid to squeeze the maximum benefit from the hard realities they face daily, not to dream, re-invent, and take chances. This does not suggest that doing so is never necessary, only that it is highly unlikely, and that it requires exceptional energy and vision for senior leaders to plow through their daily calendars while reimagining dizzyingly complex systems.

As such, it is extremely important to focus this research on the suitability of IC consolidation, rather than focusing on how it might or might not be achieved politically within the Beltway. If there are sound reasons to not pursue consolidation of the IC, there is great value in documenting them. However, if the only impediments to not pursuing consolidation are tough bureaucratic realities and a lack of political will, it is important to document that, but even more important that we as a Nation overcome it.

Anonymity

Since the flurry of high level inquiries and activity surrounding the 9/11 Commission Report, passage of the *Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act* (IRTPA) of 2004, and 2005 Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission Report (abridged title), there have been very few documented, unclassified discussions at the most senior levels regarding the value of consolidation within the IC. Taking into account the fragile global economy, ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and change in administrations, this is understandable. It is uncertain whether the waning interest in intelligence reform was caused by a perception that the changes implemented in 2005 and 2006, most notably the creation of the ODNI, were sufficient, or whether almost a decade after

9/11,waning public interest in intelligence reform has simply eroded the political capital necessary to entertain it.

That being said, it is only by meeting with senior intelligence professionals and policymakers that one can successfully tackle the research questions being proposed in this theses. As such, every effort will be made to directly quote interviewees and include the names of sources when possible. When not possible, the goal is to identify common themes amongst answers to the research questions, in order to determine where consensus or opposition exists.

Interview Methodology

A minimum of 10-15 personal interviews were sought with primary and secondary sources. A minimum of two to three intelligence consumers (i.e. policymakers) and ten IC professionals was desirable. The final list of sources interviewed included:

1. Charles S. Robb, former United States Senator (D-VA) and co-chair of the 2005 WMD Commission (abridged title).
2. Judge Laurence H. Silberman, former co-chair of the 2005 WMD Commission (abridged title).
3. Mr. Randy Bookout, Professional Staff Member, SSCI.
4. Mr. Richard Girven, Professional Staff Member, SSCI.
5. Mr. Thomas Corcoran, Professional Staff Member, previously with SSCI.
6. General (retired) Michael Hayden, former DNI; former Director, CIA; former Director, NGA.
7. Mr. Christopher Kojm, Chairman of the National Intelligence Council.
8. Dr. Thomas Fingar, former Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Analysis; former Chairman of the National Intelligence Council.
9. Mr. Timothy Kilbourn, CIA.

10. Dr. Amy Zegart, University of California, Los Angeles.

11. Senior intelligence community official (SICO1).

12. Senior intelligence community official (SICO2).

13. Senior intelligence community official (SICO3).

14. Senior intelligence community official (SICO4).

15. Senior intelligence community official (SICO5).

16. Senior congressional professional staff member.

Interviews were administered in person when possible, or otherwise telephonically. All interviewees at a minimum gave their verbal consent to be interviewed, and discussed the level of attribution or anonymity they preferred. After a brief introduction and explanation of the purpose and design of the thesis, the theoretical model was discussed (essentially a brief review of chapter 4) in order to quickly move on to a general discussion guided by the secondary research questions. Many interviewees, by virtue of their considerable experience in both the intelligence and defense establishments, intuitively understood the implications of the model and were prepared to move immediately to outlining its effects.

Notes were recorded by hand; recordings were not used. Interviewees were provided summaries of their responses via email, and allowed to clarify their responses to ensure the accuracy of both their responses and the context in which they were given.

CHAPTER 4

THEORETICAL MODEL FOR CONSOLIDATION

> I believe the hitherto loose aggregation of the Intelligence Community must become a much more tightly integrated, coordinated and managed entity than in the past. Protection of turf and old thinking must give way to the demands for greater efficiency, more cooperation, less redundancy and duplication, and better use of fewer resources.
>
> — DCI Robert Gates, 1991,
> Testimony before Congress

This chapter outlines the proposed organization of the NICs (figures 1 and 2 below) in order to focus additional discussion during research interviews and enable a more comprehensive, objective analysis of the subject. As discussed earlier, this model is not presumed to be a final, workable solution; it does not reflect the type of deliberate, comprehensive study that would be undertaken by both the executive and legislative branches before a model such as this would be finalized or implemented. The narrow goal of this proposed model is to help explain in broad terms how consolidation might work in one unique, albeit extreme example. Though it uses a Goldwater-Nichols-like model to do so, it is not assumed that such a model is ideal for the IC. The value is in determining "why not?"

That being said, it is nearly impossible to pursue that question constructively without first explaining in some detail what is meant by consolidation. Thus, this model explains in relatively detailed fashion what consolidation is, in terms of this thesis, before asking how good or bad it would be, and why?

Admittedly, there is some danger in using a detailed model to facilitate discussion on broader issues, as discussions could get bogged down in the validity of those details,

rather than the validity of the overall idea. This chapter attempts to walk that fine line, providing just enough detail from an organizational and infrastructure perspective to make the idea credible, while still focusing the discussion on the broader implications regarding its effects on the IC. It is organized into sections focused on (1) outlining the proposed organization; (2) anticipated effects on the overall IC; (3) effects on the individual agencies and components; and finally (4) potential advantages and disadvantages.

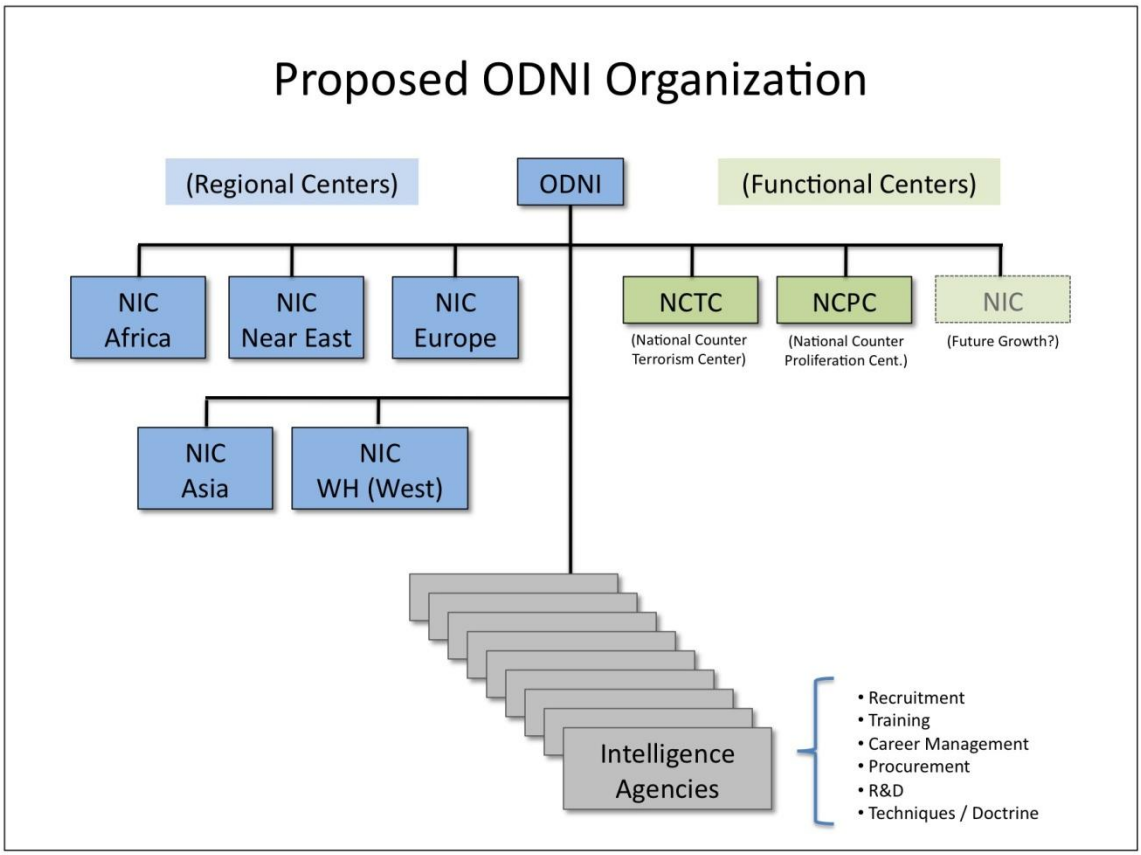

Figure 1. Proposed NIC Organization

Source: Created by author.

Proposed NIC Organization

The first and most important consideration for this consolidated model of the IC is that it would require a strong, central ODNI for effective control and implementation. The current ODNI is well on its way to that end, but still lacks the comprehensive budget and personnel authorities that would be required for it to directly control the numerous agencies and components that currently reside in other departments, such as State-INR, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), and the National Security Agency (NSA).

In this model, agencies would exist largely to provide administrative support to the operational NICs, where the lions share of intelligence exploitation and analysis would occur. Though globally focused methods of purely technical collection could still be executed centrally from individual agencies (directing satellites, for instance), the tasking, prioritization, technical evaluation, and thorough analysis of raw intelligence would occur at the centers.

Five regional centers, e.g., Western Hemisphere, would be created to divide global intelligence operations into divisions that would mirror the existing divisions within the ODNI and other intelligence agencies, vice the similar but slightly different divisions currently utilized by the DOD's combatant commands. Two functional centers already exist (NCTC and NCPC), and would serve as the general templates for future centers focused on other global, functional problems as necessary, for example trafficking or cyber issues.

All centers would be staffed primarily by existing agency personnel, causing very little real growth in the IC overall. For instance, collectors and analysts would be re-

assigned to centers based on their existing regional and language expertise. Where such expertise was absent, it would be far easier to create holistic plans to develop it through targeted recruitment and cross-training programs. Exact numbers for each center would differ significantly based on priorities of effort. It is likely that an overall reduction in IC personnel would occur, as redundancies would be easily identified and eliminated.

Marginal growth would occur in the billets being created to lead each center, namely the NIC directors and NIC deputy directors (for analysis and collection). These positions would serve to extend the career tracks of senior collectors and analysts from the different agencies, in that they would be more senior billets commensurate with their responsibility in supervising the collections and analysis of all community personnel working in their respective centers. Administrative and other support provided to the operational centers would still reside under the agencies and/or ODNI staff as appropriate.

Physical location of the centers would be aligned with existing IC buildings and infrastructure when possible. For instance, the reassignment of significant personnel from each agency would free up several floors, if not entire buildings or campuses, that could then be transitioned into centers. Co-location of centers would be unnecessary, and probably discouraged to minimize vulnerabilities, though the NICs would likely remain within the National Capitol Region (NCR), where the bulk of existing IC personnel and infrastructure currently resides. Clearly, such a massive shift in personnel and recapitalization of existing buildings would require a careful, phased application over several years. Agencies would continue to execute their current function for regional and functional issues where centers had not yet become operational. Redundant efforts

between agencies and centers would be allowed while resources were incrementally transferred, until centers reached their full operational capability.

Support and administrative staff, such as information technologies (IT), legal, and public relations for the new centers would also be shifted from existing agencies, as fewer personnel would be required in those areas. A standardized human resources (HR) system could be implemented, allowing these personnel to shift more easily between agencies and centers along their entire career track. Similarly, the overall number of IC personnel could likely be reduced in the long term, as efficiencies would increasingly be realized.

Within the centers, collectors with expertise in specific modalities would continue to report to senior collection managers familiar with their fields, i.e., divisions within agencies would retain their basic organization within the new centers, except that division chiefs would report to center deputy directors and directors vice agency directors. Though it would be possible to standup consolidated analytical centers without also consolidating collectors, doing so might aggravate the divide between collectors and analysts that has been a recurring point of contention in reform studies to date.

Clearly, the transference of collection operations to centers might raise uncomfortable issues regarding unique agency requirements for protection of sources and methods. Though it is likely that the senior agency leadership in charge of those operations within the centers could adequately advocate for their needs, some coordination and deconfliction between agency directors and center directors would inevitably occur. This would remain effectively on a peer-to-peer basis, as it does

between military combatant commanders and service chiefs, while the ultimate authority would reside with the DNI.

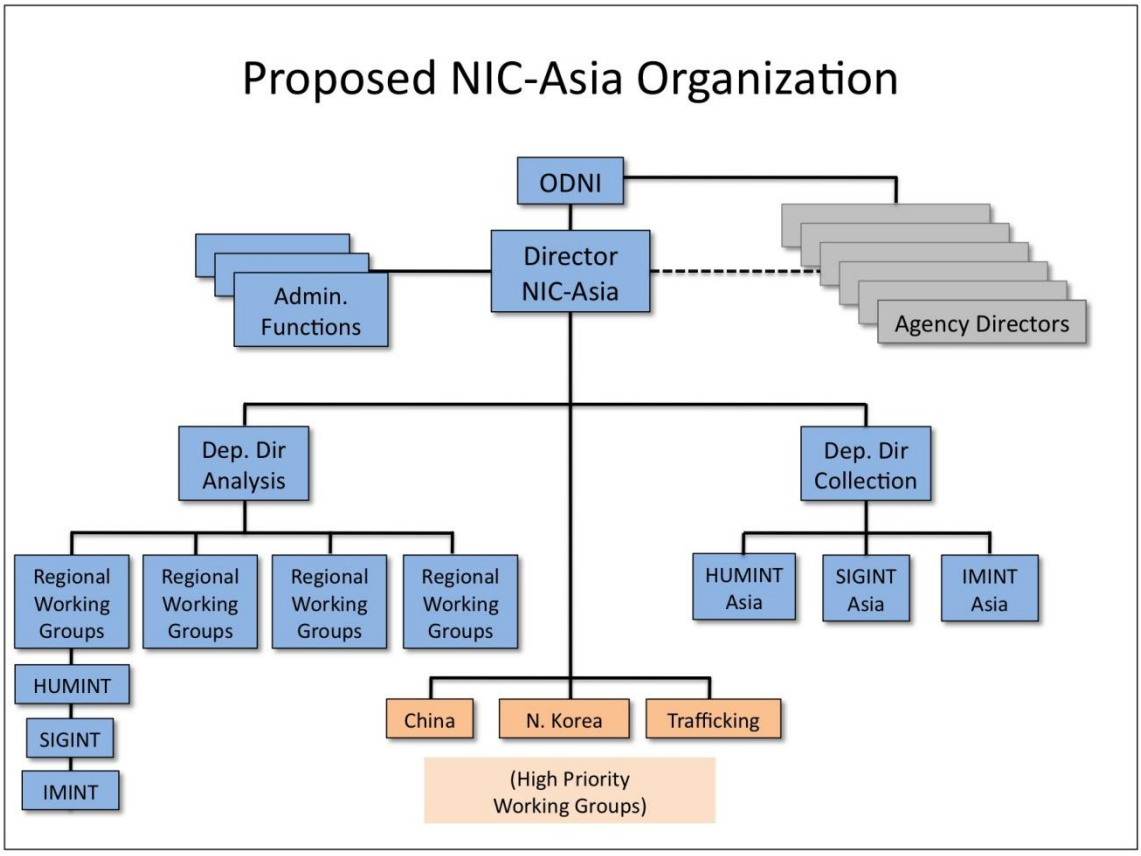

Figure 2. Proposed NIC-Asia Organization

Source: Created by author.

Anticipated Community-Wide Impacts

As stated earlier, the overall growth in IC billets would be negligible. It is highly likely that reductions would occur after existing redundancies and inefficiencies were identified, especially in the areas of all-source analysis and production and administrative support.

Though it would be essential to preserve a diverse pool of analysts with experience in different intelligence specialties (military, political, economic), having those analysts co-located might still diminish the emphasis on competitive analysis that exists within the current system. It is also possible that competitive analysis might simply occur at lower levels, and with greater transparency, in that analysts could more readily share their observations, challenge the validity of peers' assertions, and generally improve the quality of intelligence across the board. Certainly there would be an increase in the responsiveness of intelligence products, especially complicated ones like NIEs.

Currently, the National Intelligence Council is the principal organization responsible for providing coordinated, integrated intelligence analyses to senior policymakers on behalf of the ODNI, usually in the form of formal NIEs. As similar redundancies have already been identified between the DNI's Mission Managers (now NIMs) and the NIOs within the council, it would make little sense to have analytical managers within the new regional and functional centers, while also retaining them within the council.

Thus, consolidated centers would eventually assume the National Intelligence Council's duties as they reached full operational capability, leading to commensurate reductions within the NIC and its eventual closure. A word on acronyms: the proposed theoretical National Intelligence Centers (NICs) did not intentionally replicate the National Intelligence Council (NIC); although slightly confusing, it seemed the most compelling naming convention to use. It could be easily replaced as necessary, were creation of the centers to actually be realized.

The PDBs and NIEs would obviously be informed by the centers' analysis and products, vice agency analysis. This would likely facilitate both the identification of consensus (and dissenting opinions) regarding emerging and evolving intelligence issues, as the collectors and analysts working on those issues would be co-located within the applicable centers, instead of coming together only periodically.

The creation and servicing of the National Intelligence Priorities Framework (NIPF) would be executed via the new NICs, effectively bypassing the agencies. Consumer needs in a particular region or for a particular issue could be conveyed directly to NICs (with ODNI consent) whenever necessary, and with far greater clarity.

A robust relationship would have to be maintained between the NICs and their departmental consumers. For instance, intelligence analysts with expertise in political affairs would need to remain physically located within the Department of State, in order to be immediately available to department officials. However, these analysts could continue to be assigned and rated by their NIC leadership, upon the advice of the department leadership. This LNO-like arrangement would maximize the responsiveness of specialized analysts to their primary consumers, while ensuring that they remain closely integrated with the NICs working those same regional and functional issues.

Non-technical tactical and operational military intelligence would remain within the services and Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), but the NGA and NSA would be shifted under the DNI. Clearly, these agencies would continue to primarily support military operation, yet the move would greatly facilitate unity of effort in the areas of personnel, budget, and all-source analysis. Defense HUMINT would be eliminated, and

would instead be serviced by the relevant regional and functional divisions within a reinforced National Clandestine Service (NCS).

For obvious reasons, the impacts of this theoretical reorganization on covert action cannot be addressed in this unclassified thesis. Though an unfortunate omission, it is unlikely that the effects of consolidation on covert action would, in and of itself, confirm or refute the suitability of such a plan. Rather, in the event that this and future research indicates that the balance sheet of consolidation merits detailed consideration, a separate, classified inquiry into its effects on covert action would then be warranted.

Anticipated Impacts on Intelligence Agencies and Components

Though the most significant organizational changes in this model would be the creation of the regional and functional centers, the most dramatic and emotional ones would likely be its affect on the existing intelligence agencies and components. Moving from a confederation of 17 operational intelligence activities to a centrally controlled system of 5-9 centers sounds promising in theory, yet its impact on historic agencies like the CIA would be measured not just in mathematical efficiencies gained, but also in historic lineages ended. This should not dissuade America from considering the changes, but it would be a grave oversight to not consider the effect these considerations will have on both intelligence professionals and consumers that have grown up in our current system.

That caveat aside, the difficult cuts of the theoretical model being proposed would occur in the existing intelligence agencies, which would be relieved of the majority of their collection duties, and all of their analytical duties. As such, they would be drastically reduced in size, retaining only key administrative, support, and personnel

responsibilities (hiring, training, providing personnel to national centers, etc.). It is even conceivable that these limited residual agency functions could instead be more effectively executed by the central ODNI staff, rendering some of the remaining agencies largely irrelevant. In the end this might be a largely semantic, though hugely emotional difference, as many of the existing agency personnel with experience in their fields (e.g., human resources or public relations) would likely be moved into those same positions within the ODNI. Consolidation of this manner might seem gratuitous and unnecessary today, in the wake of nearly a decade of significant growth within the IC. It would make far more sense during a constrained budget environment the IC might face in the future, and even more sense if or when the ODNI becomes a more firmly established (and respected) fixture within America's national security establishment.

Regardless of the exact form that is implemented, agency directors (or "collection modality senior representatives") would occasionally need to advocate for their respective INTs' interests within the ODNI and Congress, as there would inevitably be some conflict between center directors and the unique cultural and operational needs of their diverse components. This would be roughly similar to existing scenarios within the DOD, when service components reporting to combatant commanders are occasionally required to request the involvement of their parent services in resolving disputes. Such friction is unavoidable in any complex system, yet it seems that NICs as proposed would ensure far more coordination and unity of effort than the existing fragmented organization of the IC.

Evidently, some community-wide reach-back functions currently serviced by individual agencies could remain at agency headquarters; e.g., building and operating

satellites, standardizing map data, or maintaining community-wide databases of unprocessed information. Whether or not these activities would be best shifted into centralized ODNI staff functions or remain within the current agency model is again largely a semantic difference, as the benefits of eliminating redundancies and streamlining communication and control could be achieved using either model.

One of the most controversial aspects of consolidation as proposed would be the elimination of the departmental intelligence components, including Department of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR), Department of Energy's Office of Intelligence and Counterintelligence, Drug Enforcement Administration's Office of National Security Intelligence (DEA-NN), and Department of Treasury's Office of Intelligence and Analysis (OIA). Though these specialized analysts would still exist within the regional and functional centers (and some would in fact work within the departments, probably at their same desks), their evaluations and careers would be managed by the ODNI through the regional and functional directors.

This would obviously result in the inclination, if not the likelihood that departments would simply recreate their own intelligence components, exacerbating redundancies instead of resolving them. After all, centrally provided intelligence services akin to the British Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) model would be a foreign concept in America, and quite different from the current arrangement of the IC. Departments' comfort with such an arrangement would require years to cement. Though this dilemma could be countered through the implementing legislation, doing so would be both difficult and distasteful. The easiest solution would probably be to allow very limited

departmental components to remain in the near to mid-term, providing both a functional and emotional bridge to the new model.

Potential Advantages

Many of the potential advantages of this consolidated model are either hinted at in the preceding pages, or intuitive based on the commentary outlined in chapter 2. However, it is worth highlighting briefly exactly what such a model might do for America's IC.

First and foremost, the somewhat forced integration of collectors and analysts would help rapidly facilitate greater understanding and respect between the historically separate and stovepiped cultures. This would likely be progressive over generations, as has been jointness within the military since 1986. However, it would certainly occur exponentially faster than it has in the current model. Further, by shifting intelligence professionals' loyalties from parochial agencies to their regional and functional centers, personnel would hopefully be focused solely on their particular mission(s), rather than the reputations and resources of the individual agencies.

Recognizing this potential for improvement does not imply that intelligence professionals today are parochial dinosaurs who consciously place the needs of their agencies before the needs of America. It is a realistic assertion, however, that many intelligence professionals today perform their daily duties according to the particular needs of their agency, while remaining largely ignorant of the products being generated elsewhere, at least until they are completed and delivered. As was evident during the literature review, both collectors and analysts are also not well connected with the other IC personnel doing similar work for other masters.

Recognizing this narrow focus does not indict the individuals of the community, who are patriotic, hard-working Americans. Rather, it identifies that their ignorance of the broader IC is much more of a survival mechanism, a direct result of the tyranny of taskings and limited time available for junior and mid-level analysts, than it is a conscious decision. Consumers want their questions answered, agency directors want those products delivered, and so analysts have little time to consider their peers in the other agencies, let alone those sitting beside them.

Forcing integration in the daily collection, analysis and production of finished intelligence would certainly reduce redundancies, and hopefully allow a bit more coordination in meeting these demands. It would also not necessarily reduce the benefits that competitive analysis aim for, namely the comparison and inclusion of dissenting opinions. It is likely, however, that the quality of those diverse opinions would be improved overall, as analysts would be able to share and refine their perspectives in a much more comprehensive and transparent way far earlier (and more often) during the analytical process.

This collaboration and visibility on regional and functional issues would be a recurring, daily activity in consolidated centers, vice the fairly limited interactions that occur today during the development of NIEs, PDBs, or during crisis response. Though analysts more frequently view each other's ideas using the virtual, collaborative tools implemented in recent years, there remains a distinctly separate process by which each agency produces its own unique products. Fusing these processes earlier would greatly improve community wide knowledge and experience on every issue being dealt with by

the community, instead of just those issues that policymakers seek clarity on when a crisis erupts.

This constant sharing of ideas and perspectives would have the secondary advantage of helping to facilitate regional and functional subject matter expertise within the centers. Assuming that, in the current arrangement, some analysts are wiser or better informed than their peers on a given country, region, or issue, all of the analysts within the community would benefit from the routine interaction with those mentors, leading to a far more comprehensive, durable, and transferrable base of experience moving forward.

Such experience would often remain within the respective centers, at least through the center director and deputy director level. At that point in their careers, intelligence leaders would be well versed in the different collection capabilities and analytical specialties of their centers, along with possessing much experience themselves on the region or functional missions residing in those centers. This career-long corporateness would improve the ability of IC leaders to think and manage jointly, while not diluting the specialized activities of collectors and analysts working within their regional and functional realms.

As agencies would no longer be supervising the daily operations of the community, they would be left to focus on the provision of personnel, administrative, and support services to the community overall. This clear division between the operational and administrative leaders of the community, at least below the DNI and Deputy DNI level, would potentially improve the focus and performance of the staffs. Again, whether these functions remained in the agencies or were transferred to centralized activities within the ODNI is largely a semantic difference.

Another anticipated benefit of consolidated centers would be improved responsiveness to emerging threats or crises worldwide. Planning and executing coordinated responses to such issues would require only one call from the DNI to the responsible NIC director, who would have a much clearer idea of the current situation in that region or functional area. They would also have an integrated, joint team already assembled under one roof, with at least a baseline of relevant regional, cultural, linguistic, and technical expertise on which to add any assets that were surged in support.

Though NICs would create enormous advantages in the integration of personnel, it is likely that even greater advantages would be realized in the areas of standardized infrastructure and processes. Though the implementation of one IC badge was a small step in the right direction, an empowered DNI directing consolidated centers would be able to accomplish much more, including seamlessly integrating software, networks, counter-intelligence standards, and training in order to maximize the efficiency and responsiveness of each center. Though seams would still exist between regional and functional centers, they would be seams between organizations that looked and functioned similarly, rather than the radically different cultures and organizational models of the agencies and components today.

It would be largely unhelpful (and probably inaccurate) to spend considerable time estimating the financial costs of implementing consolidated ICs in such a theoretical model. However, it is fair to contemplate that startup costs would be considerable, but not unmanageable as the process would be phased using existing personnel and buildings. Long term operating costs community-wide would likely be significantly reduced, as the benefits of greater efficiency and standardization were realized.

Potential Disadvantages

Though the list of potential advantages of NICs is considerable, there are also potential disadvantages to be considered. Some disadvantages, such as the startup costs and strain on operations during reorganization, will exist regardless and can only be mitigated to the best ability of leaders within the IC and government. Other disadvantages may not end up manifesting in any appreciable way, or may be avoided entirely through appropriate planning and execution. Either way, it would be naïve to assume that any radical organizational change could occur without some disruption to the intelligence being provided to policymakers.

Considering the trend in global events since the end of the Cold War, it is equally unlikely that there will ever be a good time to cause such a disruption, least of all in the wake of a crisis like 9/11, which is exactly when public and political will for reform reaches its zenith. If the balance sheet indicates that reform is necessary, these risks should not dissuade bold analysis and action by policymakers.

One of the most obvious potential disadvantages in a consolidated system would be the reduction in competitive analysis across the IC. Though NIC Directors would still include robust dissenting positions in their intelligence products, such dissenting positions might be at increased risk of dilution as they progressed through their center's leadership. Without agencies to conduct their own all-source analysis, there would be a decreased ability to backstop the NIC's results. In this regard, eliminating redundancies would increase the efficiency of the system, but potentially reduce its effectiveness.

However, this single point of failure or lack of competitive analysis in a consolidated system may appear far worse on the organizational charts than would be the

case during actual operations. This is because the final analytical products produced by the NICs would be no more singular in focus than the current NIEs or PDBs. All would involve a deliberate process whereby analysts of various specialties compared notes, debated the merits of certain sources and conclusions, and eventually agreed- or agreed to disagree- on the intelligence products to be sent forward.

It is intuitive to assume that groupthink is more likely to occur amongst a group of analysts who live and work together in the same building, instead of in separate agencies. Yet it seems equally plausible that the quality of stovepiped analysis, created by like minded analysts living and working together in separate agencies, would be of no greater value, even if compared at the very end of the line, and in a very limited time in the case of the PDBs or crises response. It is plausible that, if those same analysts were allowed to mingle, debate, and refine their perspectives in person, constantly, throughout the entire analytical process, the resulting products would be less groupthink and more "the whole is greater than the sum of the parts."

Further, the analytical process within agencies should not occur in a vacuum. Products at all levels within the centers would be continuously fed to policymakers at their corresponding levels within the departments. It is likely that analysts with vast experience in economic intelligence would, for instance, continue to provide most of the tailored intelligence requested by the Treasury Department, while political analysts would provide something quite different to the State Department. This two-way dialogue between specialized analysts and their primary customers would function in parallel with analysts' ongoing dialogue with their peers working those same issues. Thus, though groupthink within consolidated centers is possible, it is also possible that the comparative

value and vetting of community products would increase in the aggregate from the current design.

Another possible disadvantage of centralized collection and analysis is a potential increase in the damage caused by counterintelligence (CI) breaches. However, it is unlikely that consolidated centers would pose any greater threat than the current all-source agencies or DNI. In fact, consolidation might facilitate standardization of networks and CI training and methods, providing increased security.

Finally, as discussed earlier, decentralized supervision of collection modalities by senior officers within the centers, rather than agency directors, could cause eroding standards in the collection activities themselves, leading to an increased risk of compromised sources and methods. Put simply, senior representatives for their respective collection modalities might not have the same experience as the agency directors chosen to supervise them in the current model.

Center directors and deputy directors in a consolidated system would have considerably more joint experience than many senior intelligence professionals today, but might be less capable of providing adequate supervision and mentorship of the level provided by agency directors today. It seems plausible, however, that senior officers within the NICs could still rely on agency directors (or senior collection modality representatives within the ODNI staff) if they required guidance over and above what existed within the centers themselves.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

> Presidents want as many different opinions as they can get. They don't want consensus, they want an active debate, so that they know they've considered every angle before making a decision. To this end, redundancy is a good thing.
>
> — Senior intelligence official

The primary and secondary research questions posed in chapter 1 focused on how consolidation within the IC would affect the efficiency and effectiveness of the community. The literature review, combined with the theoretical model explained in chapter 4, anticipated several areas of concern which would likely arise during the course of the research (e.g., the concept of competitive analysis would likely be a central theme).

The findings below are divided into categories which mirror these themes, in order to tie together what has been written about consolidation, what the theoretical model was expected to do, and what current experts within the community had to say about both, as presented in this chapter. There are five sections focusing on (1) competitive analysis; (2) tailored intelligence; (3) stovepipes and seams within the IC; (4) the role of the ODNI; and (5) potential areas for consolidation.

Before embarking on a detailed analysis of the findings, it is important to note that the research did appear to conclusively reaffirm that all five topics are intrinsically related. Thus, it is nearly impossible to significantly alter one without intentionally or unintentionally affecting the others. Though this may seem abundantly obvious, it is worth mentioning, as past reform efforts have apparently attempted to do just this. For instance, they have attempted to breakdown collection stovepipes without jeopardizing

the unique cultures of the agencies, which are in turn essential to providing the level of tailored intelligence that customers have demanded. Similarly, past efforts have often tried to improve the sharing of intelligence at all levels community-wide, while preserving true competitive analysis, or without dramatically altering the organization and authorities of the former DCI, or more recently the ODNI.

To that end, the research did reveal two salient points, both of which affect all areas of the research conducted and which are best mentioned upfront. First, the concepts outlined below are all valued within the IC, but they are often prioritized differently by different organizations at different times. As such, intelligence reform is best considered as a zero-sum game of adjusting the disparate priorities of intelligence consumers, rather than merely fixing or reorganizing a broken or inefficient intelligence community.

Almost without fail, the participants in this research recognized this inherent cost-benefit analysis, and so were cognizant of the advantages of the existing system but equally aware of the disadvantages. One would not expect less from professionals with long careers in their chosen field, yet this is a point that appeared to be infrequently addressed in past studies. It seems that many external observers of the IC, to include most congressional observers and this author, were initially critical of the community's bizarre design, and not aware that the redundancies and inefficiencies apparent in this design serve deliberate ends.

Second, in keeping with much existing literature, intelligence is best considered as an art, not a science. For instance, a senior collection manager commented fervently that in recent years they had become "more strongly convinced than ever in the need to separate collectors from analysts," especially at the lowest levels; that they are

fundamentally different personalities, with different skills and training, and best left to focus in their own lanes, rather than trying to understand each others' work.[1] This perspective is far different from the consensus opinion formed in studies to date, which have pushed relentlessly to break down the traditional barriers between collectors and analysts. The point is that, in the end, neither perspective is wrong. As with any art, personal preference matters a great deal. In a community where a great many agencies (and subordinate agencies) cater to a great many consumers with radically different perspectives, and who change with every new administration, it is exceedingly difficult, if not impossible to identify what is "wrong" with the community, or what should be done to "fix it." Apart from some fairly obvious truths, e.g., analysts should be intellectually bright people with some experience in the area they are analyzing, there are widely differing opinions on everything else.

Further, every intelligence apparatus must be tailored to meet the needs of its unique system of government, its national security system, and the unique capabilities it possesses to meet its particular threats. No nation can simply throw money at their intelligence systems and expect a corresponding increase in its output, as they might the scientific community to solve a particular problem, or the armed forces to achieve parity in weapons systems with a rival. Doing so would certainly grow the community, but because of the unique, complex, and artistic nature of the organization and its work, it would not necessarily cause any improvement in the quantity and quality of intelligence.

As intelligence exists to inform policy, there is also not one intelligence template that will forever match any nation's perpetually evolving national security strategy and global position in the world, especially a globally focused nation like America, which has

been forced to radically update its national security strategy to counter the dynamic threats of a globalized, post-Cold War world. Thus, every intelligence community, especially America's, should not only expect change, it should embrace it. Rather than lamenting constant efforts at reform, the IC should anticipate that it must either undergo change commensurate to the changing world, or it will be done by someone else on their behalf.

Stovepipes and Competitive Analysis

As the literature review anticipated, the problem of groupthink is a persistent fear that continues to shape discussions regarding the form and function of the IC. As a method of combating groupthink, competitive analysis continues to be embraced by members of the IC, and was at the forefront of almost every interview conducted in the course of this research. Although the theoretical NICs proposed in this thesis argued that competitive analysis could be maintained in a consolidated system, there was near universal disagreement with that premise.

One senior intelligence official commented, "No one would argue that redundancy doesn't exist, it does by design. Increasing all-source analysis was a way of preventing groupthink."[2] This idea that widespread redundancies were intentional surfaced during the literature review, but it seemed plausible that such thinking might have become outdated in the complex, post-Cold War environment, where specialization in numerous regions and functional areas (vice one mammoth Soviet Union) might be valued over redundancy. However, it still appears to be an integral part of the IC, as confirmed by another intelligence professional who remarked that, "If analysts share the same organizational affiliation and all sit in the same room, it increases the chance of

groupthink; it also reinforces the mistaken belief that consumers want only one opinion from the IC. Presidents want all of the input, not just a single interpretation of inherently complex issues."[3]

The concept of competitive analysis was not ignored in the theoretical model presented earlier; in fact, it seemed plausible that the ideas of all analysts, both the consensus and dissenting views, would continue to be made available to policymakers at all levels. This theory was best summarized by asking the question: would not analysts continue to forcefully disagree with one another even if they were in the same room together debating the validity of sources and ideas?

Responses from intelligence officials were mixed. Analysts generally concurred that senior analysts would be experienced and confident enough to argue strongly in favor of their opinions, even if in the minority. However, several other officials were skeptical about the preservation of those opinions farther up the ladder. This was best summarized by one senior intelligence manger who stated, "They might disagree, but I fundamentally dispute that those dissenting opinions would be preserved if the analysts all reported through one Director."[4]

Apart from the idea of competitive analysis is the idea that existing stovepipes allow deep-diving on unpopular positions or issues by analysts. Essentially, analysts, either on their own initiative or at the urging of their bosses, are free to explore an unpopular or low-priority issue and possibly contribute an important contrarian opinion to senior discussions. One senior intelligence official noted that this need to preserve unusual or dissenting opinions "with their full weight throughout the stovepipes" was essential to ensuring that they would be briefed fully to the different cabinet secretaries,

who could then champion those opinions at the principals meetings. They continued by explaining, "if only one center director was presenting all the arguments, they would inevitably be sympathetic to one argument, and that bias would affect the discussion."[5]

However, it seems that the very idea of dissenting opinions, which is so central to the current decentralized model, was partially questioned by other comments. Thomas Fingar, former Assistant Secretary for State Department's INR and Deputy DNI for Analysis, remarked, "usually analysts don't fundamentally disagree about intelligence, though dissenting opinions must be carefully protected when they do surface." He also remarked that "often times there is only one way for experienced analysts to interpret things, based on the source and content of the intelligence." He was careful to note, "Competitive analysis must be preserved, primarily to act as a second opinion or independent check."[6] However, it is worth considering whether the current model is the only way to preserve dissenting opinions; also, if they are so rare, how much should we be willing to pay for them?

Other analysts also indirectly questioned the concept of competitive analysis, noting that often times intelligence being consolidated for presentation in an NIE or PDB, or in response to a crisis, is largely of one voice. One senior analyst was initially skeptical of the ability for disparate opinions to be heard by policymakers without preserving existing stovepipes. However, he eventually agreed that this was not necessarily the case, and that, "Department secretaries would still provide their own dissenting opinions during principals meetings and other policy discussions based on their unique career experience and perspectives."[7] This would certainly require that policymakers had access to both consensus and dissenting opinions at all levels during its synthesis, which would

be the responsibility of not only the center directors, but also the senior analysts beneath them.

If true competitive analysis is somewhat lacking in today's system, it does not necessarily mean the concept of tailored analysis is as well. Specialized analysts, for instance, may contribute context and understanding in their areas, even when there are no significant dissenting opinions on the quality or viewpoint of the intelligence. Thomas Fingar noted, "National intelligence is coordinated intelligence. Agency products are almost always either formally or informally coordinated before they are finished."[8]

This idea of increasing coordination between analysts at all levels appears to dispute the theory that competitive analysis even exists appreciably in our system. Perhaps the increasing need to share intelligence and get "second opinions" throughout the analytical process has largely eroded the benefits of the decentralized agency model that might have brought unique perspectives from start to finish through the isolated stovepipes of the Cold War.

This possibility would not totally refute the concept of dissenting opinions; certainly they do occur, and they may be highly sought after by intelligence consumers, regardless of their rarity. But it should cause the IC and policymakers to question whether such competitive analysis could still be delivered in a consolidated model, without having to pay the traditionally heavy costs of such a decentralized, federated model.

Another result of stovepipes is the ability of senior collection managers to supervise all of the collection activities being conducted within their specific modalities. As mentioned earlier, this would largely not be preserved in a community where collectors and analysts were organized according to their regional or functional area of

focus. General Hayden best summarized this by stating, "If mentorship of collection activities ended at the division chief level, it might not be robust enough."[9] So it seems, for instance, that it might not ensure that collection in every region and functional area operated at its maximum potential, by being supervised by the most experienced leaders in that collection modality.

General Hayden also noted that, even in a consolidated system, existing redundancies might not be eliminated. He noted, for instance, "Even if the NCTC consolidated all analysts & collectors, they still might not be looking at everything; they would still be chasing the high-profile issues."[10] Though this is a real possibility, it still seems that consolidating not just analysts and collectors- but their senior leadership- would provide a much larger pool of personnel from which to assign different tasks. In this manner, the high-profile missions would certainly still be priority number one, but more personnel might also be available to pursue issues that have traditionally been ignored due to constraints on time and resources.

Tailored Intelligence; A Retail Business

As outlined in chapter 2, tailored intelligence is a separate but related concept to the idea of competitive analysis. The traditional view of the IC is that both depend on individual agencies or components being allowed to develop their own unique cultures and areas of expertise within the protective hierarchy of their parent organizations. As Thomas Fingar succinctly noted, "One-size fits nobody. Homogenized intelligence isn't tailored and helps nobody. Intelligence capabilities have to be mission-support driven."[11] This concept of tailored intelligence will be addressed in three parts: (1) the unique requirements and pressures of America's governmental system; (2) the unique

departmental requirements of consumers; and (3) the unique nature of military intelligence.

America's Unique System of Government

Lowenthal writes "the role of intelligence varies with each administration and sometimes with each issue within an administration."[12] Though this may seem obvious to the casual observer, and not worthy of inclusion, it is worth exploring further due to the impact it has had on past reform efforts. The IC exists entirely within the executive branch, and is closely tied to the national security vision and priorities of the president and their cabinet. Yet many of the studies and reform efforts outlined in chapter 2 have originated from the legislative branch.

These efforts were occasionally based on Congress's constitutional mandate to regulate the power of the executive branch, which was necessary in the wake of intelligence abuses, such as during the Church and Pike Commissions. Yet many other congressional reform efforts were apparently caused by an outsider's perception within Congress and the public that the form and function of the IC was poorly serving the executive branch. If true, why would the executive branch not simply iron out these deficiencies itself? Partly, because each department has felt that their individual needs were being met; and partly, because American presidents- for all their power- cannot easily give sweeping orders to several cabinet secretaries telling them to abandon decades of organizational culture, especially when the funding for such initiatives must be approved by Congress.

As one interviewee summarized: "Cabinet secretaries want immediate access to specialized experts . . . the bottom line is that senior policymakers want their own intel

shops. That has to change for true consolidation to occur."[13] It should come as no surprise then that this inherent paradox within our American system has led to numerous reform efforts, all of which have accomplished only incremental, marginal change over decades. Intelligence is so complicated and specialized that the departments and the President themselves would have to all demand fundamental change nearly simultaneously in order for it to occur. As long as they feel they are fairly well served by the existing system, occasional failures aside, there is little incentive to upend it.

Outsiders, however, especially those conducting oversight within Congress, appear more able to see the big picture, and seem to repeatedly disagree with its design. Yet they are unable to effect real change without the consent of the executive branch. This fundamental paradox was overcome in the DOD in 1986, but is unlikely to occur in the IC, where its complex, secretive inner-workings, decentralized nature, and ownership by numerous departments (to include the powerful DOD) make the problem infinitely more intimidating and difficult for lawmakers.

Perhaps William Odom summarized this best when he wrote, "Intelligence chiefs can be no more effective than their political leaders or military commanders will allow them to be or demand that they be. The intelligence failures surrounding the 9/11 attacks and in Iraq are primarily political failures. Effective leaders do not tolerate inadequate intelligence performance or leave it to commissions to fix intelligence problems."[14]

Odom's comment is accurate, in that intelligence is inextricably linked to the policy it informs, just as the military is an extension of the politics it executes. Yet the politicization of intelligence, with all its negative connotations, was not a serious concern for senior intelligence leaders interviewed. Their general impression was that if

policymakers were intent on acting on a certain bit of intelligence, regardless of its accuracy, or if some within the IC were intent on creating politicized intelligence to that end, there is little which could be done organizationally to inhibit that nefarious intent. All were (rightly) confident in the professionalism of the analytic workforce and senior management, and believe that the IC does an excellent job resisting either intentional or unintentional pressure to politicize intelligence.

Presidents or senior members of their cabinet may elect to use intelligence for a variety of specific policy purposes, and they may choose to occasionally act on questionable intelligence, or to do nothing with very good intelligence, either because their intuition tells them otherwise, or they simply have other ideas or plans. Similarly, the executive branch can organize the IC as they best see fit, to serve whatever needs they may have. Apart from giving their professional opinion, there is little the IC can- or probably should- do to inhibit this. Put simply, intelligence exists to inform policy, but how policymakers organize the IC, or what they choose to do with the intelligence, can really only be effectively decided by them, and indirectly by the voters who elect them.

Unique Departmental Requirements

As explained above, the IC's form and function has been shaped in a unique way, to serve a very specific purpose. Although ultimately the president is the number one customer of the IC, the bulk of the work routinely informs the National Security Council and executive departments. As such, the very diverse nature of those departments has logically led to equally diverse instruments and methods for collection, analyzing, and production of that tailored intelligence.

Research conducted revealed very serious doubts that the unique, tailored requirements of the departments could be filled in a consolidated system. Thomas Fingar commented that State-INR, for instance, "can't be completely responsive to the National Intelligence Priorities Framework (NIPF) because that only addresses consumers' priority concerns."[15] State Department leadership, for instance, still needs continuous intelligence on every country, all the time, not just the priority missions that require the attention of the president or other departments at that time.

Regarding the division of labor within the community, Fingar commented, "Most issues aren't presidential issues- they can be handled by the departments. However, if the departments aren't sufficiently supported these issues will have to go higher to be handled."[16] In this sense, a danger exists that consolidation would become a self-fulfilling prophecy; the centers would be hard at work generating the same intelligence for the departments that is already being generated within them.

A senior analytic manger within the community commented that: "Joint duty would be beneficial, but one National Intelligence Service (which would be inevitable amongst analysts in a consolidated model) would not allow the departments to hire and shape the specialized analytical branches to meet their needs."[17] In this regard, commonality, or at least a common outlook and performance on the part of intelligence professionals, is not sought after by the departments.

Thomas Fingar commented, "There is zero-sum expertise within the IC on any given subject. The expertise is usually concentrated based on the topic." This is understandable given that the bulk of intelligence produced is tailored to support the departments, and that specialized analysts are required to produce it. Yet this also

suggests that the IC lacks the expertise to support a large mission manager or NIM structure at the top, and that, especially if draw downs of any size were to occur in the future, the IC similarly lacks the expertise to support any type of robust coordination efforts at the ODNI level.

This concept of limited expertise also further undermines the concept of true competitive analysis. If within the IC, for instance, there are only one or two senior analytical experts that understand the complex culture and politics of a certain country, how can the other agencies be producing competitive analysis that actually competes? This problem surfaced both during the literature review and subsequent research, in that there is often one agency that frequently voices a well-informed dissenting opinion (frequently State-INR, by many accounts), but that such opinions are often ignored specifically because they are in the minority.

Put simply, the current decentralized model appears to isolate experts from their less-experienced peers working the same problem sets, which merely results in competing, tailored, stovepiped analysis of unknown or questionable quality. Perhaps in this sense, the whole might actually be worth less than the sum of its parts.

Finally, there was agreement amongst most interviewees that, if consolidated centers were to be implemented they likely would not meet the specialized needs of the departments. This was summarized best by one intelligence official's declaration that "if the DNI had sweeping personnel authorities and took away the departments' specialized components, it's likely that they would simply recreate them."[18]

Unique Military Intelligence Requirements

In developing the theoretical model for "joint" centers, it was difficult to avoid the obvious parallels with the *Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act* of 1986. However, research highlighted several important differences between the military and IC that are important for the concept of intelligence reform. First, the relative autonomy and clear chain of command of the military during execution does not exist in the IC, where every department can give orders to their respective agencies or components that might differ radically from the other departments.

Though military action may be an extension of politics, there is a long history, at least in American military operations, of allowing the military to execute its operations with a clear chain of command, rather than having to worry about continuous, contradictory inputs from several departments and Congress. Though this might be largely remedied by consolidated centers reporting to the DNI, it still would not resolve the issue that departments often disagree on policies and priorities, and that they would likely place equally diverse demands on the centers. If, the criticisms went, the centers still had to divide their efforts to support the different departments, what would the massive effort really have accomplished?

Second, when not deployed overseas, military forces fall under the control of their parent services, not the combatant commands; this accounts for most of their existence, and largely shapes their doctrine and culture. The IC, on the other hand, is operational every day. In a consolidated model, the agencies would never directly control operations, and so would have a greatly reduced impact on their cultures and training, unlike the current joint model within the military. This problem with the theoretical model for

consolidation was identified quickly by SSCI professional staffer Rich Girven, who noted, "You don't need the agencies once you've created centers where most of the intelligence officers will work. The agencies aren't going to recruit and train people just so they can go spend a career at the centers."[19]

One concern regarding consolidation of the IC, regardless of the idea of centers, is that the imbalance of power (and budget) between the US military and the other departments might enable it to absorb an even larger portion of the IC's efforts, in addition to the attention of senior intelligence leaders. There is already a tendency for the community to support tactical intelligence support to the war fighter over strategic intelligence, and that could be exasperated in a consolidated system. General Hayden summarized this best by stating, "One danger is in reinforcing the militarization of intelligence. More powerful consumers would drive intelligence priorities at the expense of other departments like State, Energy, etc."[20]

In keeping with earlier comments about the importance of the executive branch in shaping the IC, Judge Silberman remarked, "I never worried that the military would suffer if NGA, NSA, and NRO worked for the DNI. If the president was on board, this would not be a problem."[21] However, it is likely that this is because the military would receive too much support, rather than not enough. Though the provision of intelligence to the military in a consolidated system is certainly cause for concern, the focus of intelligence on tactical support for warfighting at the expense of anticipatory, long-term focus, was also recurring theme in both the literature review and interviews.

Another consideration is the great disparity in the objective of military intelligence analysis from the other departments. Thomas Fingar explained, "There is a

real need for military intelligence, for instance, to consider worst-case scenarios, because that's how the military has to plan. But the 'worst case' almost never happens in the real-world, so that analysis is almost always wrong."[22] Essentially, although the military must plan for the worst-case, other policymakers are required to make decisions based on the most likely scenario, so they need intelligence efforts directed to that end.

Seams Within the IC

When discussing the concept of consolidation, there is a third serious issue that arose during almost every interview, that of addressing the seams that exist between and amongst both collection and analysis in the various agencies. These seams are simultaneously a product of the existing IC's organization, a reason for its organization, and an unavoidable fact of intelligence operations.

As addressed in chapter 2, proximity between intelligence professionals and their customers matters. However, proximity was historically addressed as the balance sought between politicization of intelligence and responsiveness. At their most basic, the seams discussed here are the difficulties in identifying which collectors or analysts in different agencies are working on the complex web of regional and functional issues. For instance, collection conducted in country X may contain intelligence related to another country Y, and also to several functional areas, like counterterrorism or counter proliferation. It may also be directly related to other intelligence on those same issues that was collected through one or more other modalities, often by other agencies. To date, efforts at effecting better communication across these seams have primarily been achieved by efforts at improving coordination, usually employed by central authorities like the DCI and ODNI, and by virtual collaboration (to be discussed later).

General Hayden agreed that seams were a difficult aspect of daily intelligence work. He remarked that he was "much more comfortable with compiling analysis than collection efforts, but even then it's very hard to draw a line where authorities and responsibilities would be divided."[23] Consolidating analysis without collection, however, would merely create more (and different) seams between those two efforts, many of which have been painstakingly reduced by separate efforts in the past decades.

Some collection efforts are more likely to shift amongst these seams quickly, as they can be more easily redirected than others. HUMINT, for instance, requires significant time to develop in a region; efforts cannot simply be redirected to another country or continent. Though this might make it more easily integrated into the consolidated regional centers proposed in this thesis, the intelligence professionals interviewed were also especially concerned that singular agency control of HUMINT collection be preserved, in order to ensure the highest levels of training and management, and the preservation of sources and methods. Covert action, which is not discussed in this thesis, would also be far easier to control in the existing system.

However, the technical collection modalities are more globally focused, in that they are largely executed centrally from within the agencies. This presents a different set of problems for consolidated centers. General Hayden noted that: "SIGINT is inherently global, how can you divide this up? For instance, collection on a specific region is not always conducted in that region, so it's difficult to separate it all."[24] Again, by attempting to mend some seams, others are inevitably created.

The impact of existing seams was downplayed to a degree by Thomas Fingar's comment that, "It's not necessary for everything to be coordinated by the NIC. The senior

agency analysts know who the other experts are in the community, who they need to go to for second opinions."[25] This use of personal experience to overcome the problem of seams should not be dismissed. However, it is very possible that the junior analysts plowing through the bulk of the analytical work do not know who the other experts in the community are. Those critical issues that reach the senior analysts might get informally vetted by friends and peers in other agencies, or they may not. In an increasingly complex and dynamic world, where there is not one monolithic threat that can be deliberately focused on, this informal method of coordination is somewhat troubling as an official corporate model.

Though seams will always exist, the IC is also seeking technological solutions (such as data-mining, social networks, and collaborative models) to alleviate their impact. One senior community analyst posited, "An amoeba-like IT collaboration could solve the need to physically co-locate. Ideas could be shared faster, results could be captured and consolidated, to include dissenting opinions."[26] Dr. Fingar reiterated the point that "Electrons don't care about proximity."[27]

However, even a Facebook-style collaborative model raises additional questions. The senior analyst quoted above, for instance, later questioned his own idea by noting, "But then the issue becomes validation. Who validates the opinions and delivers them?"[28] This inability to track the sharing of ideas, and to ensure sufficient quality control, may be yet another tradeoff that must be made to refine the analytic art to match modern, global threats.

In the end, the sheer cost of physical consolidation is extremely difficult to sell by expressing only theoretical gains that are suggested by a consolidated model. A senior

intelligence officer agreed, noting, "The sheer economic costs of physical co-location might render it a moot point."[29] This is not surprising, as the difficulty of measuring pros and cons, combined with the policy and national security implications of getting it wrong, makes physical consolidation unpalatable compared to virtual solutions. Though it remains to be seen whether these new virtual sites will work, they have apparently shown promise.

Ideal Role of the ODNI (Coordination versus Production)

One issue that was conspicuously absent during the conduct of research was any discussion regarding the permanency of the ODNI. Even off the record, there were no comments hinting that the creation of the ODNI might- or even should- be reversed. Though some intelligence officers did question whether the old DCI could have achieved the same results, it seems clear that the consensus opinion holds that the ODNI is here to stay, and that it is far more likely to achieve increased authorities rather than see them diminished. This does not mean there is widespread love of or support for the ODNI, merely that it is a broadly accepted feature of the new IC landscape, for better or worse.

As Thomas Fingar stated, "We need coordination from ODNI, not control; it should be grown carefully."[30] This need for caution was often reiterated as discussions shifted towards the ODNI's evolving form and functions. Research revealed three central themes surrounding its role as it pertains to consolidation: (1) the size of the ODNI; (2) the conflict between coordination and production; and (3) the dangers of increased ODNI authorities.

Size of the ODNI

Judge Silberman, remarking on the original concept of the DNI, stated that, "the intent in creating the ODNI was to keep it lean, to bring in some of the smartest professionals from the agencies to serve two to three years. There was to be an absolute requirement for this type of joint service being a real career booster for those intelligence professionals."[31]

As mentioned earlier, one of the reasons for this was likely an unwillingness to create "another layer of bureaucracy" due to the limited expertise in the community. Dr. Fingar remarked "there are not that many senior, experienced analysts in the community on each issue. Every billet is vying for people from the same limited pool."[32] While very relevant to the size of the ODNI, this "limited pool" of senior experts also calls into doubt the ability for a decentralized IC to maintain experts in all of the agencies, on the host of problems worldwide. Thus, especially without consolidation, it is wise to be very careful in creating a robust ODNI.

This was a common theme that arose during research. One senior intelligence official commented that creation of the ODNI, and especially the growth of the NIMs, would potentially "invert the personnel pyramid" within the IC; they were emphatic that the IC does not need more senior officers at the top, it needs more low and mid-level analysts doing the hard work in the trenches. They further expressed concerns that, if the growth of the past decade within the past decade were to ever be reversed, the billets being added to the ODNI would be the "last to go."[33] This seems a fair assertion, considering that organizational leaders often appear less inclined to cut their own jobs if

they can trim some from the lower ranks, especially from a separate agency or component.

Apparently these concerns, as well as the original intent of the ODNI, are not lost on its current director. Regarding reductions at the top of the ODNI, General Clapper stated in a recent speech that he had held a meeting "on decisions on trimming, either cutting or moving out of ODNI, some functions that either can be done on the basis of executive agency, which I'm a big believer in. We don't have to do everything on the ODNI staff–migrate a number of functions out."[34] It remains to be seen whether the concept of executive agency will be embraced long term by the ODNI, or whether consolidation of functions (discussed below) will prevail.

Both would, in their own ways, support the eventual consolidation of centers. If for, instance, agencies were pronounced the lead or executive agencies for either support (e.g., NSA for IT standardization) or operational (e.g., CIA for HUMINT), it would be fairly easy for them to retain those same functions if their analysts (and possibly collectors) served in consolidated centers.

Coordination Versus Production

Another serious concern that arose during the course of research was the danger of an empowered ODNI (inevitable in a consolidated model) producing intelligence at the expense of managing the community. It was apparent during the course of this research that there is significant confusion or disagreement, even among very senior intelligence professionals, regarding what the ODNI is doing and what it should be doing. There is much anxiety already regarding the ODNI's perceived attempts to increase the production of analytical products, vice merely coordinating that production by the

agencies. Part of this anxiety appears to be misplaced, due simply to the newness of some ODNI initiatives, their constant evolution (Mission Managers have become NIMs), and the difficulty for the ODNI to educate the community while trying to carve its niche within the IC with limited authorities.

That the ODNI might begin to produce intelligence is not surprising to many, considering the constant appetite within the Beltway for intelligence. Dr. Zegart perhaps summarized it best by stating that, "There is an inexorable push towards more production and less coordination, but there is a huge opportunity cost when you're producing, because then you're not coordinating and managing."[35] It is obvious that production and coordination both require effort, and worth noting that if the ODNI does these things in addition to the ongoing efforts at the agencies, rather than consolidating them, it will be a significant burden on the IC's personnel.

It is possible this additional layer of coordination (and possibly intelligence fusion) is exactly what policymakers had in mind. It is also possible that the ODNIs are merely attempting to prove the NIMs' worth to consumers, so that they can eventually grow them into even more robust regionally and functionally oriented teams, or even centers of experts. Or, perhaps Amy Zegart is correct when she postulated that "maybe (the ODNI) is producing because they lack the authorities to truly coordinate and manage?"[36]

One of the primary reasons for the trepidation within the IC regarding the ODNI producing intelligence is the fear that they might become subjective arbiters, and that their products would essentially "compete" against those already generated by the agencies, while they also retained the power to select which products reached the

consumers. Amy Zegart stated, "There is a danger that the DNI would overrule the other agencies. They must be the neutral arbiters."[37] This was echoed by Thomas Fingar, who stated, "It can be problematic if NIMs speak for the analytic community. They might suppress dissenting opinions due to their personal bias."[38] This need for the ODNI to provide impartial "oversight" to the community was shared by another intelligence official who noted, "There is an inherent conflict with oversight; if you allow the ODNI to get into the business of production, then who oversees them?"[39]

Yet another reason given for not consolidating community expertise, to include in the existing NIM construct, was the existence of the National Intelligence Council and NIOs. One senior intelligence official noted, "The IC already has (consolidated analysis). The National Intelligence Council is the legislated senior analytical group for the community. They can pull in the all-source analysts across the community when they need to. The NIE process is very deliberate, and exists for this reason."[40] However, the deliberate nature of the NIE process, and the limited time available to the lone NIOs for each area of responsibility, does not seem to be as helpful in putting together the pieces of the disparate IC's daily intelligence work in order to predict or anticipate emerging threats, which has been a routine criticism of the community to date.

Nowhere is the question of coordination versus production more evident than in the creation of Mission Managers (now NIMs) within ODNI. There was widespread disagreement regarding what the NIMs have done to date, and what they should be doing in the future. When asked whether NIOs or NIMs should be considered the senior intelligence official when assigned to the same region or mission, and whom policymakers should turn to for answers on those issues, one senior intelligence official

stated, "That's a question we have not fully resolved yet. Interaction between both NIOs and NIMs with policymakers is essential, the key difference being whether that interaction is regarding analysis or community management."[41]

Dr. Fingar stated flatly that "NIMs are redundant, the NIOs were already doing that." This view was echoed by numerous others, including Judge Silberman, who stated, "It makes no sense to have separate NIMs and NIOs." General Clapper's comments in a speech late last year seemed to clarify the issue, stating that "What we're putting together is a single standard organizational template that combines the best features of NIOs and mission managers into what we're calling national intelligence managers . . . and we will have somewhere in the neighborhood of 15 or 20."[42]

However, senior intelligence officials continue to give widely diverging accounts regarding the role of the NIMs and NIOs. One official stated conclusively that there is no overlap in the functions by explaining, "The NIOs are expert community analysts who coordinate and produce finished analytical products to include National Intelligence Estimates; the National Intelligence Managers coordinate and manage the community's efforts in their respective mission areas, but should not produce analytic intelligence products."[43] Judge Silberman, a leading voice behind the creation of Mission Managers, stated "the DNI should be focusing on finding the individuals within the IC that are the best managers, not necessarily the best analysts. Mission managers should be brilliant managers, not brilliant analysts, though they probably need to at least know who the brilliant analysts are across the community."[44]

Perhaps the divergent opinions on what the NIMs are (and should) be doing is simply a result of the rapid evolution of the ODNI, and the steep learning curve in

simultaneously figuring out authorities, shaping the systems, and attempting to educate such a diverse, decentralized community of intelligence professionals and policy makers. Thomas Fingar seems to agree, stating, "The ambiguous character of the rules of engagement regarding NIM's roles and responsibilities leads to widely disparate interpretation."[45]

None of this is intended to critique the existence of the NIMs, only to highlight that there are diverging opinions regarding whether the ODNI should be in the business of producing intelligence (i.e., combined NIMs), or merely coordinating intelligence (i.e., the intent behind the Mission Managers). This argument may also be moot, as the NIOs have always produced analytic products (NIEs), and they are controlled by the ODNI. Though the NIE is admittedly a very deliberate process, it is also increasingly outdated as a means of gaining consensus within the community on rapidly evolving threats in the 21st century. Tracking and reporting on cyber intelligence, for instance, may not lend itself well to the deliberate NIE process, whereas a NIM who was involved daily in both the fusion and synchronization of collection and analysis would be real value added.

More or Less Authority?

Both questions regarding the size and role of the ODNI are directly dependent on the authorities it received when it was created and in the years since. As with most of the issues outlined above, there is a widespread belief amongst the IC and many customers that the authorities of the ODNI should remain limited, or at least be expanded with the utmost caution.

Two of the ODNI's most important authorities are also the most controversial: budget and personnel. Thomas Fingar commented, "The advantage of shops like INR and

the defense agencies being outside of the budgetary control of the ODNI is that they are protected from billets getting cut."[46]

Regarding personnel authorities, one area of concern was addressed by Judge Silberman, who commented, "The DNI shouldn't just be approving the directors of the intelligence agencies, he should have hiring and firing authority. All agencies should be reporting to the DNI."[47] Though direct control over the agencies would be the ultimate authority, there are some reasons why it makes little sense. Fingar pointed out, for instance, "There are a variety of agency-specific reasons why this wouldn't work. State INR, for instance, is staffed by roughly 30% Foreign Service Officers at any given time, so it makes no sense for that budget to be outside of State Department."[48]

Potential for Consolidation

During the course of this research the general reaction to consolidated centers under an empowered ODNI was skeptical at best, negative at worst. However, there were several areas that were identified as areas for potential consolidation, and some areas where IC professionals had already noticed the tangible benefits of increased ODNI coordination. These areas included (1) creation of a National Intelligence Service (NIS); (2) consolidation of some IC support activities; and (3) general observations.

National Intelligence Service

One recurring theme pointed towards the potential for the creation of a National Intelligence Service to help improve the interoperability of the IC's analytic workforce. Though such a change would not implement true consolidation, it would be a step in that direction. Several interviewees agreed that this was worth considering. Dr. Zegart stated

that there needs to be "a systematic analysis of hiring practices, reward mechanisms like promotions, and the evaluation process . . . Maybe hiring doesn't need to be centrally controlled, but maybe the training and incentives systems could be.[49] Thomas Fingar added that the ODNI "could, for instance, help with standardization of tradecraft, or the formation of a true National Intelligence Service."[50]

Judge Silberman included, "If you were to do it, you'd have to include the FBI's foreign intelligence analysts. They are an inseparable part of this."[51] He agreed that there does need to be more transferability between the agencies; in keeping with his belief that the DNI should have more direct control over the agencies, he further added that the DNI should be controlling promotions. His insistence at the inclusion of the FBI's analysts in a potential NIS questioned the assumption made earlier in this thesis that domestic intelligence could be considered separately in any potential consolidation of national strategic intelligence.

These beliefs corresponded with the finding of a recent study by the CSI, which noted that much of the training conducted in the IC varies widely and focuses on the unique missions of the respective agencies. However, it concluded, "The problem with an agency-centric view is that, without a general community-wide training program for intelligence analysts, agencies and their analysts have difficulty finding, communicating, and interacting with one another.[52] The study also found that analysts did not seek out resources outside their own agencies, and, "Without an inclusive communitywide basic training program . . . a community of practitioners will have difficulty interacting with one another, communicating between and within organizations, and establishing a professional identity, which is a key ingredient in the development of a professional

discipline."[53] Regardless of how such a professional, integrated workforce is organized initially, it would certainly create opportunities for future consolidation.

National Intelligence Support & Infrastructure

Apart from the training and career development of analysts, another prospective area for consolidation is in the area of national intelligence support and infrastructure. Thomas Fingar noted that one way the ODNI could help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the IC would be to remove existing redundancies "like legal, congressional, and admin support, benefits management, or contract administration . . . this would realize efficiencies community-wide without hindering the agencies operationally."[54]

This concept has been a recurring theme in intelligence reform. A recommendation of the HPSCI's comprehensive IC21 Study in 1996 was to "consolidate and rationalize management of infrastructure and services of common concern across the IC. These should include at least personnel management, community-level training, security, information systems and communications."[55]

General Observations

There were several other observations noted during the course of the research that did not fit neatly in the categories addressed above, but which were important to note due to their relevancy to the primary research question. These are briefly mentioned below.

Though consolidation would certainly force community jointness, it was noted that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan might have the same effect indirectly. This was best expressed by one senior collection manager, who commented, "We are growing people

now in the community who started out collaborating at the tactical level in Iraq and Afghanistan. This will translate into collaboration at the national strategic level."[56]

One danger anticipated in the theoretical model was the potential for increased intelligence leaks caused by counterintelligence (CI) breaches of consolidated centers. However, this was not a concern amongst those who commented on this particular issue. Rather than increase leaks (or the seriousness of leaks), most commented that the ability to standardize training, classification mechanisms, and IT infrastructure in a consolidated system would likely increase the effectiveness of CI.

Finally, one senior collection manager interviewed recommended an alternative to both physical consolidation and virtual collaboration. Instead of permanent centers, he suggested that collectors and analysts could meet with customers in weekly or monthly synchronization meetings to better coordinate their activities in high-priority areas.[57]

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[1]SICO1, Senior intelligence community official, interview by author, Langley, VA, March 2011.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Thomas Fingar, interview by author, Stanford, CA, 22 March 2011.

[4]SICO1, interview.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Fingar, interview.

[7]SICO2, Senior intelligence community official, interview by author, Langley, VA, March 2011.

[8]Fingar, interview.

[9]Michael Hayden, interview by author, Washington, DC, 9 March 2011.

[10]Hayden, interview.

[11]Fingar, interview.

[12]Lowenthal, 184.

[13]SICO2, interview.

[14]Gutjahr, 81.

[15]Fingar interview.

[16]Ibid.

[17]SICO3, Senior intelligence community official, interview by author, Langley, VA, March 2011.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Richard Girven, interview by author, Washington, DC, 9 March 2011.

[20]Hayden interview.

[21]Laurence Silberman, interview by author, Washington, DC, 30 March 2011.

[22]Fingar interview.

[23]Hayden interview.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Fingar interview.

[26]SICO2, interview.

[27]Fingar interview.

[28]SICO2, interview.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Fingar interview.

[31]Silberman interview.

[32]Fingar interview.

[33]SICO5, Senior intelligence community official, interview by author, Langley, VA, March 2011.

[34]Clapper, 5.

[35]Amy Zegart, interview by author, Los Angeles, CA, 25 March 2011.

[36]Ibid.

[37]Ibid.

[38]Fingar interview.

[39]SICO4, Senior intelligence community official, interview by author, Langley, VA, March 2011.

[40]SICO1, interview.

[41]SICO3, interview.

[42]Clapper, 3.

[43]SICO3, interview.

[44]Silberman interview.

[45]Fingar interview.

[46]Ibid.

[47]Silberman interview.

[48]Fingar interview.

[49]Zegart interview.

[50]Fingar interview.

[51]Silberman interview.

[52]Cooper, 29.

[53]Ibid., 29.

[54]Fingar interview.

[55]HPSCI, 15.

[56]SICO1, interview.

[57]Ibid.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

> The longevity of many of these management and structural issues strongly suggests that difficult choices rather than definitive answers are the most likely outcomes as the IC attempts to reshape itself to face new national security issues.
>
> — IC21: The Intelligence Community in the 21st Century, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

As explained in the introduction, the goal of this thesis was two-fold. First, it sought to answer the primary research question of how consolidating collection and analysis efforts into Goldwater-Nichols-like national intelligence centers would impact the efficiency and effectiveness of the IC. Second and more importantly, it sought to contribute to future discussions regarding the potential suitability of consolidation for America's IC.

The research identified several key aspects of the IC that would be strongly affected by consolidation, especially on the scale of the theoretical model proposed in this thesis. In keeping with the organization of the preceding chapters, these conclusions are generally organized around those central themes: (1) the suitability of national intelligence centers; (2) the role of the ODNI; (3) evolving national intelligence priorities; and (4) final thoughts and the potential for consolidation.

National Intelligence Centers: Too Much Consolidation, Too Fast

A participant at the CSI's conference in 2003 postulated, "How do you create a mission focus in the Intelligence Community? I think you need to create . . . Community Centers. We have Centers, we just don't have Community Centers."[1]

The NCTC and NCPC, created under the ODNI shortly after the comment above was made, likely execute functions very similar to what that participant envisioned, although perhaps with not quite the same authorities or comprehensive unity of effort. It is also possible that the NIMs, which were intended to bring that same community focus to the IC's most important missions, have partially satisfied the desire for many for more integration in the IC's daily operations, as the NIOs have traditionally provided less frequently during formal, comprehensive NIEs.

However, research indicated that the limitations placed on the existing centers and NIMs largely prevents them from attaining the levels of integration and unity of effort that have been routinely demanded in the past, especially during the last decade. This is largely due to their limited size, one or two individuals in the case of the NIMs, and the fact that they function as an additional layer to existing community efforts, rather than consolidating them and thereby achieving more efficiency and synchronization. This does not imply that the centers and NIMs are not value added; research indicated that they clearly are. Yet they are not quite the powerful integrators many have sought, and are best viewed as interim steps towards the ideal solution.

Several interviewees, however, seemed content with current efforts, and in some instances even questioned if they had gone too far. This disparity reflects the fundamental contradiction inherent in recent intelligence reform efforts, the desire to prioritize legacy concepts such as stovepipes, competitive analysis (at the agency level), and highly tailored intelligence, while also embracing the fairly new concepts of integration, corporateness, and unity of effort. This will be discussed in far more detail in the following section.

Before continuing, it is important to address the primary research question directly. This thesis' research generally mirrored past responses by intelligence professionals and consumers, which questioned the suitability of any major consolidation for America's IC. In particular, however, consolidation of collection and analysis into regional and functional centers is currently unworkable in America's intelligence system. Though some consolidation is warranted, and will be discussed in the following pages, consolidated centers of the scale suggested in this thesis would entail too much consolidation to meet the highly specialized demands of America's intelligence consumers, at least for the foreseeable future. There are four main reasons.

First, consolidation into regional and functional centers would create new seams, especially within collection activities, because much of the collection conducted within the IC does not fit neatly into geographical and functional boxes. As such, creating organizational charts along those lines makes sense aesthetically, but ignores the more complicated web of systems that have developed during the past several decades specifically to address those seams. While it is possible that some consolidation of collection activities would deliver increased efficiency and effectiveness in the aggregate, it must be done very deliberately, recognizing that for every two seams that are mended, one or more may develop elsewhere.

Second, consolidated centers would essentially eliminate the need for the intelligence agencies as we know them today, rather than merely relegating them to a supporting status, as was suggested by the theoretical model in chapter 4. This does not argue in favor of retaining the agencies in exactly their current form, but it does recognize that consolidation would likely not happen in the particular manner considered by this

thesis. The ODNI could, for instance, grow centralized authorities that would slowly absorb some traditional agencies or their component parts, executing those functions more efficiently on behalf of the community. Similarly, all-source analysis capabilities might slowly gravitate to the ODNI (robust NIMs, for example) with corresponding reductions at the traditional agencies and components, which would eventually function in a much more streamlined but supporting (backup) capacity.

If, over the coming decades, such a transformation were to happen, it would not necessarily decrease the value of intelligence delivered to policymakers, and it may in fact greatly improve it. However, any of these changes would be implemented slowly and deliberately over the course of years, ensuring that there was no significant disruption to the quality and timeliness of intelligence delivered to policymakers. Consolidation on the scale proposed in this thesis is such a radical re-envisioning of the current system that it is unsuitable according to almost all benchmarks currently favored by both producers and consumers.

Finally, there is a valid concern within the community that consolidation would jeopardize the traditional competitive analysis, tailored intelligence, and stovepiped (i.e., agency supervised) collection that serve as the foundation of how the IC operates. In fact, this is nearly certain; consolidation, or even a stronger ODNI, would seriously and negatively impact those concepts as they are traditionally valued within the IC. However, there are strong indicators that this is precisely what must happen for the IC to evolve, so that it is postured to deliver better intelligence faster on the host of problems facing America in the post-Cold War world. This seemingly unavoidable contradiction is the

most important aspect of the debate regarding consolidation of the IC, and is discussed in greater detail in the following pages.

As that discussion will show, there does appear to be both an opportunity and a need for consolidation, especially of analysts. However, doing so along strict regional and functional lines would only exacerbate seams, as discussed above, without necessarily erasing traditional ones. Though redundancies in any consolidated system would certainly be reduced, this would not necessarily increase the quality of intelligence provided to consumers, or ensure sufficient quantity of the various specialized types that intelligence consumers demand.

It is worth briefly noting that recommendations for consolidation do not imply that the IC is broken, or that it has collectively failed in its mission. Certainly there have been several perceived intelligence failures in recent years, and the IC could be doing some things better, regardless of any organizational change. However, this research confirmed many previous assertions that major intelligence failures are almost always more aptly described as policy failures.

In fact, just as the American military struggled for so long in adapting itself to counterinsurgency operations in the early years of Iraq in Afghanistan, the bulk of the IC continues to perform its duties heroically, yet labors under an outdated organizational model and doctrine that are increasingly relics of Cold-War threats and thinking. As the military has learned, it takes decades to reform such thinking inside bureaucratically and culturally entrenched entities like the Department of Defense, let alone the infinitely more byzantine IC, of which the DOD also happens to be the largest member and consumer.

In this sense, policymakers continue to receive exactly what they have asked for from the IC: more competitive analysis, more tailored intelligence, and the preservation of the redundancies and stovepipes that deliver it all. It should come as no great surprise then if those preferences have come with an enormous price: less integration, unity of effort, and contextual understanding of the myriad issues which cannot be satisfactorily analyzed due to the preservation of the old model. This is especially true considering the enormous attention these issues have received during the past decade.

A Strong ODNI: Precursor to Consolidation?

In 2010, upon the confirmation of James Clapper as the new DNI, Michael Hayden wrote, "The nation is asking a lot of Jim Clapper, probably more than it has a right to ask . . . And good people often overcome weak structures. But consistently relying on extraordinary heroism for routine success is hardly wise policy. And it is especially unwise in an area as critical as intelligence. The DNI and the people he will lead deserve better."[2] Though Hayden's comments do not endorse any particular form or function for the ODNI, they importantly recognize the need to reform the IC's weak structure before asking much more from it.

Regardless of the direction that such reform of the IC might take, research concurred that a strong, central authority in the form of the ODNI will be an inseparable component. Concerns regarding the effect that a strong ODNI would have upon decentralized concepts like competitive analysis are warranted. Yet is seems clear that policymakers will not soon accept a return to the past, when agencies functioned without any effective central authority to at least nudge them in the same direction.

Further, it seems almost unavoidable that the ODNI will continue to grow its authorities, and to be increasingly involved in both the management of intelligence collection and the production of fused, finished intelligence via the existing centers and NIMs. Whether these are subtle, deliberate advances towards more consolidation on the part of the DNIs, or a less-deliberate but inevitable response to the evolving demands of intelligence consumers is basically a moot point. It is sufficient to note that centralization of authority within the IC is apparently marching inexorably, if slowly onward, which is noteworthy because centralization is a crucial requirement for, though not automatically a precursor to consolidation.

Finally, it is worth noting that research revealed considerable skepticism on the part of several intelligence professionals regarding the ability of a powerful ODNI to remain objective in its management of the individual agencies and the delivery of community intelligence to consumers. The concern is essentially that ODNIs might favor certain collection modalities or analytical components over others, causing those functions to atrophy. Optimistically, this might be caused by sheer demand, in that the DOD might even further dominate a budget consolidated under the ODNI. More pessimistically, DNIs might consciously diminish certain intelligence agencies or activities out of a lack of respect for their contributions or, even more nefariously, to punish them for frequently dissenting with the DNI or siding with other departments on controversial issues.

However, it seems exceptionally unlikely that successive DNIs would or could allow key components of the IC to erode under their watch, especially since both the affected departments and their congressional overseers would be well aware of any

reductions. Though DNIs could conceivably ignore complaints about their priorities and subsequent allocation of resources, they would do so only with the consent of the president, who should be sensitive to the needs of their entire cabinet, to say nothing of the president's (and the NSC's) vested interest in receiving balanced, quality, objective intelligence.

As William Odom, former director of the NSA once noted, "There is no way to depoliticize the role of the president's intelligence chief. It is a desirable aspiration, but intelligence is just as political as policymaking and military operations.[3] If true, DNIs should be chosen based on their willingness to understand and support the president's priorities with a balanced National Intelligence Strategy (NIS) that actively incorporates the entire IC, rather than merely acting as an impartial judge when disputes among disparate IC components or departments arise.

As Judge Silberman succinctly stated, "No matter what happens, the president has to be behind the DNI."[4] Indeed, suggesting that another level of objective executive oversight would be required to somehow restrain a powerful ODNI seems to greatly undervalue the professionalism of the IC leadership and the entire national security apparatus it supports. As with the DOD and other cabinet-level departments, the right people must be identified to lead them, and then held accountable for their performance. No organizational model can ensure good leadership or protect against the debilitative effects of bad leadership; the most that can be hoped for is an organization that enables good leaders to perform, and enables bad leaders to be more easily identified and replaced.

Unfortunately then, the ODNI has been charged with a herculean task: to improve the effectiveness of the IC against modern threats, while making few (if any) changes to its legacy, decentralized structure. In other words, they've been expected to deliver dramatic improvements in function, while not tampering with form. For some, the creation of the DNI itself was a dramatic change, yet the ODNI's current authorities, although superior to the old DCIs', are a far cry from the powerful, central authority many have suggested. Without full budgetary and personnel authority, and without the authority to select agency and component directors, the ODNI is a noteworthy addition to the IC, but not the fundamental reconsideration of priorities that is necessary to realize the true benefits of consolidation.

Evolving National Intelligence Priorities

Research identified numerous apparent contradictions between efforts to significantly improve some aspects of the community, such as coordination and integration, and a near-total unwillingness to adjust fundamental priorities that routinely stymie these efforts, such as continued support for competitive analysis, tailored intelligence, and the associated agency stovepipes. Considering the complexity of the IC and the need to carefully balance concepts like coordination with dangers like groupthink, adjusting the organization and operation of the IC is best described as a zero-sum game; it is extremely difficult to improve key aspects of its performance without making equally important concessions in other areas.

Yet there appears to be a fundamental mismatch between the evolving focus and priorities of the national security community and the largely static organizational and cultural model that is expected to meet those needs, for four main reasons. First, Cold

War intelligence processes required parceling and exploiting one monolithic threat, whereas modern intelligence processes require assembling countless complicated puzzles from diverse but inter-related component parts scattered worldwide. Second, the exponential growth in the number of intelligence issues that require expertise invalidates the concept of retaining competing experts in numerous agencies on every issue. Third, because individual departments continue to get responsive, tailored intelligence, there is little collective recognition amongst these same consumers that these various efforts are not well coordinated. This helps explain the repeated critical analyses of America's IC by external actors (especially Congress), and the continuing resistance to reform by many producers and consumers. And fourth, repeated demands for more corporateness or enterprise-like operation by the IC represents a serious misunderstanding of how most successful corporations operate.

First, it is increasingly counterproductive to track and exploit 21st century threats using Cold War technology and organizations that were specifically designed to exploit a monolithic adversary that disappeared two decades prior. Stovepipes, for instance, were crucial mechanisms to preserve the sources and methods of the different collection modalities when penetration and exploitation by foreign intelligence services was of crucial importance. They were also important to help preserve the technical expertise and cultural integrity of the agencies, so that the various components of the Soviet Union's political, economic, and military apparatus could be divided into its component parts, while competitive analysis could provide contrarian evaluations of Soviet capabilities and intentions.

However, in recent years globalization and emergent technologies such as the Internet and social media have radically changed the number, diversity, and methods of the threats facing America. A significant contradiction emerges when intelligence professionals and policymakers passionately champion the preservation of competitive analysis and highly tailored departmental intelligence, while also demanding better cultural awareness amongst analysts, better mentorship and training of analysts, improved anticipatory and strategic intelligence, and better intelligence sharing and fusion at all levels community-wide. This is akin to demanding that an engineer build the world's fastest racecar, while also expecting that it comfortably seat seven passengers and tow 10,000 lbs.

Though flippant, that analogy seems depressingly accurate, and reflects a continuing willingness on the part of many within the IC to preserve an outdated business model and practices, even though the market has fundamentally changed. Clearly, some legacy requirements are still valid; we must ensure we know the capabilities of our adversaries' next tanks, and we must monitor the development and posture of nuclear weapons worldwide. However, it is essential to achieve a better balance in the allocation and specialization of community resources, which will be extraordinarily difficult to achieve in the current model.

Second, the validity of traditional competitive analysis is increasingly doubtful due to the apparently limited number of true experts within the IC on any particular region or functional problem, and the fact that they may reside in only one agency at a particular time. Lowenthal writes, "Competitive analysis requires that enough analysts with similar areas of expertise are working in more than one agency."[5] This may have

been common at the height of the Cold War, when the IC was chiefly concerned with one enemy that spoke one language, and that operated within a rational system that could be easily divided into its component parts. It has proven far more elusive in recent years, and will become even more so in the coming decade.

This helps explain why in some cases, expert analysis may lose out in competition against the community's consensus opinion, regardless of which analysis is superior. As Thomas Fingar stated, "Analysis has to be measured according to the quality of the tradecraft that was used to produce it and the quality of the argument being made . . . The seniority of the analyst matters, as well as their time on or experience with that specific account."[6]

However, it becomes increasingly difficult to determine where to look for expert opinions when numerous agencies claim to be produce intelligence on so many different and increasingly complex issues. Obviously none of the agencies wants to be viewed as inactive, or even worse ignorant regarding a question that matters to policymakers. This carries real consequences in terms of both prestige and funding. Yet when multiple agencies claim expertise, or at least generate their own coordinated and allegedly expert analysis, it is very difficult for policymakers, let alone fellow analysts to sort out who the true experts are for any particular problem. This difficulty is compounded by recent, well-intentioned attempts to increase virtual collaboration in venues like A-space.

Moreover, research indicates that the IC is increasingly expected to synchronize efforts and ideas at all levels during the collection and analysis of intelligence, rather than forming their own ideas in relative isolation, which was supposed to prevent group think and enable the comparison of contrarian opinions at the most senior levels. Although

sharing, comparing, and improving ideas at the lowest levels community-wide is essential to develop better awareness on the prolific number of rapidly developing challenges in the 21st century, it casts serious doubts on the continuing validity of concepts like stovepipes and competitive analysis in today's IC.

Third, so long as departments control their own intelligence components, the IC will continue to err on the side of responsiveness to specialized, often very short-term demands for the bulk of its production. There will continue to be few opportunities to create more and larger teams that can gain regional, cultural, and functional expertise, except for when they are specifically prioritized by policymakers, and then for a limited duration. In this sense, the IC will continue to excel from a free-market perspective, in that supply will meet individual demand. Yet the larger deficiencies in contextual and anticipatory intelligence across the community will also persist.

Further, it is conceivable that tailored intelligence could continue to be provided to individual departments, even if most of the experts delivering that intelligence were consolidated into joint centers or mission teams. Though some of these members would necessarily reside within the departments, where they could interact in person with consumers, it is essential to consider how the two different models would deal with the promotion, evaluation, and tasking of intelligence personnel, as loyalties tend to follow suit. For instance, the American system currently delegates far more power to the departments than in the British model, yet it is worth considering whether the British foreign secretary has any more difficulty getting their intelligence needs met than the American secretary of state.

Fourth, demands for increased corporateness, jointness, or enterprise-like operation within the IC are understandable and admirable, but reflect a serious misunderstanding either of how either the IC is organized, how most successful corporations are organized, or both. Responses indicated that the organization, priorities, and core values of the IC and its primary consumers make it increasingly unlikely that a decentralized structure, with sixteen separate intelligence agencies controlled by numerous different departments, could ever achieve even a semblance of the jointness or corporateness enjoyed by many corporations, or even the US military twenty-five years after the hard fought passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act.

As Amy Zegart wrote, "The benefits of competition are naturally more limited in the IC than in the private sector. On the one hand, competition can stimulate ideas, sharpen analysis, guard against groupthink and other pitfalls, and generate new ways of doing things. Yet because intelligence agencies compete without the shadow of organizational death, weak practices in one agency are likely to linger alongside better ones elsewhere."[7]

Consider also that most (successful) corporations maintain separate departments or functions, yet they are controlled by the same Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and they share the same stock and fate if their business fails. Within the IC quite the opposite is true, even after the creation of the ODNI. Agencies often compete for resources, are funded separately, their personnel are hired, managed, and fired by numerous different cabinet-level departments, and responsibility for their success or failure ultimately falls on the agency directors and the department secretaries that control them, even if the creation of the ODNI has provided a convenient target for future criticism.

Moreover, any claim that the president acts ultimately as CEO would greatly underestimate the authority of the department secretaries. For instance, it would be very difficult to assert that the secretary of defense does not possess CEO-like powers over the DOD, even if they ultimately report to the president and their budget is ultimately funded by Congress.

Tasking NIMs to attempt the management of diverse community activities does not somehow create corporateness within the IC any more than the standardization of IC badges; rather, the fact that these minor improvements are so noteworthy denotes just how far the IC is from any semblance of true integration. Perhaps a more apt business analogy for today's IC would be a customer who asked the market research divisions of numerous individual electronics companies to occasionally pool their resources and provide a collective evaluation of some aspect of the marketplace. The companies' opinions would often be similar (if not identical), but on occasion they would be radically different, forcing the customer to choose which opinion would guide their strategy. It would not help if, as with coordinated national intelligence products, customers frequently lacked the time and resources to carefully determine which firm had the smartest market researcher or best track record on the most complex issues.

In this manner, the widely divergent experiences of community analysts, combined with the unique agency cultures and disparate departmental needs, works as much against the principal of corporateness as it does the principal of true, or at least fair competitive analysis.

Final Thoughts and Potential for Consolidation

In February 2011, in response to a prehearing question from the SSCI regarding the IC's performance in adjusting its policies, resource allocations, planning, training, and programs to address America's threats, Stephanie O'Sullivan stated, "The IC is making progress in setting and adjusting priorities, reallocating collection assets, and beginning to focus on nontraditional security issues."[8] O'Sullivan's evaluation appears to coincide with prevailing views on the IC's reform to date. However, America's senior policymakers should be duly alarmed that, twenty years since the end of the Cold War and a decade since 9/11, the IC is only just beginning to focus on nontraditional threats, and only just implementing NIMs to better coordinate community efforts to that end.

Though consolidation into regional and functional centers as proposed in this thesis would be too much consolidation too quickly, the IC is long overdue for a new organizational design that achieves truly integrated and synchronized national intelligence operations, all of which reports to the same powerful director. Regardless of whether that model includes more robust NIMs, smaller regional and functional analytical centers, consolidation of some collection efforts, or any of the numerous other ideas that have been proposed in this thesis and elsewhere, some consolidation does appear suitable for America's IC, and it cannot happen soon enough.

Unfortunately, the institutional and cultural indoctrination of many current senior leaders occurred largely during an era of Cold War threats and the decentralized, parochial IC that grew in response. These leaders have only hesitantly embraced concepts like coordination and unity of effort over the last decade. It remains to be seen exactly

how much change will be required, but the first step must be a fundamental, conscious re-examination of priorities by both intelligence producers and consumers moving forward.

Research revealed that most senior intelligence professionals and consumers were quick to argue against consolidation due to its likely impact on the core tenets of the IC, usually described as the need to preserve, in no specific order: (1) highly specialized, tailored intelligence to customers; (2) competitive analysis; and (3) retention of existing collection stovepipes, so that the experts are supervising their trades. Though important, these concepts should be subordinated to new priorities for the IC moving forward, including: (1) better integration and unity of effort; (2) more jointness and cooperation IC-wide (3) greater analytical expertise on more regional, cultural, and functional issues worldwide; and (4) better anticipatory intelligence and contextual analysis.

It will not be easy. As Thomas Fingar wrote, "Although many proclaim the need for more strategic analysis, I have found the 'market' for such work to be both small and episodic . . . it is difficult for officials to think about how events might play out after their term of office while piranhas are working on their legs."[9] Without straying for long in the realm of political feasibility, which was not the focus of this research, it is worth noting that the suitability of IC reform hinges on the needs and wants of its primary customers, and that those same customers are part and parcel of an American national security system that frequently appears short-sighted, if not convulsive.

Unfortunately, intelligence consolidation is also limited by the ease in which career IC professionals can dismiss outsiders' observations as uninformed, amateurish, and dangerously naïve. Such conflict is nothing new. As chairman of the SSCI in 2004, Senator Pat Roberts (R-KS) and eight other Republicans suggested fairly major changes

to the IC, including breaking up the CIA and forming three separate agencies from its main directorates (operations, analysis and technology). They also suggested transferring the NSA and NGA under the DNI and moving Defense HUMINT under what would have been the CIA as a newly formed operations agency.[10]

As acting DCI, George Tenet refuted the senators' ideas in no uncertain terms, stating they, "Would gut the CIA . . . is a dangerous misunderstanding of the business of intelligence . . . Senator Robert's proposal is yet another episode in the mad rush to rearrange wiring diagrams . . . It is time for someone to slam the brakes on before the politics of the moment drives the security of the American people off a cliff."[11]

The diametrically opposite nature of these two arguments is typical of the disparity that was discovered in most of the research regarding both consolidation and centralized control of the IC. External actors, especially within Congress, are routinely exasperated by what they view as a fragmented, hopelessly outdated IC organization. Most departmental consumers and intelligence professionals are equally vocal about the need for dramatic improvements to coordination and integration IC-wide, yet claim that the existing system requires no major organizational changes to accomplish it.

Criticism of reform efforts by intelligence professionals is especially effective given the secretive, complex inner workings of the IC and the proud, mystical lineage of the CIA. However, most senior generals made similar arguments when congressional critics focused on the DOD leading up to the passage of the *Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act* of 1986. Though a reorganization of that type does not appear suitable for the IC, the necessity of reform is comparable, as is the friction caused by any attempts to effect real change.

It is difficult to balance the acceptance of experts' advice on the state of their own trade with the reality that often times that same wealth of experience can blind them from truths that are evident to more objective observers. No one is above the dangers of cognitive dissonance, yet it seems inevitable that emotional, cautionary statements like Tenet's will continue to stifle future reform efforts, as it is far easier for policymakers to focus on their immediate needs rather than tackling the ominous tar-baby of IC reform.

Consolidation would help free the IC from the confusing and oppressive system of divided loyalties and diluted authorities that have held it back in recent years. This would facilitate its ability to focus resources on what matters for America's security overall, rather than focusing on what matters to individual consumers in the near-term. It would also be much easier to identify consensus and dissenting opinions in a timely manner, on more issues, and to more accurately weight them based on the relative experience of the analysts involved.

Imagining these potential advantages of consolidation would make far more sense if the idea of traditional, stovepiped competitive analysis was appropriately discarded by policymakers as counterproductive to the sort of integrated, synchronized, and efficient sharing of information and ideas that is required to counter future threats. It would also help greatly if the IC embraced change rather than bemoaning constant efforts at reform. As the professionals of their trade, the collective IC should anticipate that it must either evolve constantly, proportionate to the rapidly changing world, or it will be done for them by well-intentioned external actors, regardless of their expertise or the pain involved.

America simply cannot afford an IC that only generates truly coordinated national intelligence and a deep understanding of issues only when tasked to do so during crises,

for PDBs, or during the deliberate NIE process. We should strive to develop and maintain a continuous, well-coordinated awareness of what is happening in far more geographic and functional areas, in order to maximize anticipatory intelligence and identify emerging threats before they reach flash points. The IC will never possess the resources to coordinate and master every single issue, even if it consolidates and glaring redundancies are eliminated. But it is far less capable of doing so when deeply fractured, even in the robust budget environment of the past decade.

In the end, it seems that only the president can, with any authority, redirect the priorities of a resistant IC. This is partly because the IC exists principally to inform the president and their cabinet, but even more so because the president alone possesses the authority to decisively shape the opinions and actions of their department secretaries, who continue to generally oppose serious attempts at integration.

As stated earlier, intelligence is best viewed as an art, not a science; and as with any art, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Senior policymakers continue to get exactly what they have asked for individually, but they don't appear to be getting what America needs them to collectively. A more integrated, stable, and long-term national strategy may be required to necessitate a more integrated IC, but in the end the president and their cabinet will get what they order.

Several interviewees stated, in a variety of ways, that no sane person would set out to build the intelligence system we have now, but that it generally does what it needs to do. If true, it does so just barely, and extremely inefficiently besides. Rather than continuing to lament that the IC evolved in such a haphazard manner over the last 50

years, policymakers should be asking themselves just what system America should be building to meet the security challenges of the next 50 years?

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[1]CSI, "Intelligence for a New Era," 15

[2]Hayden, "State of the Craft."

[3]Gutjahr, 81.

[4]Silberman interview.

[5]Lowenthal, 140.

[6]Fingar interview.

[7]Zegart, "Implementing Change," 312

[8]O'Sullivan.

[9]Fingar, "Analysis in the U.S. Intelligence Community," 13.

[10]Gutjahr, 83.

[11]Ibid., 84.

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