

Intelligence Agencies

Critics of the U.S. Intelligence Community (IC) blamed inept structure for failure to stop 9/11. Restructuring into a more centralized network supposedly improved IC's capacities to fight international terrorism.



Intelligence agency – a governmental org that gathers of information (“intelligence”) relevant to security matters from espionage, cryptanalysis, public documents, communication intercepts (SIGINT), interviews, interrogations, ...

Intelligence analysis – the assembly and interpretation of intelligence information and its communication to public policy officials

What was the IC's previous structure & why did it fail to prevent 9/11?

How was the IC reorganized after 9/11 to overcome those problems?

What new problems has IC restructuring created? How might they be overcome?

Can the IC adapt to the changing network structure of international terrorism?

Does *Top Secret America* reveal a bloated public & private intelligence system that is wasteful and out of control? How could it be reformed to become more efficient?

Intelligence Firewall Follies

Pres. Richard Nixon used the CIA to block the FBI investigation of the 1972 Watergate break-in. CIA participated in domestic spying & plots to assassinate foreign leaders. Hearings by **Senate Select Intelligence Comm**, headed by Sen. Frank Church, led to limits on executive branch power & intelligence gathering.



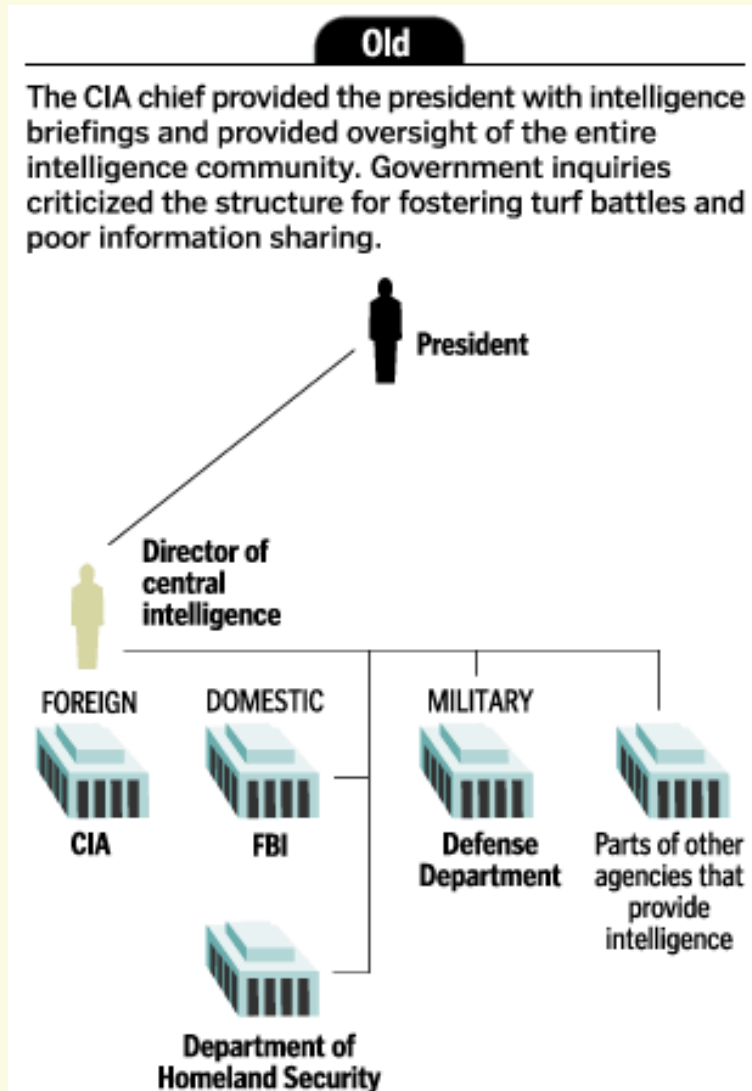
The 1978 Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) created a **Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court** to oversee federal police agency requests for warrants to investigate suspected foreign intelligence agents who operate inside the United States borders.

The CIA is prohibited from involvement in domestic law enforcement, but it is supposed to share any information relevant to FBI internal investigations.

CIA claimed it emailed FBI about the 2000 Malaysia meeting involving two future 9/11 hijackers, but FBI denied notification. CIA admitted not telling INS or State Dept, so men's names weren't added to terrorist watch list. In July 2001, FBI was allowed to participate in CIA's review of cables & both names were added to the watch list. But too late – the men had received new visas and had entered the U.S. On 8/23/01 CIA urged FBI to help track the suspects down, but request was denied, citing “wall between prosecution and intelligence as posing a problem.”

The Old IC Structure

Before 9/11, only CIA Director George Tenet briefed President Bush daily about intelligence on terror and other international developments.



Washington Post 10/19/05

Characteristics of IC bureaucracies:

- **Information-intensive** organizations
- Face risks of **high failure costs** – catastrophic consequences if they draw the wrong conclusions
- Embedded in a network structure with major **disincentives for info-sharing**; hence, protective of info

Did IC structure & organizational cultures contribute to failure to detect the 9/11 plot, despite field agents' reports about strange flight-training activities?

Did IC structure problems contribute to erroneous intelligence reports about Iraq's WMD capabilities before 2003 invasion?

The Reorganized IC Structure

The 9/11 Commission proposed major IC structural change, to unify & centralize 16 agencies under NID & NCTC. See other charts next slide.

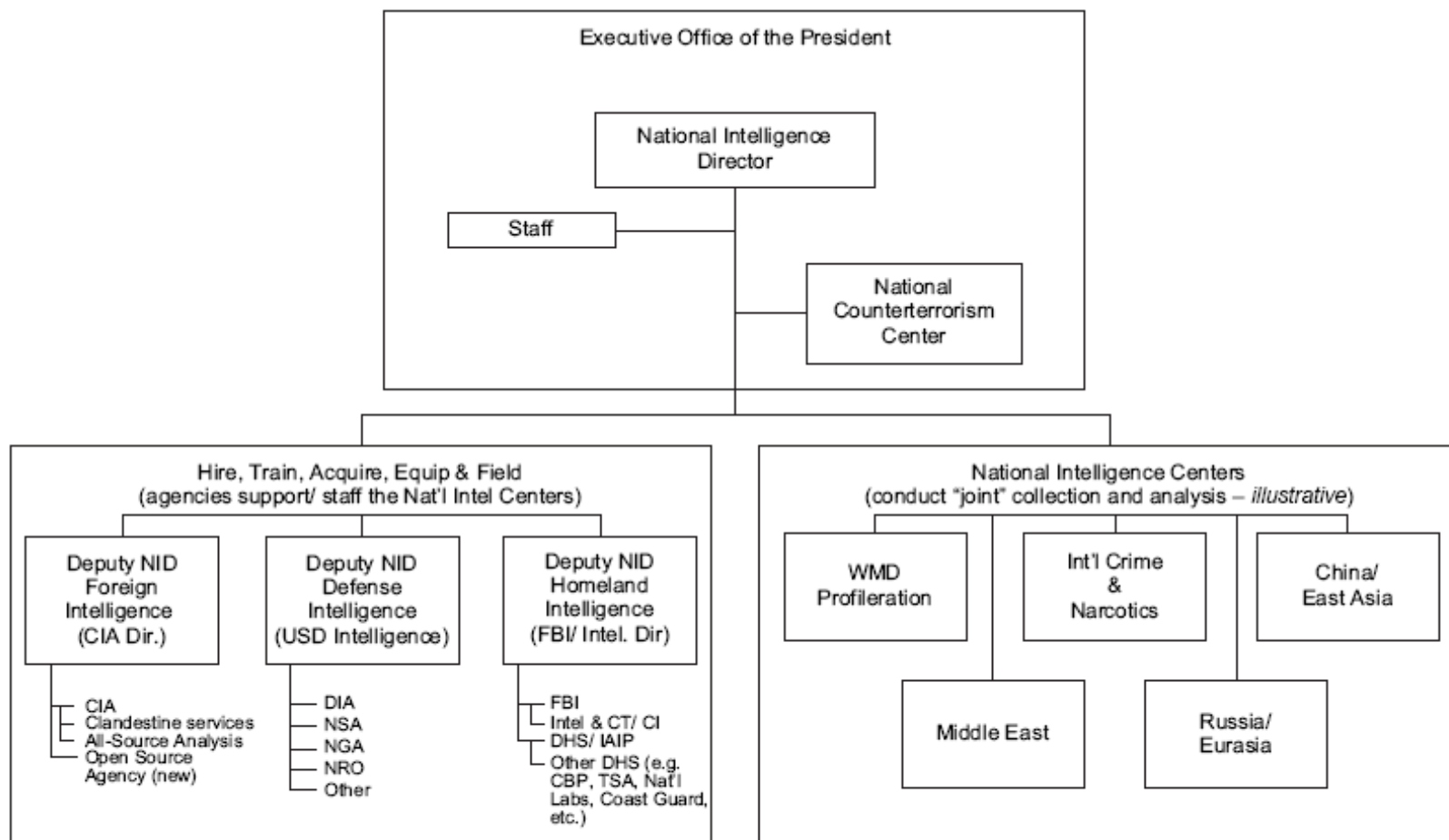
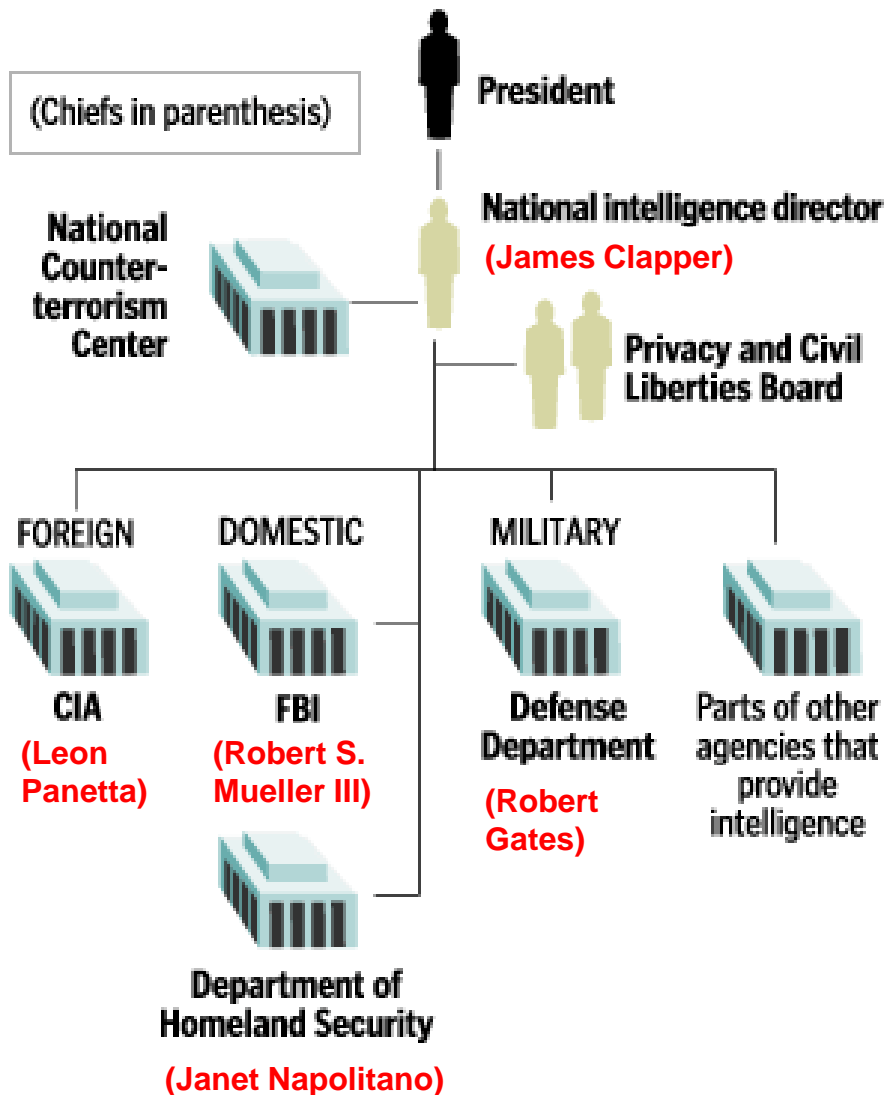


FIGURE 1 *Unity of effort in managing intelligence*

Source: National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States. 2004. *9/11 Commission Report*. Washington, DC.

Current

A national intelligence director oversees the entire intelligence community and briefs the president. A counterterrorism center synthesizes information from the community for the director, and an independent board looks out for citizens' civil liberties.



Barack Obama



James Clapper

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE
 Manages the U.S. government's national intelligence program and serves as president's chief intelligence adviser.



One Fight, One Team

Hans de Bruijn questioned the validity of two 9/11 Commission propositions:

1. To reduce the **fragmentation** among IC agencies and to promote greater cooperation, strengthen **centralized control** under National Director of Intelligence & the National Counterterrorism Center
2. To encourage **information-sharing**, more **incentives** must be offered: fewer secrecy classifications, more “connecting the dots”



“Strengthening central control also poses risks: it engenders more battles over territory, it does not improve understanding of the **capillaries of the organization – the capillaries being when the primary processes of information gathering, validation, and assessment take place – and it involves the destruction of checks and balances.”**

Centralization seeks to reduce “**stovepipes**” – lack of agency cooperation due to fragmentation – but can generate huge information overloads at the top.

Greater information sharing creates not more intelligence, but greater need for better **selection mechanisms** to sort and evaluate masses of data.

Process Before Structure



Other dangers in a centralized, info-sharing IC:

- ✓ Information may lose its usefulness; infiltrators could acquire info and use it against the IC
- ✓ Premature fixation on a single interpretation of ambiguous information
- ✓ Choosing the wrong time to share ambiguous info
- ✓ Processing only information that agrees with the top agency leaders' preconceptions

Why does Hans de Bruijn place greater emphasis on **horizontal coordination (networking)** and **intelligence processes** than on formal structural changes?

When would **nonsharing** of information among IC agencies be justifiable? Give some examples.

Why does he argue that "**fragmentation** may actually be functional"? How then to overcome stovepiping?

Could **redundancy (overlapping tasks)** and **duplication** of agency activities be more beneficial than harmful?

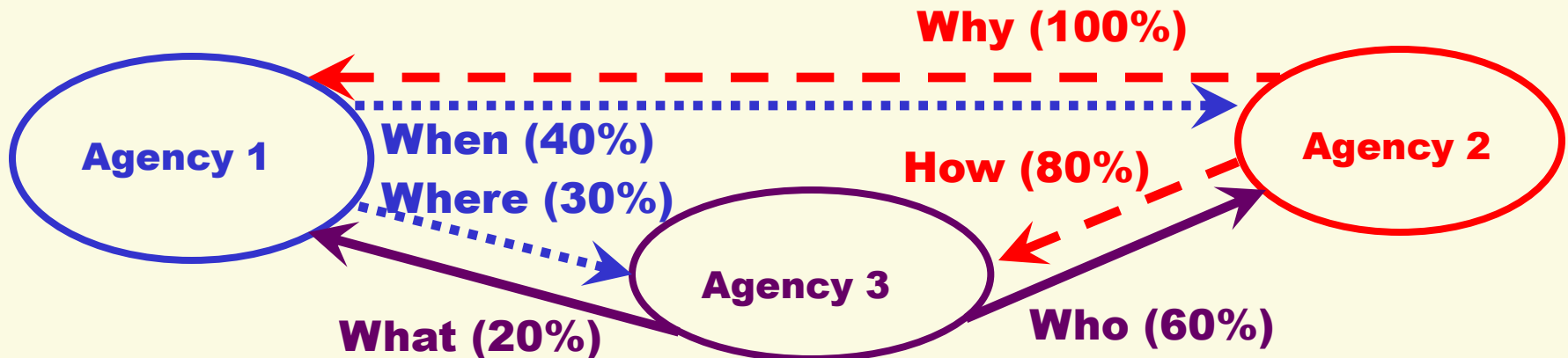


A Race Against Time

HIGH ALERT: Scattered evidence indicates that some international terrorists are planning to strike inside the U.S. **Your job is to stop it.**

This intelligence agency simulation requires information sharing. Your agency's goal is to be the first IC member to identify with highest probability of accuracy: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How.

- Every agency has info about only some of these 6 elements
- Each information element has a probability rating: % likely accurate
- Find agencies with “better” info willing to trade for yours: **Must use coupons!**
- Acquire as much high-probability info as possible on all 6 elements
- Your agency's budget depends on total of all 6 probabilities: **sum of %s**
- Agency should “make the call” (identify all elements) as soon as possible
- Agency that most **quickly & accurately makes the call will WIN!!!**



Film: *The Enemy Within*

Watch “Frontline: The Enemy Within” on the multibillion-dollar reorganization of government agencies after the 9/11 attacks (first aired in October 2006).



“Through interviews with high-level sources from the FBI, Department of Defense and Homeland Security, and relying on previously undisclosed documents, reporter Lowell Bergman reveals continued inter-agency rivalry, as well as troubling flaws in intelligence operations.” He asks whether we are really “better prepared to prevent another catastrophic attack.”

How did the FBI transformed itself to fight terrorism inside the U.S.?

If there was no evidence of post-9/11 sleeper cells plotting to carry out a “second wave” of attacks, who is the real domestic enemy?

Did the FBI’s Lodi, CA, investigation uncover a case of home-grown terrorism? Were the videotaped confessions mishandled?