

## READERS' FORUM

### Intelligence Affairs: Evolution, Revolution, or Reactionary Collapse?

Michael A. Turner's article, "Intelligence Reform and the Politics of Entrenchment" (*IJIC*, Vol. 18, No. 3, Fall 2005, pp. 383–397) is gripping, compelling, and illuminative. He clearly explains why we many published intelligence reformers, from Allen to Bauer to Berkowitz to Codevilla to Gentry to Goodman to Gerecht to Fialka to Godson to Johnson to Levine to Odom to Riebling to Steele to Treverton to Wiebes to Zegart, have failed all these years. I am reminded of Machiavelli:

There is nothing more difficult to plan, more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage than the creation of a new system. For the initiator has the enmity of all who would profit by the preservation of the old system and merely lukewarm defenders in those who would gain by the new one.

An example of the status quo thinking is a recent RAND document, "Toward a Revolution in Intelligence Affairs" by Deborah G. Barger (TR-242-CMS, 2005). Upon close examination, I have found that the document is reactionary rather than revolutionary. Indeed, the footnotes are completely focused on what has been said by those who failed to protect America from 9/11, and completely ignorant of any—literally any—of the many sources on intelligence reform available to those who are open to ideas from the outside.

I decided to look at this situation more closely, and I have identified three competing approaches to the eradication of intelligence incompetence such as the Americans have displayed so profoundly since the end of the Cold War. The reactionary approach, reflected in both the RAND study and the recent selections of deputies to the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) who cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, be considered anything other than "business as usual" choices, is one we will dismiss right now. The DNI will fail. He will fail because he was not willing to consider external solutions or external deputies. Drawing on a very weak and shallow bench, he has fielded a group of second and third stringers who will not prevent another 9/11, and will soon embarrass the White House in multiple ways.

As Michael Turner states so clearly, the DNI and the people around him are the *status quo ante*, not the reformers.

An intelligent examination of the potential for evolution or revolution within intelligence affairs must begin with an understanding of these two terms. Evolution is a gradual process in which something changes into a different and usually more complex or better form. We emphasize here both "different" and "more complex" or "better." An evolutionary approach to intelligence reform would, at a minimum, expand the concept of national intelligence to embrace what the Swedes are calling M4 IS: multinational, multiagency, multidisciplinary, multidomain information sharing at all levels of classification, and to embrace what we ourselves call the "seven tribes" of intelligence—not only national and military, but law enforcement, business, academic, ground truth (nongovernmental organizations and media), and citizen (including labor unions and religions) networks. Such an approach would retain the capability to collect and exploit secrets, but it would establish a new national Open Source Agency as the 9/11 Commission has recommended, and it would emphasize sharing over secrecy, with open source intelligence (OSINT) as the baseline for sharing, rather than a cosmetic afterthought, as is now the case.

A revolution in intelligence affairs (RIA), in contrast to an intelligent evolution, is a drastic (that is to say, sudden, and far-reaching) change in ways of thinking and behaving. Such a revolution would be characterized by a true sense of national crisis, such as occurred after Pearl Harbor or Sputnik. The Global War on Terror (GWOT) is a political affectation today in America, not a true national endeavor, our earnest defense endeavors notwithstanding. Indeed, while the Americans play at GWOT, the Chinese, Indians, Iranians, and Russians—with active interest from the Brazilians, Indonesians, Malaysians, Pakistanis, and Venezuelans—are eating our lunch in South America and taking over Africa, at the same time that Latin America is being invited to invest in Africa and trade with Asia. Behind the scenes, the common agenda among these players, with Europe sitting foolishly on the sidelines, is the displacement of America as a superpower—the relegation of America to coequal status with that lonely island called England.

A true revolution in intelligence affairs would radicalize and internationalize American education overnight, shifting billions from guns to brains; it would democratize U.S. politics (electoral reform, so that every American's vote counts, which is not the case today); it would eliminate U.S. support for the 44 dictators who pretend to support GWOT while raping and pillaging the commonwealth of billions whose poverty threatens America vastly more than any terrorist gang; and it would strive for nothing less than a cultural revolution, a revolution of the American