

Week 11: Counterterrorism

A. Counterterrorism Overview

- Despite a significant increase in the intelligence effort against the terrorist threat, serious problems remain in collection, analysis, and dissemination.
- While there has been a major increase in the quantity of information collected, particularly HUMINT, there are shortcomings in quality because of problems in penetrating terrorist cells. Also, reliability of sources has declined.
- The explosion of terrorist analysis centers in every IC agency has resulted in unnecessary duplication of effort, multiple data bases that are not shared, and inconsistent warnings to both the same and different customers. ie NY subway. Golden Gate bridge.
- The multiplicity of customers, from policymakers to local law enforcement, is a problem in itself, with many having vague or overlapping responsibilities.
- The issues of terrorist legal rights, terrorist rendition, and terrorist interrogation (torture) are very controversial, and highly politicized.
- Finally, the potential threat of terrorist use of WMD is extremely contentious.

B. Collection Problems.

- Space collection has little use. More HUMINT needed. Hitz says unleash CIA, but others skeptical. Reuel Marc Gerecht says DO dysfunctional. Supports Porter Goss, but DO resists reform. NOCs expensive and risky. Embassies and liaison safer. Unilateral ops hard without foreign coordination. ie Milan and secret prisons.
- Domestic collection still difficult. Rishikof and FBI culture of law enforcement. FBI and FISA. Still no terrorist data base. Patriot Act and risk of abuses. Connecting dots vs innocent until proven guilty. Reasonable cause for data collection vs national security letters.
- Problems with regional and local law enforcement. Who screens reporting and verifies credibility of sources. Garbage in and garbage out. Much pork. Expect false alarms.

C. Analytic Problems.

- CTC vs NCTC. Central data base vs operations. HSA has ten components with CT centers. Can Charlie Allen bring order. Or will he run amok? Many hidden costs. More than \$44 billion.
- What are metrics of success or failure. Harris says measure actions and measure results.

But who really knows what is working. Why no major attacks on U.S. Elephant joke.

-Issue of terrorists and WMD. Competing Centers and Agencies.

D. Whose in Charge?

-Overlapping responsibilities of DNI, DOD, HSA and FBI for integrating intelligence and combating terrorism at home and abroad require a high degree of coordination at the national security level, which is difficult. Competing bureaucracies require strong oversight. What is CT strategy, other than intel and use of force? Root causes or fanatics. Poverty and crime.

-NSC coordination not always effective. No direct control over departments or agencies. Independent budgets. Separate Congressional oversight. Much pork. Leadership and personalities often key. Louis Freeh says who was Richard Clarke? Deputies and Principals meetings are principal policy tool, but whose in charge? Eliot Abrams example. Interagency Group or Restricted Interagency Group.

-DNI using Principal Deputy Hayden DNI to oversee IC. Experienced intel professional. But problems persist between NCTC, CTC, FBI, DOD, etc. Problems both legal and substantive. Lack of common data base and security clearance process. Intel still not shared fully with law enforcement and vice versa.

-Solution? Standard career service for terrorist analysts, joint training and assignments, and unified clearance process. But don't hold your breath. Is National Clandestine Service for HUMINT a model? National Analysis Service in the future? Joint National Centers for regional and transnational threats, which combine analysis and operations. ie. Goldwater – Nichols and Joint Commands.

E. Bottom Line

-Issue is politicized. No one says we are spending too much, but many acknowledge waste. Maybe Betts is right. Privacy and human rights violations will end this nonsense, but when, and what if there is another major attack, or many minor ones. ie DC sniper.