

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF THE AGGREGATE INTELLIGENCE BUDGET FIGURE



HEARINGS BEFORE THE PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED THIRD CONGRESS SECOND SESSION

FEBRUARY 22 AND 23, 1994



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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1994

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE,
*Washington, DC.***

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:10 a.m., in room 2212, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Dan Glickman (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Glickman, Coleman, Pelosi, Laughlin, Richardson, Combest, Hansen, and Lewis.

Staff present: Michael W. Sheehy, Chief Counsel and Staff Director; Calvin R. Humphrey, Counsel; Louis H. Dupart, Senior Counsel; Virginia S. Callis, Auditor; Patricia M. Ravalgi, Analyst; Mary Jane McGuire, Chief, Registry; Jeanne M. McNally, Executive Assistant and Chief Clerk; Stephen D. Nelson, Minority Counsel; and John I. Millis, Professional Staff Member.

The CHAIRMAN. Good morning.

Today, the committee resumes its hearings on the issue of publicly disclosing an aggregate figure for spending on intelligence programs and activities.

During yesterday's session we received testimony from Mr. Woolsey, Director of Central Intelligence, and from Congressmen Frank and Hyde and Senator Metzenbaum.

This morning we are pleased to welcome to the committee three former distinguished Directors of Central Intelligence: The Honorable Robert Gates, Ambassador Richard Helms and Admiral Stansfield Turner, each of whom has had to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of running this Agency and making the budget figure public in specific terms. As a matter of fact, Admiral Turner was DCI when the committee first considered this issue 16 years ago in its first open hearing.

This afternoon, beginning at 1:00, we will hear from several scholars who have considered the constitutional implications of this issue. Following their testimony, the committee will receive testimony from representatives of organizations concerned with national security issues.

Let me restate my view that, with the end of the Cold War and in the absence of a specific military threat, the burden is on those favoring continued secrecy to clearly identify the danger to national security which would result from disclosure of the budget total. If that cannot be done—and that is the purpose of these hearings, to get information on that issue—I believe that disclosure would be required by the Constitution.

I am delighted to welcome our witnesses this morning back before the committee and to give them special credit for the extraordinary service they have given to this country of ours.

Before I begin, I want to recognize Mr. Combest for whatever remarks he might care to make.

Mr. COMBEST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to welcome our distinguished guests this morning, former Directors of Central Intelligence Admiral Stansfield Turner, Robert Gates and Ambassador Richard Helms.

You are appearing before this committee today to provide your views on the proposal to disclose the aggregate total of the U.S. intelligence community's budget. This is not the first time the issue has been raised, and each of you has testified on this matter previously.

What has changed since your earlier appearances, however, is a belief by some that the threat posed by adversaries of the United States has diminished. Consequently, disclosure of the aggregate total of the U.S. budget would not harm our national security.

I, however, strongly disagree with that contention. While at present we no longer risk the near instantaneous nuclear conflagration that we faced with a heavily armed and hostile Soviet Union, we still face significant threats around the world. The questions are: What right do the American people have to know? And will the disclosure of our total intelligence budget aid our enemies?

In closing, gentlemen, this is a timely debate, one that goes beyond the issue at hand, which is the disclosure of the aggregate total for the intelligence budget, but reaches to the question of whether our government should withhold elements of its budget from the American people. Your testimony will greatly facilitate our deliberations on this matter, and we appreciate very much the fact you are here.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. It is ironic you are here during the time the intelligence community is being prominently featured publicly. While the issues specifically do not relate to each other—disclosure of the aggregate amount vis-a-vis what the allegations are in this particular case involving Mr. Ames—I think it is relevant that we are talking about real-life problems as they relate to the issue of the operations of the intelligence budget and the role of oversight by Congress and/or the American people; not or the American people, and the American people in the process. I think it is a particularly interesting time.

I understand none of you have actually prepared statements. You are going to talk from notes or cards or whatever, which is fine.

One of the other issues this committee is going to be pursuing, in addition to this issue, has to do with classification and declassification generally; and it also relates to what the subject is. You may want to talk about that as well. That is, are the laws and rules governing classification and declassification clear and specific, or do they need to be modernized as well in this post-Cold War era?

So we are delighted to have you here. I think that we will start with the most recent DCI who happens to be from my hometown. I will use that privilege. Mr. Robert Gates, it is a pleasure to have

you here. Then we will go with Ambassador Helms, Admiral Turner, in terms of how you are sitting. It also is alphabetical as well.

STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT GATES

Mr. GATES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a pleasure to be here. It is always a pleasure to come up here on a voluntary basis.

I think one needs to begin this discussion with the reality that there is a broadly recognized need for greater information for the public on intelligence and how we go about our business. In a post-Cold War environment, I believe that congressional and public support require a greater understanding of what intelligence is all about and what we do with the taxpayer's money.

Building on the efforts of my predecessors while I was Director, I took a number of initiatives to further this kind of openness, including more public hearings here before the Congress by CIA and the other members of the intelligence community, more briefings for the press, more access to senior officials of the Agency by the press, the declassification of historical documents, including those on covert action, the declassification of all estimates on the Soviet Union older than 10 years, declassification of the National Reconnaissance Office and rewriting all of the guidelines for declassification of intelligence documents with a bias in favor of disclosure after 30 years.

This brings me to the budget number because we looked at this as well. I looked at it at the request of the Senate two years ago.

The first thing that comes to mind is that—is just a reminder, as I am advised by both Walter Pfortzheimer and Ambassador Helms that it was, in fact, the Congress that initially, in the late 1940s, determined that the intelligence budget should remain secret. And this principle was guarded with great vigor by Senator Russell and here in the House by Representative Mahon.

That said, it seems to me that there is nothing intrinsically sensitive about the aggregate figure of the budget for the American intelligence community. A general notion of that figure is already public. I think it has been confirmed by enough current and former officials to give it some credibility.

Since most people have a fairly good idea of what the aggregate number is, I then puzzle over why there is the desire to make that number official and to confirm it. The more I have thought about it, the more I think it is a mistake officially to confirm it for the same reason that I think a number of people would like to have it confirmed; and that is that, once confirmed officially, it makes it almost impossible not to begin to break that number down further in order to defend it, in order to explain what intelligence is about and why that sum of money should be spent on intelligence.

In fact, I do not know how you would defend it once it is made officially a part of the public debate without breaking it down, without taking one large number and giving some indication of what part is for CIA and what part is for the National Security Agency, what part for defense intelligence and so on, how much for human collection versus technical collection, and so on.

I think you begin to open the door to a lot of questions about the budget that then become difficult to answer in an unclassified way.

My basic concern derives from my conviction that there is not anyone in this room who can or should commit that this will be the only number about the intelligence budget that is made public; that, in fact, if you officially confirm this number, no other number will ever be officially confirmed or no other breakdown will be used.

Now the question arises, well, suppose that those aggregate number—that that aggregate number is broken down. So what?

It seems to me there are four dangers in beginning to break down that aggregate number which I believe follows inexorably from official confirmation of that number in today's environment. The first is that, once public, especially in today's budgetary and political environment, I think it will be very hard ever to increase that number.

Let me give you a small example in which public confirmation of a number has made it difficult to increase the budget.

The only part of the intelligence budget that is made public is the budget for the Intelligence Community Staff. Now both Houses of the Congress dealing with intelligence over the years, the last several years, have wanted to increase the authority of the DCI to manage the intelligence community. By the same token, because that is the only public part of the budget, every year that instrument of the Director's authority over the community has been cut in both personnel and dollars; or requests for increases have been turned down because, politically, you cannot demonstrate, you do not want to go forward with the notion that the intelligence budget is being increased.

I think that that small example will be writ large if the overall aggregate number is published. It will become very difficult for the Congress, much less the President, to begin to rebuild or to increase the intelligence budgets under those circumstances. The result is at cross purposes ironically with what the Congress itself wants to do in this particular example.

The second danger, it seems to me, is that once the aggregate number is out and once that eventual disaggregation takes place, at least into Agency numbers, I think it will become very difficult for the Congress and the President to undertake new intelligence initiatives.

Let me take two hypothetical examples. If the President, with the consent of the Congress, decided to undertake a new covert action, whether it was for a major initiative on nonproliferation or hypothetically because we decided we wanted to help Ukraine, if the Russians were putting pressure on them, and we wanted to do something of the magnitude of the assistance we gave to the Mujaheddin in Afghanistan, it would be impossible to hide a new initiative and covert action of that size within an aggregate number once made publicly available.

By the same token, on technical collection, several years ago the Congress wanted to add a satellite—a new satellite capability to the intelligence budget. If the aggregate numbers are made available for the different agencies, it would be almost impossible to add a secret new kind of satellite program to the intelligence budget without attracting attention to it and putting people on the path of trying to figure out what it is.

Third, it seems to me that the need, the felt need politically, to release the—or to officially confirm the aggregate number for the intelligence budget, in essence, begins the process of surrendering the surrogate role of the Congress on behalf of the American people.

I know Director Woolsey yesterday talked about the precedents for Congress dealing with secrets from the committees of correspondence to the Continental Congress and so on. But the reality is that the whole principle underlying intelligence oversight, the intelligence oversight committees and their creation, was the notion that on behalf of the Congress and on behalf of the American people the Congress could look at these budgetary details in their great evident detail and make judgments and recommendations to the rest of their colleagues.

I think that the fact that six committees of the Congress have virtually unlimited access to all of the detail of the intelligence budget should provide some assurance to the American people that there is adequate oversight in this respect.

The fourth danger is, from your standpoint, I think, perhaps the most worrisome. That is that as the executive branch perceives the security of the intelligence budget jeopardized or weakened, it will look for other places to hide money for other intelligence initiatives. Whether it is in the Defense Department budget or the Fish and Wildlife Commission, the executive branch will find other ways to hide the monies for especially sensitive programs to avoid them becoming public. And I think that that will significantly complicate your oversight responsibilities.

Let me conclude by just making two mildly politically incorrect observations: It is very hard to be against openness, particularly in today's environment. But I believe that the declassification now of the aggregate number will begin a process that over time will reduce congressional flexibility as well as the effectiveness of the intelligence community. Because, once you begin it, you cannot stop it.

The second observation is that, contrary to a lot of popular conceptions, the world following the end of the Cold War is not the place that we thought it would be. Revolution and instability in Russia, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, ethnic and nationalist conflict, dying despotisms from China to Cuba, religious fundamentalism, terrorism, networking between the drug cartels and international crime syndicates, all have presented us with a much more complicated environment.

It seems to me that this country cannot be immune from all of these developments if for no other reason than our extraordinary economic interdependence. Therefore, if we are going to continue to exercise a national leadership role, we need to have a continuing strong intelligence capability.

I believe that your ability to draw the line at some point with the further reduction of the intelligence budget and say that is enough, particularly in today's political environment or if the budget continues to go down, your ability at some point in the future, like your colleagues in 1979, to begin to increase that budget again will be jeopardized by beginning this process.

I think it leads you down a slippery slope. I think it, in effect, would become an intelligence budget luge.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Thank God the Olympics are here. We wouldn't know what you are talking about.

Ambassador Helms, a pleasure to have you here as well. You may proceed.

STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR RICHARD HELMS

Mr. HELMS. Mr. Chairman, I am honored to be here.

I went over the testimony that I gave in April, 1977, to the Senate Intelligence Committee which was looking at this same problem at that time. I also have seen the conclusions that the House committee came to in 1978 about the fact that it was not desirable to give an aggregate figure for the intelligence community, so I don't feel any need to go over that material again.

But having reread that, having read Director Woolsey's testimony yesterday and having listened to Mr. Gates this morning, I can only say I agree with the points that have been made and would simply like to put a little bit of a gloss on two things.

One, Mr. Gates mentioned this question of trying to hide things, various items, actions, projects in the United States' budget, a most difficult thing to do.

I remember vividly in the early 1960s when the Agency was designing and building what turned out to be the highest performance aircraft ever done in the United States—or ever built in the United States—Senator Russell, who in those days was the Chairman of the Oversight Committee, called me in and said, "the expense for this airplane is becoming too high to hide in the CIA budget. You must go to the Secretary of Defense and get him to pay for it." Which is what I did.

Since then these matters have become much more bureaucratized, if you like, as to what is in what intelligence budget and what is in another. But I often wonder myself, having been away from the intelligence community for 20 years, how one figures out exactly what one is spending in any given year. A lot of the satellites, technological improvements do not admit very readily of being put in one particular fiscal year because it takes a long time to build them.

I think that the need for trying to husband one's resources in such a fashion that one came out with an accurate figure would turn out not to be all that accurate in the end.

Now, Mr. Chairman, there is one other comment I want to make, and I will end my brief statement.

You started off this morning by saying, "now that the Cold War is over." I agree that the Cold War is over; but it seems to me that we are in haste not only to have it over but to forget it.

When one examines the fact that there are still very large ICBMs sitting on launchers in what used to be the Soviet Union, when we see that democracy is not necessarily taking over in Russia or any of the other Republics of the former Soviet Union, it must give us pause to reflect on whether we should really regard the world as a world at peace which cannot harm the United States

or at least doesn't have the power, the punch, to hurt the United States.

The fact remains that if Mr. Yeltsin were replaced by another type of individual in Russia, it would be very easy to start blackmailing us again with the possibilities of a nuclear strike. What is to stop him?

We have the SALT agreements that must be verified. How are we going to verify them unless we keep a very good intelligence capability? How are we going to know really when the Cold War is over—a cold war or a warm war or whatever kind of war you want to mention?

Mr. Gates mentioned many other things. I notice the first time we really had a serious terrorist episode in this country came after the Cold War up in New York. New York is probably the most vulnerable city in the world. It takes nothing to have New York in an absolute state of total collapse. Turn off the electricity and what works in New York?

So I think that we are a bit in haste at trying to want to be more open with the budget figures.

Mr. Gates has pointed out that the Agency is trying, with the intelligence community, to make more and more information available for historians, for the media and so forth. I think that that is fine. But once you get down to the actual dollars and the breakdown of the Intelligence budget, you will have opened Pandora's box and started a debate going. I think it would be a mistake to do so at this time. I think we should take more time before we cross that Rubicon.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Helms.

Admiral Turner, a pleasure to have you here as well. I am amazed at how all three of you look no different than when you were Directors, although Mr. Gates is fairly new. You still, all three of you, look relatively the same. I don't know how you feel. You look the same.

STATEMENT OF ADM. STANSFIELD TURNER

ADM. STANSFIELD TURNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I testified before this committee in 1978 on this issue in favor of releasing a single budget figure. I did so with President Carter's approval and direction. Historically, I think that that was the beginning of a new policy of openness with respect to intelligence in this country. The fact that we are still here 16 years later debating the same question would indicate the progress in terms of openness may be at somewhat of a snail's pace.

While I do recognize many of the things Bob Gates adduced as evidence of greater openness, I think producing material that is 30 years old is not what President Carter had in mind when we started moving down this track. I think, while there has been progress, it has not nearly been fast enough.

President Carter was working from the premise that all secrecy is an anathema in a government like ours where the people govern. The people need to know what is going on in their government to govern well. Of course, there have to be secrets. This very commit-

tee was created to be surrogates for the public in those instances of intelligence when secrecy had to prevail.

However, I think it is the basic principle of this government that we should minimize the amount of surrogate work that has to be done so the public can participate and exercise that ultimate judgment that governs our country.

The idea that if we release one number everything is going to spew out I think is somewhat exaggerated. I think the fact that, even if additional numbers did come out, it is going to lead some opponent to precisely identify the kind of intelligence activities we are involved in is also a big stretch.

More than that, I believe today the opposition is centered in the fact that there is a concern that the public will not understand the size of the intelligence budget if it is released and will create opposition to it. It is not, as Director Woolsey said yesterday, a level playing field, and it is difficult to explain to the American public things that have to be kept secret.

I don't think that that is an acceptable reason in our governmental structure. We have to trust the basic premise that as far as the men and women involved in intelligence it is our obligation that we have to protect sources, but I believe that that is a greatly overstated issue. And, of course, it is also true that there will always be cases where it is to our best advantage not to let others know that we know something.

But in most other cases, if the intelligence community releases more information, especially from its estimates, the American public will be better informed and will make better decisions for this country.

In addition, the American public will support the intelligence community better because it will know something of what it is getting for its money.

Speaking to the issue of overclassification in our country, it is accepted that there is a tremendous amount of overclassification of material. Every small step to solve this problem will help. I would also like to suggest that less secrecy will lead to less likelihood of abuse of the intelligence process.

When the CIA opened United States' mails illegally back in the 1950s and 1960s, the people doing it never expected that anyone would know what they had done.

When the CIA administered drugs to Americans without their being aware of it in that same time frame, they never expected that that would be uncovered.

When the CIA very badly mistreated a Soviet defector for over three-and-a-half years, they assumed that that would be kept secret.

When the CIA people in my time aided Edwin Wilson in running guns to Libya illegally, they didn't expect that to become known.

When the CIA defied the Hughes-Ryan amendment as well as the clear intent of the Congress in the Iran-contra affair, they certainly did not plan on that being known.

CIA people should be trained to make their decisions on the assumption that those decisions will be subject to public scrutiny. The best way to inculcate that kind of thinking is to reduce the aura of secrecy in general. Opening up the budget number will just

be one small step in that direction, but the basic purpose will be to move more rapidly towards an era of greater openness in intelligence.

Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Thank you all for your excellent testimony. Thank you all for being here.

I want to pay special tribute to Mr. Gates. I think a lot of what we are discussing here are items that have become more freely discussable as a result of his tenure as Director of Central Intelligence where he took the lead in making the intelligence community less mystical than maybe it had been in generations past.

While I think there is a difference of perspective among the three of you, I think that the fact that we are discussing this issue, with all these television cameras here, indicates that there is the recognition that the public does have an interest and a stake in the amount of dollars we spend on intelligence. This is not something that is preserved exclusively for the inner circles of Congress or within the executive branch. We are talking about lots of dollars that people work very hard to pay their taxes with. That is one of the reasons we are here.

Also, the Constitution requires a statement and account of all public monies spent, recognizing there are some areas that are appropriately limited for secrecy. But the basic presumption is the public ought to know what their tax dollars are going for. That is the premise on which these hearings are being held.

I just wanted to begin the questioning by referring to a congressional document called the Congress Monitor, put out by Congressional Quarterly, published daily. In yesterday's CQ daily, there is the following paragraph:

Now that the Cold War is over, John McCain, Senator from Arizona, is trying to get a little glasnost at the Senate Armed Services Committee. McCain recently wrote Chairman Sam Nunn requesting that the panel's markup of the annual defense budget be open to the public. The panel has traditionally done its work behind closed doors. "We are no longer considering the defense budgets in the context of the Cold War with an overriding need to maintain an impenetrable veil of secrecy," McCain wrote Nunn on February 10.

It is interesting because nobody can accuse John McCain of not having an interest in his country's military strength nor has anybody ever accused him of not being a patriotic individual. What struck me about this is it is not only getting to some of the arguments we are talking about today, but, in the Senate, the way they authorize their intelligence budgets is slightly different than the way we do.

The Senate Armed Services Committee has exclusive jurisdiction over the TIARA portion of the intelligence budget—which is, essentially, the military operational part of that budget, for folks who do not know—and the Intelligence Committee in the Senate has the operation of the national intelligence budget. Our committee, basically, has jurisdiction over both.

Well, what was interesting to me—and I don't know what Senator McCain was specifically referring to—but if, in fact, he is saying the TIARA part of the budget would be part of that process, it would mean interestingly, at least in the Senate markup process, that part would be in the open.

Now without getting into a total debate, I wonder if you would—the three of you would comment on what Senator McCain was talking about: “We are no longer considering the defense budgets in the context of the Cold War with an overriding need to maintain an impenetrable veil of secrecy.”

Mr. Gates?

Mr. GATES. I am trying to read between the lines of what a Member of Congress is saying. That is sometimes a challenge. But I suspect that there probably are elements of the defense budget dealing with new secret weapons’ programs that are under development that Senator McCain would not include in a public disclosure of the markup.

The CHAIRMAN. I am sure that that is true.

Mr. GATES. It sounds to me as though what Senator McCain is calling for is more sunshine on the deliberative process here on the Hill in terms of the bill as proposed and the actions that the committee takes on that bill in its deliberative process.

I suspect—and, obviously, I am presuming—that Senator McCain is not talking about revealing the TIARA budget within the context of such a markup.

I think that there really is a different environment in terms of, certainly, the intelligence community today than has been the case in the past. I think there is a much greater understanding of the need to make more information available, more current information available.

In the first six months that I was Director, I think I had 10 open hearings on the Hill, all on substantive issues. They were not procedural issues. They had to do with proliferation and a variety of other foreign policy issues in which we were able to present openly and for the American people the kinds of—the results of the kind of work we were doing.

I think that there is a fair amount of information available, at least there certainly are a large number of books and articles out, that get into a good deal of detail about what the intelligence operations are, intelligence capabilities, and certainly its shortcomings. So I think there is a different mindset than there has been in the past. I think inside the community it has been something that has come to pass mostly in the last decade and probably mostly in the last few years. But it has changed, and I think a willingness to make more available, as Admiral Turner suggests.

I would be the first to agree with the Admiral that there is too much classification; there is too much overclassification. But I think that it requires a considered approach in terms of how you go back and reveal information, make information available to the public. And I think the slippery slope argument is often criticized as worst casing, but I also think that it is a realistic appreciation of the political realities here on the Hill and in this town generally that if you throw a figure out on the table, the notion that you can defend that figure without explaining in some greater detail what goes into it I think is a hard proposition to accept.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me stop you for a moment.

Can’t the same arguments be made about the defense budget? I don’t understand the difference. The culture is different, I understand that. Intelligence culture is different. It is historically dif-

ferent. People in your business do it differently than the military budget people.

You could make the same arguments that defending this country using the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps requires the presumption of secrecy where the folks who are actually doing the classification would so decide, and we haven't gone that road.

There were efforts early in this republic to do the same thing with the defense budget that we did with the intelligence budget. What we did with the defense budget is we made the judgments that there are certain things within that budget that we will not release—the development of, in weapons systems, a variety of operational programs that we think would not be in the national security interest to release.

But, as a general proposition, the budgets are releasable because the taxpayers have a general right to know that.

What I am trying to figure out is what is so unique about the aggregate dollars that are being spent on defense that it shouldn't be treated in a—in intelligence, I am sorry—that it should not be treated in a similar way to what we do with defense?

I would ask both Ambassador Helms and Admiral Turner to comment.

I must tell you after yesterday's hearing I walked out of the room. Somebody said to me—I don't know; I thought about this myself—they said, the real issue is political. The real issue is once you let the number out, people will try to cut it and then use it for other things—like health, crime, whatever else there is.

That means that the intelligence budget becomes less immune to the political process, and the intelligence community doesn't want to see that happen. To which my response is, well, I am not sure I do either, but democracy is tough. This is just a problem. In our kind of system of government, you have to make these competing choices.

I have raised two separate issues here. One is, why is defense different and discloseable? The other issue is, isn't the great fear really that the budget may be cut in the political process?

Ambassador Helms, Admiral Turner, and then back to you, Bob. That will be it for me.

Mr. HELMS. I suppose that Senator McCain put forward this suggestion perhaps because he has been described as being hard-line for so long that he would like to change his political image.

But I would feel a lot more interested in this argument if the Armed Services Committee of the Senate votes out to the Floor a bill that says that from now on we are going to have absolutely public disclosure of the defense budget. It doesn't impress me that this can be public and then, when we get down to the end, we are going to keep part of it secret.

I believe the defense budget has a black budget. I suppose that that is the one we are talking about.

The CHAIRMAN. Right.

Mr. HELMS. There are newsmen in the room here. They will all tell you that once you get yourself in that situation, then they are going to focus their total attention on the black budget.

The CHAIRMAN. We have that now. We have the budget that is totally disclosed and within that are black items not specifically disclosed. That has been the case for decades. Don't we?

Mr. HELMS. I am not sure. I have not been involved in any of the budgetary processes for 20 years. I have no comment on that.

The CHAIRMAN. Admiral Turner?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. I have seen this, of course, from the defense side as well as the intelligence side. I have never seen it being a big problem.

Mr. Ambassador, did the—did the U-2 leak out when it was moved over into the defense budget?

Mr. HELMS. It wasn't moved into the defense budget. The SR-71 was.

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Oh, I am sorry.

Well, we are in a situation today where all the world talks about a figure for intelligence; but we haven't seen a lot of breakdown of that into other figures. It almost is like a confirmed figure today in terms of what the public thinks we spend on intelligence, but people are not busy breaking it down.

I think you are absolutely right, Mr. Chairman. The issue is political. Some of the problems that Bob Gates I think very articulately brought out could arise. That is that there will be resistance to adding to the intelligence budget. There will be efforts to cut the budget. As you said, sir, that is part of our democratic process.

Intelligence has to stand up to the same kind of scrutiny as the rest of the budgets of our country. I think there is a good enough case for it. Wisdom will prevail in the public, as well as in the Congress with its additional information as surrogates. It won't necessarily come out as badly as people are predicting.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Gates?

Mr. GATES. I think it is a mistake to cast this issue in terms of the intelligence community being afraid of cuts.

The reality is, as this committee knows better than anybody else, that budget is being cut. It is all secret. It is being cut. It is being cut fairly substantially. It was cut dramatically in the late 1960s and throughout most of the 1970s under three different presidents. The notion that secrecy protects intelligence against cuts is simply not substantiated by the facts, period.

The issue is in a budget that is significantly smaller than the defense budget, a defense budget where, if I am not mistaken, roughly half is accounted for by manpower costs which are hard to characterize as particularly sensitive, you have a situation in the intelligence community where the overwhelming amount of money that is spent in the intelligence community is spent on technical systems and support of human operations.

The amount of that budget that goes for intelligence analysis and so forth is on the order of 10 percent of the budget, somewhere between 6 and 10 percent of the budget for the community as a whole.

So any focus on the budget of the intelligence community is not going to be on the array of logistical and personnel kinds of costs that account for a substantial part of the defense budget but rather

will go right to the heart of what the intelligence business is all about: specific satellite systems, covert actions and so forth.

Now the numbers for a lot of these things and the identity of a lot of these things has, in fact, been leaked over a period of years. The truth of the matter is that there are some people sitting in this room who have not served in the intelligence community whom I believe could give a very well-informed budget briefing for you, either in defense or against the intelligence budget.

But the point is the issue is not cuts. The cuts are taking place, and they are taking place despite the fact that that overall number officially remains secret. The issue is over the overall security and I think if you asked most of the people in the intelligence community, 99 percent of them would tell you if you can take that one number and hold to it, who cares?

The CHAIRMAN. So the slippery slope argument worries you?

Mr. GATES. Absolutely.

The CHAIRMAN. If you were convinced that that aggregate number was it, it wouldn't bother you because most people in the intelligence community know it; right? A large number of other people know it?

Mr. GATES. Certainly in the ballpark.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

I have a few more questions, but I will recognize Mr. Combest. Then we will come back again.

Mr. COMBEST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I guess I will follow in the tradition of my predecessor in the 19th Congressional District of Texas, Mr. Mahon, who suggested that these numbers be kept secret.

I think, Mr. Gates, you make some really good points. I come from the philosophy—I know you heard me say this before, in our committee—but I come from the philosophy that you do not necessarily parallel your defense spending changes with intelligence.

I strongly believe—I will not go into the argument or speech at this point—but I strongly believe that at a time defense is taking substantial reductions, that there are very good arguments that intelligence spending should possibly go up because you are much more dependent upon intelligence, and you had better be right. And when you are wrong, you measure your error in terms of numbers of lives lost.

The problem in making that change in approach, whether it is increasing overall spending, in overall programs or one or two programs which constitute a majority of spending or a large part of it, when you make adjustments in those to compensate for greater needs, in satellite programs or whatever, it becomes much more obvious when the budget is public. Consequently, you either have to trim substantially in other areas or one has to raise the overall budget and accept not being able to fully respond to public questions on the purposes of the amount of the specific increase over the previous year.

Maybe we want to invite Senator McCain to come and testify and explain what he meant exactly. Knowing John McCain, I believe he would agree strongly with Bob Gates' interpretation of what he was saying.

There is an argument that was made yesterday and that the Chairman mentioned earlier, that the intelligence budget being kept secret by those involved in the intelligence community, so as to keep it immune from cuts or further cuts. I totally concur, Mr. Gates, with you. That has not happened in the past. That has no bearing on it at all.

If you look at those who continue to push to publish the figure, many of those make the arguments that we shouldn't keep it secret because it is protecting the budget. Secrecy certainly has not kept them from cutting it in the past.

All one needs to do is read the debate for the past few years on the authorization bill on the Floor of the House, and one would see the priorities of those who would like to see further cuts. They want to spend them for highways, schools, whatever. We like highways and schools, but one has to establish a priority.

It doesn't always mean some other program is not going to get funded if we adequately fund defense or intelligence. I do not believe there is any validity to the argument that we want to keep this secret to keep it from being subject to cuts.

Admiral Turner, I did have a question for you relative to the Carter administration. I understand—correct me if I am wrong—the Carter administration was prepared to accept disclosure of the aggregate budget. It was not something it wanted to do, but was willing, basically, to go along with the congressional initiative at that time to disclose. Was this something it felt strongly about doing, that is suggested, or basically did it agree to go along with Congress' instructions on it?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Technically, we did the latter, sir. However we were putting the onus on the Congress. We didn't want to release the single budget and then find that Congress wanted to release lot more. So we were in favor of releasing it, but we put it in a way that said if you people in the Congress are willing to accept the responsibility for keeping it down to one number—

Mr. COMBEST. Just the aggregate?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Just the aggregate.

Mr. COMBEST. Do you still support that today—as Mr. Gates mentioned—that it be just the aggregate? That most people in the intelligence community would agree with that if they were assured that it would not go beyond that?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Yes.

Mr. COMBEST. Also discussions have been made in the committee about the fact that we are only talking about the aggregate here, that we cannot consider the slippery slope concept because we cannot assume it will happen. I, however, don't believe you can discuss the two options without considering the slippery slope.

You mentioned—let's see how you said that—Admiral Turner, you mentioned the more disclosure we have, the more we are letting the American people know what they are getting for their money.

Well, I don't think that the aggregate total tells the American people at all what they are getting for their money. First of all, I think this is a Beltway issue. The American people are not screaming out there to have the figure at all. No one has asked me about

it. I don't think that is a burning issue in most Members' hall meetings.

But if that is the purpose, how much do we have to disclose or how much disclosure will it take to satisfy the American people that they know what they are getting their money—what they are getting for their money?

I don't believe the aggregate total tells them anything. I think that to really know what they are getting for their money we should point to the things we can point to that they are getting for it, such as the arrest of the purported bombers of the World Trade Center in New York, and the arrest before five other bombs were to be set off in New York, and a number of other things that are tremendous successes—peace, lives saved. These are what they are getting for their money.

I don't believe we can ever assure the American people they are getting their money's worth by simply disclosing the aggregate intelligence budget.

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. I would agree with you that one number will not add tremendously to the common knowledge of our intelligence. I think, though, even one number would help to the degree that the public would know whether we are increasing or decreasing intelligence after the Cold War. I agree with you, sir, we ought to be increasing it.

Mr. COMBEST. They already know that today because, while we do not talk of aggregate number, we do talk in terms—and it is very open in the debate every year, and it will be discussed again this year when we bring the authorization bill to the Floor—in terms of percentages, what we are decreasing and what we have decreased over the past several years.

So in terms of whether there is an increase or not, that is very clear. We are not hiding that at all. So they do know from the standpoint of total dollars expended from one year to the next whether it increased or decreased.

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. I read the other day in the paper a combination by a Member of the House of what the actual decrease or increase was and the percentage which, of course, leads you to the aggregate figure very quickly.

Mr. COMBEST. That is true. We do not suggest that Members do that. We do not suggest that Members release any kind of information that they obtain that is classified. We don't have the total control over that. You are exactly right.

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Let me not argue the point. I think just a much bigger issue in terms of the overall approach to the secrecy within the intelligence community and putting the onus on the community of justifying itself within the limits of secrecy, which I think it can do—if the public—

Mr. COMBEST. Well, I agree. Again, in my opposition to this, I am not taking the position that we do not have overclassification. I commend the Chairman for having the hearings. I commend Mr. Gates, Mr. Woolsey, others who are—who started us down that path of making a disclosure, declassifying information. I think that that is good.

I think that we have such a level of classification in this country that many times people overlook the importance of it because there

is so much stuff inexplicably classified. I believe that we do then begin to hone in on really what is important to be kept secret when we change that process. I think we are in the middle of changing that process.

The final thing I would say would be that, as to the purported figure by the media—many times, my colleagues feel if the media says something it is okay to go ahead and verify that. I think that that encourages leaks. I do not come from that same school of thought.

The purported figure, whatever it is, people say it is this or that—the number is not exactly correct—is a part of a bigger story. If we specifically confirm a number, whatever that number is, the aggregate number, that becomes the story.

And from there you go down this slippery slope which I do not believe we can avoid to discussing what makes that up, where are the changes, how much is in defense, how much is being spent in the Air Force versus the Navy versus the Marine Corps and on and on.

That is where I am afraid we go down. Once we cross that threshold, how do we ever get that genie back in the bottle? I don't believe we do. I believe the American people understand there are secrets in this country. There have got to be secrets in this country. Their concern is not so much that we have secrets. Their concern is much bigger: That there are some people who have a tendency to want to share those with the public at a much greater detail than we wish.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Combest.

Before I recognize Mr. Laughlin, I want to clarify a point.

Mr. Gates, I think you left the impression that the only thing that was public in the intelligence community budget—has to do with the staffing number. Once it became public, it was subject to big cuts. That was because it was public.

I want to take issue with that. In fiscal year 1992 the Intelligence Community Staff budget request was \$30.9 million. The authorization was \$39.4 million. That was half a million dollars above it. The number of people were cut in that request—this is from public numbers—from 240 to 218. That is because the committee felt that there was a dysfunctional problem with the organization of the Intelligence Community Staff which apparently was agreed upon in the next year because, in fiscal 1993 and 1994, it became a community management account request.

For example, in fiscal 1994, the request was for \$105.8 million. That was by the administration. Authorized was \$113 million. The request was for 222 people. Authorized was 222 people.

The only point I want to leave here is the fact it was a public issue was not the reason there were any changes in the numbers. It had to do with the substance rather than just the fact it was out in the public. I didn't want to leave that impression.

Maybe you have different thoughts about that, at least for the record. That is what I wanted to leave.

Mr. GATES. It certainly was the case in fiscal year 1991 and 1992 and also when Director Webster was Director of Central Intelligence that we had a very difficult time over a period of years in

trying to get additional resources for the intelligence community staff.

A lot of members of the staffs of the two Intelligence Committees had questions and problems with the intelligence community staff.

The CHAIRMAN. Right.

Mr. GATES. I will tell you that the impression inside the community was that—it was as I suggested. We may simply have a different perception from the two ends of Pennsylvania Avenue.

The CHAIRMAN. I am not sure it is the biggest issue in the world.

Mr. GATES. Fair enough.

The CHAIRMAN. I yield to Mr. Laughlin.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Adm. Turner, when you were testifying I understood you to say that you had no problem with the release of the aggregate number and probably would not see any harm in some numbers below that being released. Did I understand that correctly?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. No, sir. I did not say that, I don't believe.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. I wanted to be sure. I thought I heard you saying that. So your position is no problem releasing the aggregate number, but you would draw the line there and not release any of the other numbers below the aggregate?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Yes, sir.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. Is your reason for that the recognition that you have a requirement to protect not only lives of men and women operating in the field but also arrangements with other governments and other government officials who feed us information?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Yes, sir.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. And to have the Congress or the public debate the justification of those could jeopardize lives of people who are daily trying to protect these freedoms that we Americans enjoy?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Yes, sir. I would say I think we exaggerate how rapidly it is going to go from one number to a life, but—okay.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. I agree with you.

Also, you discussed a litany of sins the CIA has committed, your time, prior time. None of those sins would have been prevented by the release of the aggregate intelligence budget number, would they?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. No, sir. I, again, make the point you are only talking about let's open up the place.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. Sure. So those things that should not have occurred which you listed would not have been prevented by having an open budget number on the intelligence budget?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. It might have been prevented by having a greater openness within the whole organization is what I am suggesting. This is, as I said, one very small step in that direction.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. Well, this committee is doing a far greater oversight in the intelligence operations and from a budget viewpoint and from even operations viewpoint than occurred even back in Ambassador Helms day; isn't that true?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Yes, sir.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. You support that openness, at least to the congressional intelligence oversight committee?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Very much so.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. I have a question for all three of you.

Yesterday in the hearing I went through some of my background that I hoped was well-known in my congressional district about my service as a reserve officer in the intelligence field. By the way, I would add that service occurred under all three of your tenures and during my membership on this committee, I am still active in the Army reserves.

I made the comment: Not one time has anyone in my congressional district said they wanted a release of the intelligence budget number because it made them more comfortable, or any of the other list of reasons we are hearing.

You three certainly are far better known around the Nation than I am. You certainly travel a lot more in other parts of the country than I do, that perhaps my district is not representative of all the American people.

So I wonder, in your travels outside the Beltway, as we frequently talk—I think often there are two Americas: inside the Beltway and outside the Beltway. I want to direct my question to outside the Beltway in other parts of the country.

With the recognition of your prior service to this Nation as Directors of Central Intelligence, how frequently do American citizens come up and say, Mr. Director, Mr. Former Director, Mr. Ambassador, Admiral, we think it is vital to the operation of this country that you support the release of the intelligence budget number?

Mr. GATES?

Mr. GATES. Well, the direct answer to your question is it has not happened to me. But I will say this: I have found in talking to groups around the country and to editorial boards, so on, there is a real interest in what intelligence does. They may not be eager or clamoring for a budget number, but they are very interested in intelligence and the kinds of things we do, the way we support policy makers.

And I think there is an interest in having more openness about the process of intelligence and how we go about it and what the oversight process is all about.

So I think it is a little different approach than just asking for the budget number, but I think there is that kind of interest. But the direct answer is, I have never been asked that.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. Ambassador Helms?

Mr. HELMS. I was in the Agency for 25 years. I have been out of the Agency for 20 years. I have never been asked in my life by any member of the public that there should be more openness about the secrets of intelligence work.

Everybody is curious about it. Mr. Gates said they are curious about the process, how successful we are being and so forth. But I have never had anybody approach me saying there is too much secrecy connected with intelligence. I think they would all rather hold to the idea that intelligence, or at least certain types of intelligence, is going to be conducted in a secretive way, that it is part and parcel of the system.

I, therefore, cannot believe that there is any mantra in the United States today to release an aggregate figure of the intelligence community budget. All the talk about the public's right to

know is perfectly valid. I like to wrap myself in the mantle of democracy. After all, I spent 25 years of my life trying to defend the democratic system. When somebody says it would be more democratic to be more open, that is debateable.

But I don't find any pressure in the outside world except for the media and the historians who really appreciate this openness. I have heard more criticism of openness than I have comments in favor of it.

The CHAIRMAN. Would my colleague yield, the great patriot from Texas, for a moment?

Mr. LAUGHLIN. Sure. I appreciate your recognition of my patriotism.

The CHAIRMAN. I don't think the issue is the mantra of people calling for this. I think Mr. Gates correctly stated people are interested in more openness.

The fact is, the executive order as a matter of law says that you cannot keep a document classified unless it specifically relates to the national security of the United States. So, regardless of people clamoring for it out there, I think—at least from my perspective—the underlying issue is, does keeping the aggregate of anything classified directly relate to the national security of the United States?

Whether folks are clamoring for it is an interesting point; but, as a matter of law, it gets us off the main issue here which has to do with national security issues.

Thank you for yielding.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

After Admiral Turner answers my question about outside the Beltway, I have one last question.

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Mr. Laughlin, I have never been asked for the intelligence budget figure.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. Outside the Beltway?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Outside the Beltway.

There is outside the Beltway?

Mr. LAUGHLIN. My dear colleague and good friend not only to my left but from San Francisco wanted to know if you all went outside the Beltway. I will answer for you. I have seen them outside the Beltway.

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. I particularly go to San Francisco as often as I can.

But, seriously, I do find outside the Beltway there is a great skepticism as to how our intelligence community is being run, whether it is being done properly. This solution is not going to take that issue away, but it will help.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. The last point I want to make—and there was discussion about a concern that with the release of the intelligence budget numbers there was a concern that the budget process for the intelligence community would become political. Do each of you share the concern that it would become political? If so, how do you prevent the politicizing of the intelligence budget which is neither liberal nor conservative nor Republican nor Democrat but serving the purpose for which you know that the intelligence community exists?

Mr. GATES. It is hard for me to believe that release of that aggregate would make the budget process more political or intelligence issues more political. I think that it is a fact of life that there are differences of views on what the intelligence budget ought to be between liberals and conservatives here on Capitol Hill, but I think that that is not a partisan issue. I think it is a philosophical issue. I don't think that that would be worsened or made more partisan by the release of this number.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. Did you have an opinion on that, Mr. Ambassador?

Mr. HELMS. I agree with Mr. Gates.

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Me, too, sir.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. In closing, I will tell you last year was my first year on the Intelligence Committee. As I went around my district and had to defend the intelligence budget because there were large cities in Texas with newspapers writing editorials that it ought to be cut substantially, I explained the process by which this committee made up of Democrats, liberals, Republicans, conservatives—did I get them in the wrong order, Nancy—a cross-section representative I thought of the Congress and of America and how we struggled and fought, argued, had witnesses back two or three times to explain programs and reached our decision. I sensed a great deal of pride from the people I represent that there was a committee that operated that way. I thought we did operate in the best interests of our country last year. I hope we continue to do that.

I thank all three of you for being here.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the time.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Jerry Lewis.

Mr. LEWIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, we very much appreciate your being here.

The question of openness and the public's right to know I think is fundamental. You all expressed your views in slightly differing ways.

It occurs to me that most people agree that the black parts of the defense budget are black because keeping that information private to the closest circles who are concerned about defense is important to America's interests. It seems to some of us that almost all of the work of the intelligence community is similar, and that takes us to the question of a gross number. Is there some benefit to having the gross number of the intelligence budget made public so that the public can chew on it in terms of relative priority?

Mr. Gates repeated an oft-repeated theme here: That is, that this is the most poorly kept secret in the world. Our Chairman has said this a number of times during these hearings. You elaborated further on that by saying there are people in the audience who can probably give us a very fine briefing on the defense budgets, including—you implied—some detail.

The aggregate number does not seem to be as secret in terms of general dollar amounts. Confirmation seems to be. Confirmation by the government seems to be the point to be argued here. And that is very curious to me.

In view of the fact there is no argument at all that out in the general public they are not clamoring for this number, in view of

the fact that those who care to know seem to pretty well know, then I am not sure what service there is in confirming a specific that is within a fraction because, clearly, the intelligence community is already competing within the marketplace of various priorities here.

Mr. Gates explained very well, but I think all of you have confirmed, that the intelligence community has been under budget pressure, that it has been reduced over time. And I think you would all agree as we are shrinking our defense budget we ought to have stronger support for the intelligence budget.

Having said all of that, we get to the nub of Congressman Henry Hyde's argument yesterday. That is that confirmation of a specific number serves almost no one. At best, it is of slight interest to the public's right to know. If there is then a further interest, it is to the interest of those who are—who would by any number of mechanisms either use that information along with other information they have available to them—and I am speaking of people who are not friends of the United States—to confirm things that are of concern to their individual objectives.

But, above and beyond that, it would lay the foundation for pressure—effective pressure for those who want to go into more detail.

I don't know how—it is hard for me to imagine how it would take us to any other place. Confirmation would then highlight that number in a way that would get lots of publicity. People would say, wait a minute. How much of that goes for humans spying on people in Argentina? How much goes for humans spying on people in Bosnia? Et cetera.

That sort of pressure does have an effect on this place. We do not have that pressure now. I would like to—especially—ask Admiral Turner how you argue that, since the numbers are already available, it would do much more than that?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Mr. Lewis, I think confirmation is terribly important. I think it is important in telling the American public that this government is going to share with it as much of the information that it possesses which the public has a right to know.

Mr. LEWIS. It seems to me, Admiral—

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. And it can.

Mr. LEWIS. How does this do anything to the public in terms of their real knowledge or priorities if you do not go beyond that aggregate number?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. It isn't this number itself is going to illuminate the world for the American public. It is that the American public does not trust the intelligence community and the way it is managed. This would help show the public that the government is willing to share with it information that it has about intelligence that would not endanger the national interest if it were released.

I think the public feels—quite understandably—that there is a lot of information held in the intelligence world that need not be held secret.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Gates? Ambassador Helms? Any comments?

Mr. GATES. I guess there really are two fundamental observations. One is that, in principle, there is no difference on, I think,

for the most part, on the question of releasing the aggregate number, partly because it would not do any harm by itself.

The real issue is in the level of confidence that one has that the Congress can stop there, that in the defense of that budget and during the budgetary process that eventually the disaggregation of that number must inexorably come. I don't believe anybody can provide assurance that it will not. That is the only concern as far as I am concerned.

The second observation is—and it is an area where I think Admiral Turner and I are in complete agreement—and that is that there is a great deal about the intelligence process, about intelligence and even, often, about the conclusions that intelligence draws about developments around the world that can be made available to the American people and ought to.

I think that being more willing to do that, being more open about structure, process, organization, how we go about our business, the oversight process, our substantive conclusions on a variety of issues—you have Director Woolsey up here testifying on substantive issues. These are the kinds of issues that I think give the American people a lot better sense of the way the intelligence community is performing than providing them with a number that, frankly, I don't think you can stick to.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Ambassador?

Mr. HELMS. I don't think the number itself in the aggregate really enlightens anybody about anything. I quite agree with that.

But I don't agree that the American public thinks that the intelligence community needs a greater credibility. I don't know who Admiral Turner talks to, but I don't find people coming up to me and saying those fellows over there in intelligence, they don't seem to be doing their job. This is going to be, in the next 24 or 48 hours after the discovery of the spy at the Agency, debated ad nauseam as to whether the agency is doing a good job or a bad job.

More openness wouldn't help with this kind of a problem. It will hardly help with any problem. I understand the desire of people to get their hands on intelligence information, historians and so forth, but I don't see the American public being interested in anything except spies.

When one talks about the structure of the intelligence community, how estimates are written and so forth, it is as Director John McCone used to describe the problem. He would invite a newspaperman in for an interview, spend an hour or two with him, trying to describe the process by which national intelligence estimates are written. And the meeting would end up by the newspaperman saying, "do you use women as spies?" The only thing they were interested in was the spy and the covert action part of the Agency's activities.

So this openness may be great for academicians and great for the Naval War College, but I don't see that there is any fascination on the part of the American public.

Mr. LEWIS. Just one more question, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral Turner, you used the phrase a number of times—I believe it is correct—"We need to open up this place. It would be helpful to open up this place."

I almost go back to Mr. Laughlin's question in a different way. I have great difficulty knowing what you mean by that. How do you put meat on the bones of opening up this place if you go below an aggregate number? Clearly, an aggregate number doesn't open up the place in terms of the public's right to know, ability to criticize, et cetera, et cetera.

You say—you say, I do not want to go below the aggregate number. Then what the devil does "open up this place" mean in terms of not going below an aggregate number?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. I am sorry, sir. I tried to say repeatedly this is not going to solve the openness problem.

But you should not keep a fact secret that does not need to be kept secret—and everybody agrees this does not need to be kept secret as far as the one number is concerned. It is only the slippery slope argument which we have to deal with, of course. But when you keep numbers or facts secret that do not need to be kept secret, you are defeating the idea of opening up as much as you can, like both of my confreres here have endorsed the idea of opening up more of the estimates of what the conclusions are from intelligence.

You can read a national intelligence estimate and every paragraph is labeled as to whether it is secret, confidential, top secret or unclassified. I found many of these estimates in which there is one paragraph that had anything but unclassified before it. You can drop that paragraph and, in most cases, it will still be a meaningful document. In some cases it will not. You have to make that judgment. But we do not do that, except for historians 30 years back.

Mr. LEWIS. So you are suggesting, by "opening up this place," what you are really saying is we in this committee and others around the community ought to be telling the Director that year, look, classify, unclassify, in a different way. Make sure you release all you possibly can that is not classified. That is what you mean by opening this up?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Yes, sir.

Mr. LEWIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. RICHARDSON [presiding]. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Ms. PELOSI. I, too, want to add my appreciation to our expert witnesses for their testimony.

I want to declare myself as one who supports disclosing the aggregate number. I think we should all stipulate around here we live on a slippery slope. Most of our decisions have to be made in light of defending the position we are taking. That is to say, if it is an aggregate number we are arguing for, then that is what this debate is about.

The next debate is the next debate. As you know, Congress always reserves the right to do something else. That is another fight.

But I, for one, most of the people that I work with, are talking about one thing and one thing alone. That is the aggregate number as far as disclosure of the budget. We are also talking about the committee classification in keeping with what Admiral Turner and Mr. Gates have discussed as well.

Admiral Turner just said it, but I will go to your own words, Mr. Gates: "Nothing is intrinsically sensitive about the aggregate num-

ber." Ambassador Helms said it doesn't enlighten anyone about anything. The one thing it does do is put it in priority to the rest of our spending. I think that the American people have a right to know that.

While people may not be running up to us—as we discussed yesterday, Mr. Lewis said it was very low on the list of concerns of people in his district or beyond his district. I think that that is healthy. It should be low on the list of concerns after their own well-being, health, crime, et cetera, other issues.

But if you ask, not if you say what are the 10 most important issues, but if you ask the American people do they have a right to know how much money is spent on intelligence, I believe you would get quite a different answer and that many more people would be responding, yes, they believe they had that right.

It is about openness. I think openness is important, Ambassador Helms. You said earlier that we shouldn't do this in haste. We need a little more time. So do you foresee a time when releasing the aggregate number might not be objectionable to you?

Mr. HELMS. I was hoping that we might one day see a world in which it was a little less dangerous to publicize these figures.

Ms. PELOSI. Let's put that on the table then. Because we have had Senator McCain declaring the Cold War over. We have also our own concerns about proliferation and other issues which have been alluded to or more directly addressed in your comments.

However, we also have Admiral Turner who testified 18 years ago, 15 years ago—

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Fifteen.

Ms. PELOSI [continuing]. Fifteen years ago when we were in the midst of the Cold War that the aggregate number should be released. Is it that number that endangers our national security then or now? Whether there is a Cold War or not? Why does that have to be part of the equation if it, in fact, doesn't enlighten anybody about anything and isn't intrinsically sensitive in itself? Mr. Gates, would you respond?

Mr. GATES. First of all, I would respectfully make the observation with respect to your first point of dealing only with the issue before us, which is the aggregate number and the question of what might happen subsequently has to be dealt with subsequently. I think you cannot take actions that have long-lasting implications without consideration of consequences.

Ms. PELOSI. That is true.

Mr. GATES. I don't think you can isolate a single decision and consider that everything apart from that single decision is irrelevant to it, that the consequences of that decision are irrelevant. That is my concern.

My concern is that there are consequences to this, that having lived in this town and been part of this intelligence and White House process for 27 years, I have seen the way these things work. I am as confident as I can be that once the number is officially confirmed, then the process will begin of trying to get official confirmation of disaggregated numbers, and we will be down a path that I think will jeopardize our ability to maintain covert actions, to sustain satellite programs and for the Congress itself to have the flexibility to increase that intelligence budget or take other actions.

So I think there are real consequences. Those consequences are the fundamental limit of my position.

Ms. PELOSI. I appreciate that. My response to you is we have a responsibility here to be able to do so much and then no more.

Of course, we do not act without considering the consequences. It is in the consideration of those consequences that I am saying to you what is important is to know how that number relates to the total budget, not how that number relates to breaking it down.

In fact, I think one very important point that Admiral Turner made that I think my colleague may have misunderstood—but we will see—was when he was giving the litany of some of the actions that had taken place in the past, and my colleague said would they have not happened with more openness—but the gentleman's point was that the CIA did not know that this information would become public.

I believe that if the public has an idea of the number, that it does give some motivation to the CIA and to those recipients of the budget, appropriations, to understand that they have to, we have to, get our money's worth.

For example, in declassification, I think the more declassification we have, that has to represent a savings, does it not?

Mr. GATES. No. The fact of the matter is that declassification represents a substantial increase in cost.

Ms. PELOSI. The process of declassification. But once we get into a mode of not classifying everything? You know, we have to cross the bridge. We have to make the transition.

Mr. GATES. Sure.

Ms. PELOSI. I am saying to operate in a more open way it would seem to me would be less costly than operating in a more classified way, just to keep the information secret?

Mr. GATES. Two quick points.

First, I think the reality is, as Mr. Combest pointed out, those who are dealing with questions of priorities in this government have a pretty good idea of the proportion of the budget that goes for intelligence.

Ms. PELOSI. I am talking about the American people, though. They have a right to know, too.

Mr. GATES. The American people know. It has been in the papers hundreds of times.

Furthermore, as Mr. Combest said, in your own authorization process, you confirm percentages up or percentages down. In recent years, it has been percentages down in terms of the total budget.

I would also say I think the attitude of people in the intelligence community toward the propriety of their actions—and I believe you should start with the assumption of their integrity. But a viable, pervasive congressional oversight process, I think, provides more assurance for the American people that there are people carrying out intelligence responsibilities, and they are behaving according to the wishes of the law and the wishes of Congress than the release of this or that particular number.

The fact of the matter is, each of these committees have audit groups that go into every nickel of the budget. My view is that the American people take a lot more comfort from knowing the fact that the full political range of the American people is represented

on these two committees and on the other four that look at the intelligence budget than they would feel comforted by confirmation of a number that is in their newspaper every couple of weeks anyway.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Gates, it is not an either/or situation. We are not saying if you release the aggregate number, we will surrender oversight. That was never the proposal on the table.

I appreciate your point of view. We have a philosophical difference about what openness means to a democracy. We have a philosophical difference about what is the threat to national security.

Mr. GATES. I don't think we have a philosophical difference about the effect of openness to the American society. I agree openness is important. I took a lot of initiatives to improve that openness.

Ms. PELOSI. Indeed you did.

Mr. GATES. What we are talking about is one little number, not a philosophical difference of openness.

Ms. PELOSI. What we are talking about is that which cannot be made open without any—in other words, if it is not a threat to our national security, why can't that one number be made open?

Mr. GATES. If I can assure myself that the release of a—of any piece of intelligence information or analysis will not jeopardize other sources and will not lead to the discovery of other intelligence information, then I would approach it with a bias for openness and release.

Ms. PELOSI. I don't disagree with what you said.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. Will the gentlewoman yield?

When I asked Admiral Turner about the sins committed by the CIA in the past if they would have been prevented by release of the aggregate number, I think he told us they would not have been, with which I agree.

He then went on to say that these sins would not have been committed or could have been prevented if there had been more openness with this committee. And at least I interpreted his remarks to mean that there was not much oversight back even in the days of Ambassador Helms' tenure at CIA. And with the openness that I understood Admiral Turner to be talking about, it needed to be with this committee who had oversight responsibilities that did not exist in years past. That is where I intended to be.

If I confused you, I apologize. But I was not confused.

Ms. PELOSI. I just wanted to make the point that one other, further point Admiral Turner had made in his initial presentation was that if the—I think it is a fundamental point. If you know these things could be made public later or if you know that the public knows how what you are doing relates to the full picture, then there is a little more pressure within the organization to operate a certain way. That was my interpretation.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. That very point is the responsibility of this committee to exercise the oversight and require accountability for actions of the CIA.

I yield back.

Ms. PELOSI. I accept that. Thank you.

My time is almost up. But I don't believe in any of our discussion we are talking about us surrendering anything, as far as this committee is concerned, in oversight.

I did have some concerns because Mr. Gates said originally the reason you shouldn't reveal the number, even though it is not intrinsically sensitive, is that once revealed it would be hard to increase the budget.

You agreed it is not hard to decrease it once—you stipulated that everybody knows what it is anyway, so—and it is being cut even though the public doesn't officially have a confirmation. So your concern was just on the increasing of the budget?

Mr. GATES. That is correct.

Ms. PELOSI. Frankly, I think the Agency and community should feel pressure on increasing the budget as that relates to the rest of our budget.

Mr. Lewis, while nobody may be asking you now about the intelligence budget, I believe Ambassador Helms is quite correct. After yesterday, they will be asking you about it. I think there is a great deal to defend in this number. That is why I do not fear the release of the number.

But what—after hearing two days of testimony—a day and a half of testimony, I myself am beginning to have doubts about whether any of us know what the number is. That may be what some of the opposition is to it because a real number had to go out there. It may be something that is beyond even what we know on this committee because Mr. Gates has already testified it would be possible for the executive branch to hide funding in other appropriations and the rest.

Mr. GATES. I just said there would be an increased incentive as the budget became less secure for some future president to seek to protect the security of a program by moving in that direction.

Ms. PELOSI. I appreciate your making that clear.

The Chairman is signaling my time is up. I hope he gives me a moment to thank you once again for your expert testimony.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Before I recognize Congressman Coleman, the staff informs me, Mr. Gates, you have a commitment and a plane that may be waiting. You are excused.

Mr. GATES. They don't wait anymore.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Do you wish to stay?

Mr. GATES. I can stay for a few more minutes.

Mr. RICHARDSON. The gentleman from Texas?

Mr. COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think one thing to point out is that a lot of us do not think—you know, we might give the number out today. I am not sure the press would report it. I agree with Mr. Gates. They have guesses. They report. They do what they do best: that is, surmise unnamed sources.

I think the national media doesn't come to this issue with all the credibility in the world anyway. We close meetings around here on a regular basis that in my State legislature in Texas we wouldn't allow. Somebody throws up the issue of national security perhaps for closing a meeting or for whatever reason meetings are closed here. The national media accepts it; which is a total surprise, by the way, to a lot of us, so I am not sure that is where the pressure comes in to do this.

To be honest with you, I don't think the leaders in the issue—I really and truly think—it is that Members would like to be able

to debate the specifics of the intelligence bill when we debate it on the House Floor. That is what was wanted last year when we debated it.

What angered, I think, Members not being able to do that was we wouldn't confirm the first number. Had we done so, I think Mr. Gates' position is absolutely correct. That is, we would have had to defend program by program each and every element of the budget as it related to the national intelligence community. I think that that is where the problem lies.

I would only ask whether or not you might agree with some testimony we heard yesterday on this issue about how the difficulty in finding those increases comes from the very fact that, in debating them, we will need to be fairly specific about why we want the additional funds.

Secondly, is it not also true that one of the main problems that you had when you were serving as Directors, was in trying to get increases in funding for things you cannot see.

It is like someone else mentioned yesterday. It is like—it is like a research and development budget. It is hard to sell research and development to the American public or to a taxpayer. If you can point to this building we are building, people say, okay. That is all right. To suggest you are going to go out and find a threat or be aware there may be a threat or you will be ready in case a threat makes itself known, I think that is a very hard thing to sell to the taxpayer.

I wondered whether or not you have had that difficulty in your past experience as Directors of the Agency in getting funding, selling the kind of funding to a Congress?

Mr. GATES. I will speak first because my experience is the most recent.

First of all, I think all three of us had one experience in common. That is, we were generally struggling to protect what we had, not get increases. I think we were all three directors during a period when the budgets were under a great deal of pressure.

The reality is that under all three of us, I believe, new programs were proposed. And, frankly, I guess part of what I am—of where I come from on this issue is my confidence in the oversight process itself. Because I have found that in testifying before the Intelligence Committees, the Appropriations Committees, the Armed Services Committees, there is a pretty good understanding of these long-term needs and a willingness to consider intelligence projects and intelligence programs.

And, quite frankly, although we all have to deal with the realities of budgets under pressure—meaning the committees and those of us trying to defend or promote particular programs—I have not had any problem in getting people to recognize the value of what we are proposing.

Then it becomes a trade-off in terms of whether it is worth more than something else we are doing or worth more than something somebody else in the government is doing.

Frankly, there have, obviously, been differences; but, over time, I found the reaction of the committees to be pretty responsible. I really have not had much of that problem in that respect.

Mr. COLEMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Ambassador? Admiral?

Mr. HELMS. I dealt with the Congress in a very different period. I am not entirely sure my experience in this regard is useful to the committee now.

In my day, we discussed the budget before a subcommittee of five members of the House chaired by the Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Mr. Mahon. He had one staffer who worked on the budget. When those hearings were over, what that committee decided was what the House passed.

Now that was not the community budget. You have to recognize that was just the CIA budget. Because the Directors being able to speak for the entire community in the budgetary sense is a recent departure. I am not acquainted with exactly how it has worked. So I don't think any of my comments would be very useful in this regard.

But I would like to comment on this issue of the "slippery slope," because I can only say that the American people know a lot more about their intelligence community today than they ever did 10, 20 years ago. I suppose that the slippery slope will continue.

But I want to assure you that if you go for the aggregate figure, make it official, put it up there on the wall, then Pandora's box is open. Maybe you will not be responsible for it, and I will probably be dead, but it will continue to open, open, open.

If you feel the United States can stand it, that our democracy is not under challenge any place, and everything is fine, and it is a sweet and delicious community, the world we live in, be my guest.

Mr. COLEMAN. Admiral?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. I had more problems getting hardware approved by this committee and the other one than I did the less concrete programs, the satellite programs. That is because so much money is involved, comparatively speaking.

Overall, I share Bob Gates' view. I thought the committees did a balanced job in scrutinizing our budget.

Mr. COLEMAN. I wanted to thank you for all of your comments on that issue. I think it was Mr. Woolsey who yesterday suggested the difficulty of getting funding when you do compare it to other research and development type requests. I think it is legitimate.

I think all of us, no matter which side of the aisle we are on, have to, particularly on this committee, by the way, I noticed most recently four to five Members sitting here were on the Appropriations Committee, on most committees, we have to make those choices. We do compare them to each other. We do compare it, whether it is housing, battleships, whatever it may be. We do have to do that. That is a role that I think we were set up to do.

I happen to be one who agrees with you, Mr. Gates and Ambassador Helms, that our role, I think, is not, would not be, enhanced by the revealing of the number. In fact, it may be made more difficult, in fact, trying to convince our colleagues in the process that these programs we have advocated, which have been proposed by and approved by this committee, are justified in comparison to all of the programs we believe are necessary for our national security.

I would just say I think it is the next step. It is the confirmation that causes me the greatest problem. I think it is the next step that causes a lot of us the most concern.

Mr. LEWIS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. COLEMAN. I will be happy to yield.

Mr. LEWIS. You made a point that was very important to me which I wanted to share here, Mr. Gates. You mentioned the importance of being very sensitive about the consequences of decisions that we make.

My colleague, Mr. Coleman, suggested that there is not a clamor out in the public but even suggested further that there is not really a clamor from the press for this aggregate number. They kind of assume numbers, and it satisfies their need to communicate to the public.

I would submit further your comment that maybe, as people in the House who would like to debate the details of our budget, that bringing the pressure for this is the most interesting one.

Gentlemen, I am very sensitive to the fact that the press knows about and appreciates the need for secrecy.

I believe intensely in the First Amendment. That intense support caused me to carry a constitutional amendment in California to put the newsmen's shield law in the State Constitution because the courts were intervening with the media's ability to keep the confidentiality of their sources secret.

Confidentiality allows them to carry forward their responsibility to open a channel of communication between the government and their representatives. They know that those sources would be cut off. Namely, the consequences could be devastating to democracy if they didn't have some secrecy. So I think, inherently, the press understands the need in some very small areas of our government for secrecy.

The pressures seem to be coming in-house here. The aggregate number is generally understood out there. Confirming is what we are resisting because of the potential consequences of people eroding away, getting into the details during the debate.

That brings us back to the nub again. I think it is important for Members to have a sense that maybe the press is smarter about this than we are.

We appreciate your being here very much.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Let me conclude this hearing by asking a couple of questions. I will do so mainly not to edify anybody in this room or, as some of my colleagues mentioned, inside the Beltway but those that are watching this program.

We have three former DCIs. I think the public would like to know some answers.

Let me just report to all of you that my constituents have known that for eight years I have been a Member of this committee. They have been calling this morning asking about the Ames case. I cannot tell them anything.

Now I am not suggesting that we publish the aggregate amount of what we spend on counterintelligence. I do believe, as the Chairman does, that we should publish the aggregate amount for the entire intelligence budget. In fact, I think there are a lot of things the intelligence agencies do that should be open to the public. I think the public has a right to know, especially at times when we have such budget scrutiny.

Now we all know the answer that we cannot publish the counterintelligence budget, but I think the American people would like to know why, for instance, we cannot do that. Why are there certain figures that—below the aggregate amount—that cannot be published? Maybe if I can ask each one of you to explain that?

How do I tell my constituents from Santa Fe or Taos that I cannot tell them more about the Ames case than they probably read in the paper? Use this to educate those who are listening as to why it is important that below the aggregate amount that we retain certain amounts of secrecy and not as much full disclosure.

Maybe I will start with Admiral Turner?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Mr. Richardson, I see it as an arbitrary issue. You can certainly release additional numbers without endangering the national security. But there are numbers you cannot release without endangering the national security. You have to draw a line somewhere.

It seems to me—particularly considering the 16-year history we have of this—that we should limit it to the aggregate number at this point.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Admiral, be a little more specific. You are not talking to me. You are talking to people that are watching this program.

For instance, with the Ames case, what is it that would be damaging to the national security if we published the counterintelligence number?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Well, you would reveal—could reveal details of our counterintelligence activities as to what techniques we are using, where our emphasis is within the counterintelligence field, therefore.

For instance, one of the things we use in the counterintelligence field is the polygraph. How much we depend on the polygraph, if that came out in the course of this, would lead other people to decide whether they spend a lot of time training themselves to fool a polygraph. That is a specific example.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Admiral? Ambassador?

Mr. HELMS. Counterintelligence is one of the more difficult aspects of the intelligence world to define very clearly. It involves almost everything that one does in the espionage business. Trying to protect our government from being penetrated by spies involves a whole range of intelligence community activities: intercepts, telephone taps, defectors. It goes on and on. It would be impossible to put together a counterintelligence budget because you would find that it cut into various percentages of everybody else's budget.

I recognize that it is very difficult for the American public listening to television programs to know exactly why it was that Mr. Ames was not identified earlier than he was. I don't have the explanation myself. I simply don't know.

The fact remains that everybody in the United States has probably read a spy story once in a while and recognizes this is a game in which one does not win them all.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Director Gates?

Mr. GATES. Mr. Richardson, I think the best way to answer your broader question is, in effect, to draw on my experience over a number of years as an analyst of Soviet affairs, where we had to

put together a picture of Soviet military capabilities and the level of effort that the Soviets were devoting to a variety of weapons systems, R&D and so on, on the basis of extremely fragmentary information.

What we could do from the very limited and other economic information we had was then determine where there were changes in levels of emphasis between strategic offense or strategic defense or that it seemed like the Russians were—the Soviets were spending more money on a particular kind of fighter interceptor or a different kind of bomber. That then allowed us then to turn all our intelligence resources and target them more carefully on that area where it was clear there was some kind of activity, something new, something that we had not seen before.

So a sophisticated service—and there are a number in the world still as we have seen very recently—has the capability to take limited, disaggregated data and extrapolate from that a great deal of information about capabilities and intentions, whether it is intelligence or whether it is military.

That is the problem that we face on this kind of an issue.

Mr. RICHARDSON. In conclusion, since I suspect many here are anxious to learn more about the Ames matter, do any of you wish to make any comment on it? Openly?

Mr. HELMS. The only comment I would like to make is that for every director—his greatest nightmare has been to have happen to him what happened to Director Woolsey in the past 48 hours. That is, to have a Soviet spy identified in the heart of his organization.

Other than that, I don't have any comment to make except that this is a tough one. I think it is probably a serious case from all I have been able to read in the papers. There will be plenty of people who will point fingers. Why he got away with this for as long as he did is a little hard to understand, particularly with his lifestyle.

On the other hand, let's be fair. He didn't start his fancy lifestyle until quite a way into his new money, which I gather was very considerable. And since the Russians have over the years had a reputation for being parsimonious in paying their spies, the amount of money they paid to Mr. Ames indicates to me they thought his information was very valuable, and that makes the case even worse.

Mr. COLEMAN. Will the gentleman yield for just a second?

Mr. RICHARDSON. Let me conclude.

Again, the staff reminds me that what we simply have here are allegations. And, obviously, the courts and other forums will decide many of these issues.

Let me mention that I have to leave, so the Chairman now is designated as the gentleman from Texas.

We will resume at 1:30 instead of 1:00 for the second part of the hearing. We will have a journal vote for the information of those attending.

I personally want to thank the three DCIs for coming, for spending so much time, for giving valuable insights into both the disclosure issue and many others.

With that, the Chair recognizes Mr. Coleman.

Mr. COLEMAN [presiding]. Thank you, Mr. Richardson.

I wanted to say, when the Chairman asked the question about the events of the last 48 hours, I think it was right to say these are allegations that are being made. I think anything we talk about relative to that at this point could be problematic for the judicial system. I think it is better to leave those, as Mr. Woolsey put it, to the comments of those who filed charges in the Justice Department, the U.S. Attorney's press release. I think that is where it belongs.

I would ask this question, however. I think one thing that perhaps, again, people are unaware of, one of the roles of this particular committee and the one in the Senate, is to ask the very questions that Ambassador Helms asked. How long it had gone on? When did we know? How come it took so long, if it did? I think those are the kinds of questions that this committee in its oversight capacity should ask the Agency and others in the community.

Then comes the next question. How much of that should become public? Should it, of course, become public during the course of a trial? Or after the trial? I think those are legitimate questions for us to ask. I think those need to be stated very clearly by our own committees in the House and the Senate. I think they will be.

I would only say that I think in the entire debate on the issue of openness and public disclosure that we all have a responsibility, first of all, I think, to the people that work for us. You know, they are our employees, the men and women that are in the Agency or anywhere in the world working for us. It doesn't matter to me if they are working for the U.S. Trade Representative, for an embassy, or an intelligence agency. It seems to me that that should be our primary responsibility, first and foremost.

I heard the term "overt" a lot during the testimony this morning. I wanted to comment on it. I agree we overclassify. Sometimes, of course, that is done to be on the safer side of what I consider to be a very important issue. That, of course, is protection of the men and women that are providing us sources of information that really go to the very heart and core, I think, of what we need to be vigilant about and that is the national security of the United States.

I think Ambassador Helms has directly stated it. Somebody says the Cold War is over; so, therefore, there must not be much else to do. I agree with him completely that that is hardly the case. So there are still enemies of the United States, our way of life, democracy that we will continue to see, I submit, for a long, long time.

Again, let me thank you for testifying.

Mr. Laughlin? Do you have any other questions?

Mr. LAUGHLIN. Admiral Turner, in your last response to a question you made a statement that prompted my question earlier for which I must have misstated the words, I must tell you, unintentionally.

Just a few moments ago, in talking about the aggregate number, I understood you this time to say that, in your opinion, numbers below that could be released without jeopardizing national security?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Yes, sir.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. Okay. That is what I heard you say earlier that prompted me to ask the question where I must have gotten the words jumbled up.

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. I was not advocating it. I stated it could be done.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. That is what I wanted to clarify. In your view, there are numbers below the aggregate intelligence number that could be released without jeopardizing national security, but you do not advocate doing that?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Yes, sir.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. Any number below the aggregate?

Adm. STANSFIELD TURNER. Yes, sir.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. I just wanted to establish that point. I am glad I stayed long enough to get it done.

Thank you all very much.

Mr. COLEMAN. Thank you all very much for your testimony. The meeting is adjourned until 1:30.

[Whereupon, at 12:10 p.m. the committee recessed, to reconvene at 1:30 p.m. this same day.]