

RELEASE IN PART B6

From: sbwhoeop [redacted]
Sent: Friday, May 21, 2010 11:25 PM
To: H
Subject: FYI: Wash Post, friend of mine's column, on Clapper, see Lang's comments. Sid

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http://blog.washingtonpost.com/spy-talk/2010/05/former_dia_analysts_rip_clappe.html

Former DIA analysts rip Clapper's leadership

Two former top Defense Intelligence Agency officials say retired Air Force Gen. James R. Clapper, Jr., a leading candidate to be the next Director of National Intelligence, nearly wrecked the agency's analysis wing when he ran the organization in the mid-1990s.

Clapper, currently Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence, ran the DIA for three years before retiring in 1995 after 32 years in the Air Force.

According to the two former top DIA officials, Clapper's major initiative -- to reorganize intelligence analysis by specialists in enemy weapons, rather than specialists in countries and regions -- wrecked havoc at the agency and significantly downgraded its understanding of foreign events.

One of the analysts, Jeffrey White, who was chief of Middle East/Africa military assessments, among other top jobs during a 34-year career at the DIA, said Clapper eventually realized the mistake he made and reversed course.

But in the meantime, according to W. Patrick Lang, DIA's intelligence officer for the Middle East, South Asia and terrorism at the time, veteran country and regional specialists rushed for the doors.

"We lost a tremendous number of analysts, old hands with 25 or 30 years of experience, who said, 'Screw this, I don't want to be a tank expert -- I'll just go fishing,'" Lang said in an interview.

"All of the sudden, we had this army of kids who knew about particular pieces of equipment, but nothing about the Middle East," Lang added.

"Clapper damn near destroyed DIA as an analytic body," he said.

Clapper's spokesman could not be reached for comment.

Jeffrey White, now defense fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, echoed much of Lang's criticism.

"I do not recall this reorganization driving analysts away, as much as it disrupted the agency's ability to perform regional/country analysis," White said via e-mail late Friday in response to a query.

"Functional stovepipes were created which reduced the coherence of the analytical effort," he added.

"For example, the analyst working on the Syrian army was organizationally disconnected from the analyst working Syrian leadership, Syrian air defense, etc."

White said, "The only thing that allowed the agency to produce useful intelligence was the strong personal working relationships that existed among the analysts that had been in regionally organized elements."

"To Gen. Clapper's great credit," White added, "he recognized the problem and reorganized again to reestablish strong regional elements."

According to The Washington Post and other news media, Clapper is the leading candidate to succeed Dennis C. Blair, who resigned under pressure as DNI this week after months of turmoil.

In 2003, Department of Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge asked Clapper to run his intelligence operation, but Clapper turned him down, according to a Washington Post report at the time, because he thought the position lacked resources and clout.

Many critics of the DNI position think it lacks the same.

By Jeff Stein | May 21, 2010; 9:00 PM ET

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