

*Tactical vs National*

29 September 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: Admiral Daniel J. Murphy, USN (Ret.)  
Director of Policy Review  
Office of the Secretary of Defense

John N. McMahon  
Acting Deputy to the DCI for the  
Intelligence Community

SUBJECT: Terms of Reference for the National/Tactical  
Interface Study

1. I've read the Terms of Reference for the National/Tactical Interface Study, and the attached paper on "The Nature of National/Tactical Interface." I'd like to express my keen interest in this study and offer to participate enough to be of assistance but not interference with the progress of it.

2. To begin with, I'd appreciate knowing who is actually going to be doing the work of the study.

3. I was concerned with paragraph 6c. of the Terms of Reference. It seems to me you could read 6c.(1) to say the study should be developing tactical concepts of employing tactical intelligence systems. It seems to me that is beyond the bounds of the study and properly a matter for the Department of Defense. Similarly, paragraph 6c.(2) talks about determining requirements for tactical intelligence which seems to be beyond the scope of this interface issue.

4. Basically, my concerns are that the study cover two points:

a. How we insure that the tactical spilloff from national collection systems is made available to the proper tactical commanders.

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b. How we conduct some review in the budget process to insure that there is not undue duplication between national and tactical systems.

5. With respect to the first point above, it seems to me that the issue is quite simple. The NITC tasks all national systems, but tactical commanders are free to provide advisory tasking or request tasking which the NITC will have to adjudicate; on the other hand, the tactical systems are tasked by tactical commanders, but the Director, NITC, may provide request or advisory tasking which the tactical commanders adjudicate. I am still strongly of the opinion, despite all the advice I am receiving contrariwise, that it would be desirable for the Director, NITC, to allocate a portion of the tasking of the overhead systems to the major unified commanders on a daily basis. Even though the unified commanders now make a strong input to this tasking, I believe we should make them feel responsible for tasking to meet their most urgent needs. Only if we in fact give them a "hand on the wheel" will they begin to believe that the national systems are and will be responsive to their tactical needs. In short, if Generals Haig/Huyser have 25% of a satellite's time when in their geographical zone, they will begin to feel the utility of having that vehicle and be prepared for the day when the readout of it will go direct to them. The NITC could program the other 75% working around the requirements of the 25% levied by CINCEUR, e.g., subtracting overlaps from national and tactical requirements.

6. On the reverse question of national advisory tasking of tactical systems, it seems to me this can be worked out between the NITC and the CCF. The CCF should be keeping the NITC posted at all times as to what tactical systems are being employed at a given time; the NITC should be alert to see where that tasking could possibly pick up national requirements and so advise the CCF.

7. On the budgetary issues, it seems to me the new decision units that we are instituting in our budget process should be a big help, at least if Defense is using the same units as the NFIP. I believe that the IC Staff could take responsibility for checking within decision units of the IRA and the NFIP as to where there is competition and then proposing and promoting a review to see whether consolidation is feasible.

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8. Additionally, I think we should make provision that the Strategy/Planning Staff of the NITC should be required to take into account the potential contribution of tactical systems when drawing up overall collection strategies.

9. I've made a tick on your milestone charts for the points at which I would like to receive copies of the progress reports. I appreciate the real effort that's going into this key project.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stansfield Turner', with a stylized, sweeping flourish at the end.

STANSFIELD TURNER

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