

28 October 1983

NATIONAL HISTORICAL INTELLIGENCE MUSEUM RESOLUTION

Mr. Chairman:

I want to thank you for this opportunity to give you my views on the Senate Resolution to support the establishment of a National Historical Intelligence Museum. I am truly moved by this resolution's recognition of those Americans who have worked and sacrificed, from the first days of our Republic, to give our government the intelligence it has needed to prevail in war and to remain secure in peace.

CIA is a young organization, going back only to 1947, and its World War II progenitor, OSS, goes back only another six years to 1941. But American intelligence did not begin with OSS or CIA. As the resolution notes, General George Washington organized and relied upon a variety of intelligence activities in leading the 13 American colonies in the long war for our independence, whose happy ending 200 years ago we celebrate this year. As you know, I have long had a strong personal interest in the history of American intelligence, and several years ago I wrote a book on the American Revolution that paid special attention to the work of American intelligence services in that war.

I am grateful that all of you on this Committee have joined your Chairman in sponsoring this resolution to establish a museum that will commemorate the contributions of thousands of men and women to American intelligence since 1775. It is important that the American public recognize and understand the importance of intelligence, and for this the public needs information and education about the role of intelligence in

our nation's history. And as this resolution suggests, one highly important way of educating and informing the public is to establish a national museum where "intelligence objects of historical interest" can be collected, preserved and exhibited to the public.

In inviting me to testify today, Mr. Chairman, you and your Vice Chairman asked for my thoughts not only on the importance of having such a museum -- which I have just shared with you -- but also on what might be included in it, and on how I think that such a project might be carried forward. Since the question of what such a museum should contain depends to a considerable degree on how it is set up, I might first comment on the kind of institution that I believe is envisioned.

At the outset I can say that I am glad that the movement to establish a National Historical Intelligence Museum is a private initiative. I think its advocates are right in wanting to create a public -- but not governmental -- museum. I agree with those who hold that it would probably not be appropriate for CIA, the Intelligence Community as a whole, or the Federal Government to fund or administer such a museum. Such a museum should be entirely free of the constraints of national security classification; that is, all of its holdings should be freely accessible to the public. It should also be independent in managing its own affairs, especially in deciding what it wished to exhibit. For these reasons it should not be an appendage or adjunct to CIA or other organizations in the Intelligence Community. Indeed, for such a museum to depend upon intelligence agencies for funds, exhibits and direction might encourage the public to believe that it was merely a government public relations operation. Thus, I find myself in sympathy with the proponents of this museum who believe that the general public interest, the

functional requirements of intelligence work, and the benefits of freedom from official constraints, all argue for an independent museum. Having said all this, I can immediately add that CIA, and I am sure other components of the Intelligence Community as well, will be glad to support and cooperate with a National Historical Intelligence Museum in every legitimate way we can.

This brings me to the question of what should be included in such a museum. Here I should focus principally on what might be expected to come from CIA and the Intelligence Community. Here I must say frankly that what CIA can contribute will almost certainly be quite limited. This is first because we do not have many objects or artifacts that could be exhibited in a museum: we mainly produce paper, and the release to the public of some of our records is, I think, a separate issue. Beyond this, our need to protect our sources and methods means that we must keep much of our material secret for very considerable lengths of time, sometimes long after the actual substance of a report may be general knowledge. Within these constraints, however, there are some things that we could offer to such an historical museum. We have, for example, been able to release U-2 photography to the John F. Kennedy Library for its documentation of the Cuban Missile Crisis. We have also given the Smithsonian Institution related U-2 material for exhibits there. We have shared with the public the results of applying advanced photo interpretation techniques to World War II aerial photography, by releasing detailed analysis of Nazi death camps and evidence of the Soviet massacre at Katyn. While I am confident that we can continue to release this kind of intelligence material from

time to time, I would not want to mislead anyone into expecting us to be a major source of exhibits for this projected historical intelligence museum.

In conclusion I am grateful for the opportunity to testify before you today, and for the support all of you have shown by joining your Chairman in co-sponsoring this important resolution.