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Aide tells of policy bias in CIA analyses

WASHINGTON (AP) — Deputy CIA Director Robert M. Gates acknowledged yesterday that agency analysts initially set out to prove Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Jr. wrong about Soviet links to terrorism.

rather than to assess the issue fully.

In a rare and revealing speech about the disputes and tensions between intelligence analysts and government policy-makers, the CIA's No. 2 official conceded that more than a few times policy-makers have analyzed or predicted world events better than the CIA.

"And, truth be known, analysts have sometimes gone overboard to prove a policy-maker wrong," Mr. Gates said.

He noted that the CIA has been accused by more than one administration of "cooking" or slanting its intelligence reporting. But he said, "In 21 years in intelligence, I have never heard a policy-maker (or anyone else for that matter) characterize as biased or cooked a CIA assess-

ment with which he agreed."

Mr. Gates argued that the existence of diverse viewpoints within an administration and the reporting of intelligence information to Congress help ensure that analysts will not try to slant their work, saying, "The sharing of intelligence with Congress is one of the surest guarantees of CIA's independence and objectivity."

He also conceded that there are some institutional biases at the CIA.

Mr. Gates is a career intelligence officer whose nomination to head the agency was withdrawn March 2 amid questions about his role in the Iran-contra affair.

He spoke at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. The prepared text of his remarks was released here.

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