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U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
 PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE
 ON INTELLIGENCE
 WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6415

June 7, 1999

The Honorable George J. Tenet
 Director of Central Intelligence
 Washington, DC 20505

Dear George:

Last Friday (June 4) morning, Committee staff, putting together background and briefing materials for this Thursday's closed briefing on the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, were advised that their scheduled meetings with Intelligence Community personnel for later that day had been cancelled at the request of John Moseman. When advised by staff of this, the Committee staff director called John to seek an explanation. John indicated that you had directed that the Committee was not to receive further briefings on the completed investigations carried out by the various agencies in the Intelligence Community or to be given access to individuals who participated in the targeting or who were knowledgeable of the specifics until you had had a chance to review the CIA Inspector General's (IG) report on the matter. When asked for the justification for this embargo, John advised that you felt it was the DCI's right, as head of the Intelligence Community, to review the issue and reach his own conclusions prior to having the oversight committees delve into the matter. John did offer that the embargo on our oversight should be lifted by close of business today, assuming you had had a chance over the weekend to review the IG report.

We are writing to share with you our strong disagreement with this claim of a new and totally unacceptable DCI "right," which has to our knowledge never been asserted before. In recent years the Committee has on numerous occasions carried out its oversight - including interviewing Intelligence Community officials who carried out independent investigations and who were participants in the matter in question - at the same time and even prior to the IG's investigations. Indeed, in several investigations the Committee has independently interviewed subjects of IG investigations and required status reports from the IG (something that has not been requested on this occasion). If we were to accept this new "right" as a precedent, it would mean that the Committee's schedule for investigations and oversight would henceforth be held

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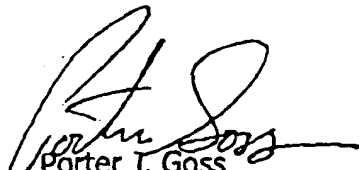
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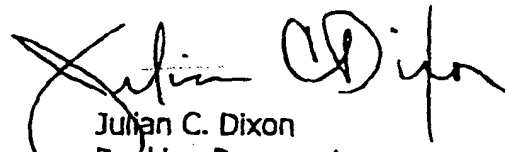
hostage to the schedule of the IG and the DCI's review of the IG's final report - a process that has taken, in some cases, two years or more.

Finally, we must advise you of our disappointment that this "right" has been raised at all in this case. The bombing took place one month ago on May 7. It is a serious matter demanding our oversight. Nonetheless, we have - at your request -- twice postponed public hearings on the events leading up to the misidentification of the embassy building. We have shown our reasonableness and had every reason to expect your full cooperation. It does not give us the confidence we normally have in your openness to oversight to have staff fact-finding efforts, undertaken at our express direction, obstructed and delayed just three days before our closed hearing.

We ask that you lift immediately the embargo on Committee oversight. We wish to make it clear that we do not concur with the claim of a "right" to prevent the Committee's gathering information in this matter or similar matters and do not agree that its assertion in this instance is a precedent for future actions.

Best regards,


Porter J. Goss
Chairman


Julian C. Dixon
Ranking Democrat

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