

Political Science 972: International Conflict
Discussion Questions for Week 9
Strategic Intelligence: History

Assignment: Johnson and Wirtz parts 1 and 9

1. Assess the various factors that led to the expansion of the U.S. intelligence community following WWII. Obviously the emergence of the US as a global power was the earliest motivating force, but what else was involved? Consider at least the following
 - a. Intelligence failures/demands of WWII
 - b. Nuclear weapons
 - c. Communist success in Eastern Europe and China in 1945-1950
 - d. Decolonization
 - e. Characteristics of the Soviet Union

To what extent to these characteristics still influence intelligence in the post-Cold War period—in particular does a country that is an unchallenged military power have the same requirements as a country in a bi-polar (or multi-polar) system? To what extent did they change *during* the Cold War? To what extent do they impede efforts to deal with militarized non-state actors?

2. What alternative models might the development of the U.S. intelligence community have taken? (See in particular the actual alternative models used in other states discussed in Part 9.) What are the advantages and disadvantages of these; why weren't they used in the US? Why is the intelligence community subjected to periodic "reforms"—the most recent major one being 2004—at a greater frequency than most other government agencies?
3. What has prevented the Central Intelligence Agency from being "central"? To what extent is it likely that the most recent variant on this—the creation of a post of Director of National Intelligence—will fare any better? Has the decentralization of intelligence made it more or less prone to the problems of ideological manipulation?
4. To what extent have the real and perceived threats of counter-intelligence driven the structure of intelligence in the US and elsewhere? (Note: we will consider this in greater detail in two weeks, but it is fairly central)
5. Closely related to the above, assess the proposition that in the current "information environment", there is sufficient information available in open sources that the costs of classified information actually outweigh the risks. More generally, consider the impact of various military and commercial technologies that have developed since 1945 on the quantity and quality of strategically-relevant information available to governments.
6. How important is democratic control and oversight of intelligence? Does the US experience differ significantly from that of other democracies? Separate out the various components of this control, for example the issue of the public having access to information similar to that

available to decision-makers, the use of intelligence agencies against domestic opposition, and the use of secrecy to find illegal activity (e.g. Iran-contra)

7. Assess—realistically—the advantages and disadvantages of secrecy in a bureaucratic environment: who benefits, who gets hurt? Assess the proposition that in a complex organization such as the US government, it is impossible for the organization to function with compartmentalized information and therefore “leaks” are inevitable.
8. Has democratization made intelligence analysis easier or more difficult? How about globalization? [we will, of course, need to define both of these terms]