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# WITHDRAWAL SHEET

## Ronald Reagan Library

**Collection Name** NORTH, OLIVER: FILES

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ID Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date	Restrictions
12058 PAPER	RE: COUNTER-TERRORISM ISSUES	8	ND	B1

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- B-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
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United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

October 28, 1985

MEMORANDUM

TO: Admiral James L. Holloway, III  
Executive Director, Vice President's  
Task Force on Combatting Terrorism

FROM: Robert B. Oakley *Bob Oakley*  
Director, Office for Counter-terrorism  
and Emergency Planning

SUBJECT: Initial Task Force Proposals

After reviewing the set of 38 issues papers, I want to give you on a personal basis and in summary form some preliminary thoughts:

1. The main focus of all the papers is understandably on internal organization but there is an overemphasis on organizational, formal structure and not enough identification of problems and suggested solutions for some major parts of the counter-terrorist program. For example, the issue paper dealing with intelligence treats it only organizationally rather than identifying and addressing the real problems. Can one assume that creating a "fusion center" will automatically deal effectively with these problems? The same approach is applied to several other issues. It is seductively misleading.

2. Papers 1, 2 and 3 obviously form the core of a single conceptual approach which runs throughout the issues papers, and result in an approach which seems derived too directly from military theory: doctrine, mission, operation plan, tightly organized staff, strong centralized control. My experience with the very complicated, multifaceted, multi-agency, multi-government issue of terrorism--and my experience with the actual functioning of this Administration as well as previous Administrations--convincing me beyond any doubt that this approach will not work in practice. In fact, it will have a very negative effect so long as whoever or whatever mechanism is responsible for counter-terrorist action places top priority on following such an approach in practice. (Does DOD today actually work in accordance with such tightly-structured formal procedures and organization, even on matters entirely within its own purview? We know that issues such as arms control have not been susceptible to tight, central control. We also know that "Cabinet Government" is the preferred overall philosophy of this Administration.) One

needs to subject theory to the scrutiny of experience and common sense, lest one confuse the senior members of the Task Force when they examine the final versions of the issues papers.

3. There needs to be a much clearer distinction between crisis management, top-level policy decisions, and long-term management and coordination. The conceptual approach in these papers would put all these functions in the NSC, and inevitably plunge it more deeply into operations. (This is an inappropriate role for the NSC. Interestingly, it is applied across the board except for intelligence, coordination and management which somehow remains with CIA.) On the basis of my experience, with this issue, that a staff numbering over 30 would be necessary merely to do the paperwork and attend the many meetings assumed under this new approach.

4. In connection with the apparent ambiguity and confusion over crisis management, major policy decisions and long-term management and coordination, there appears to be similar ambiguity as to the role of the IG/T and the TIWG, and the role of the National Coordinator. Although the IG/T would be continued in form, the substantive and operational arrangements are in fact drastically altered. Rather than a true coordinating role, the Chairman/National Coordinator appears to become in effect the sort of czar for anti-terrorism which has so intrigued people over the past five years. Moreover, key coordinating and policy responsibilities for many issues (e.g. #5 and 6) are specifically assigned to TIWG, none to the IG/T. Possibly, this is not what is envisaged, but it certainly seems that way. The roles of the IG/T, TIWG and Coordinator need to be spelled out clearly so that all concerned agencies understand clearly what is at stake.

5. By apparently making the several agencies nothing more than the implementing agents for decisions taken by the National Coordinator (or the TIWG), there will be an inevitable tendency for the National Coordinator to assume more and more operational responsibility. There will also be an inevitable tendency for terrorism to dominate other issues/interests with respect to USG relations with other governments, risking serious damage to these interests/issues; and for priority to be given to topical actions by the USG (often unilateral) against terrorists on a specific incident/person basis rather than at the risk of damaging efforts to increase the long-term cooperation of other governments in countering terrorism. The ability of other agencies to make appropriate inputs would be diminished in practice, if not in theory.

These thoughts are of a more general nature than will be the responses to the 38 issues papers, and they are strictly my own, not shown to or cleared with anyone else. Some of my ideas along these lines you and your staff have already heard. They are not, unfortunately, constructive in the sense of offering alternatives. These will come with State comments on individual papers.

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