



Statement by Senator Feinstein on Resignation of CIA Director George Tenet  
June 4, 2004

“George Tenet served as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency and the Intelligence Community during one of the most difficult and dangerous periods in our nation’s history. I was surprised at the timing of his resignation given the threats facing our nation. I wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

Director Tenet has provided leadership as our intelligence agencies took on the new challenges of a post-Soviet world. The rise of the non-state actor, the stateless terrorist, and the proliferation of asymmetric threats, all were challenges that faced Director Tenet during his tenure. He rallied the men and women of our intelligence agencies during some of the darkest days of our history, providing encouragement and guidance during a very hard time.

I believe that the departure of George Tenet marks the end of an era – despite the change in our adversary, he was obligated to lead an intelligence community built for another time, unsuited to today’s world, and today’s threats. He worked hard and long to move this community into today’s world, and his effort and struggle should be honored. I hope that Director Tenet’s successors will work towards meaningful and effective reform of the intelligence community.

I also believe Congress needs to consider the establishment of a Director of National Intelligence with the statutory and budgetary authority to truly oversee our nation’s intelligence-gathering efforts and have introduced legislation to do so.

With 15 separate agencies, offices and departments charged with collecting or analyzing intelligence our efforts are fragmented and inefficient. Further, the leadership structure within our intelligence community exacerbates these divisions. One person, by law, serves two separate and incompatible functions. The Director of Central Intelligence oversees an agency while also acting as the leader of the entire Intelligence Community.

The Director of Central Intelligence is further hampered by the fact that he oversees a mere one-fifth of our nation’s intelligence budget while the Secretary of Defense holds the purse strings for most of the remaining 80 percent. That’s why I believe the best way to address this structural defect is to establish a single Director of National Intelligence to concentrate full-time on coordinating intelligence resources, setting priorities for the Intelligence Community, and advising the President on intelligence matters.”