



INTELLIGENCE

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The Honorable Carl Levin
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-6050

Dear Senator Levin:

In the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence letter of December 19, 2005, Dr. Stephen Cambone provided you some context not otherwise reported in an NBC News segment on the Department of Defense (DoD) TALON system. Dr. Cambone also advised that we would thoroughly review the TALON system. That review is nearly completed. I would like to update you on our results:

- DoD field commanders highly value the TALON reporting program as a source of timely information about possible foreign terrorist threats to their personnel and facilities.

The TALON reporting system is much like a capability to document information from a "neighborhood watch" program in which concerned citizens or DoD personnel report suspicious activities they believe may be linked to possible foreign terrorist activities to DoD counterintelligence, law enforcement or intelligence organizations. The focus of the effort was on possible foreign terrorist threats to the DoD and not on U.S. persons in the United States. The information that was reported to DoD security, law enforcement, counterintelligence or intelligence personnel was then briefed to local military command officials and law enforcement as appropriate prior to being sent to the TALON reporting database at the Counterintelligence Field Activity (CIFA) for analysis. CIFA's role in the process is to maintain the database and conduct analysis.

- TALON reporting has led to a number of investigations. Those include terrorism investigations, most often conducted under the purview of the Joint Terrorism Task Forces headed by FBI, and the reporting has identified other criminal activities. The reporting has also disclosed



some patterns that have allowed the Department to focus or change security procedures in order to deter potential terrorist activities.

- Although the TALON reporting system was intended to document suspicious incidents possibly linked to foreign terrorist threats to DoD resources, some came to view the system as a means to report information about demonstrations and anti-base activity that would be of interest to field commanders from a force protection perspective. A very small percentage of these reports were submitted to the TALON/CORNERSTONE database.
- CIFA has removed the TALON reports on demonstrations and anti-base activity from the database. The process to remove other reports that are no longer analytically significant is ongoing. All TALON reports are now reviewed at CIFA upon receipt to ensure compliance with the TALON reporting criteria.
- The DoD organizations involved in the TALON reporting system were following multiple rule sets regarding the collection and retention of this information. The Department will soon issue detailed guidance that clarifies the purpose of the database, the rules governing the collection and retention of the data and more detailed procedures to be followed. The database will then be reviewed again to ensure compliance.

Dr. Cambone also directed that all Department counterintelligence and intelligence personnel receive immediate refresher training concerning the laws, policies and procedures that govern the responsibilities for handling information, especially information related to U.S. persons. The refresher training is underway and should be completed by January 31, 2006.

This review clearly indicates that TALON is an important and valuable tool, and that we have room for improvement. We will continue our analysis of findings from this review to determine precisely what we need to do to improve and will provide you with additional information.

There is nothing more important to the U.S. military than the trust and good will of the American people. The DoD values that trust and good will and consequently views with the greatest concern any potential violation of the strict DoD policy governing the protection of civil liberties. Our new guidance will reflect that concern and protect that trust.

My office continues to be engaged in formal and informal dialogue with members of your staff on this subject. These discussions have been positive and productive. I look forward to an opportunity to brief your committee on these complex and overlapping issues. I have sent a similar letter to the Committee's Chairman, the Honorable John W. Warner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Rogalski". To the right of the signature, the word "DETING" is written in a similar cursive style.

Robert W. Rogalski
Deputy Under Secretary of Defense
(Counterintelligence and Security)

cc:

The Honorable Ted Stevens
The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
The Honorable C.W. "Bill" Young
The Honorable John P. Murtha
The Honorable Duncan Hunter
The Honorable Ike Skelton
The Honorable Pat Roberts
The Honorable John D. Rockefeller IV
The Honorable Peter Hoekstra
The Honorable Jane Harman