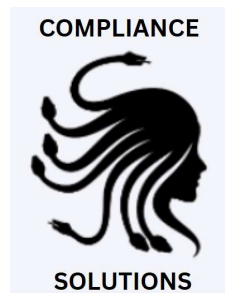


TLPCLEAR
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Compliance-Solutions.pro
Cyber Warfare Center Pacific
Liberty Station USNTC Point Loma CA
legal@compliance-solutions.pro
31 MARCH 2025 04:30 Zulu



According to the Dead Drop on Cipher circa March 7, 2025:

"WHAT, ME WORRY? Last week, we mentioned that CNN had a story suggesting some senior intelligence officials were concerned about foreign intelligence agencies possibly targeting recently fired intelligence officers – and DNI Tulsi Gabbard pooh poohing the notion. Fox News reported that CIA Director John Ratcliffe is “unconcerned” about the matter. “Any individual who would be willing to sell the Nation’s secrets to a foreign adversary has no place working at the Agency that plays an incredible role in keeping Americans safe every day,” Ratcliffe told Fox News Digital in a statement. Not that we’re one to argue but of course, if you’ve just fired someone, you have actually told them they have no place at the Agency. CNN doubled down on the line of reporting with another story saying that both Russia and China are going after recently laid off folks – or people worried about being next on the chopping block. CNN says they saw a “partially redacted” copy of a document produced by the Naval Criminal Investigative Service which says the intelligence community assesses with “high confidence” that foreign intelligence outfits are trying to “capitalize” on the unhappiness stemming from some of the recent firings."

This article presents an interesting contrast between different intelligence and media perspectives. Here are the key takeaways and potential hidden agendas:

1. Dismissal vs. Real Concern;

DNI Tulsi Gabbard and CIA Director John Ratcliffe dismiss the idea that recently fired intelligence officers pose a significant counterintelligence risk. CNN and NCIS (Naval Criminal Investigative Service) argue the opposite: that foreign intelligence agencies (e.g., Russia and China) are actively targeting these disgruntled individuals. This stark divide suggests either: A legitimate downplaying by the administration to avoid public panic or media hysteria. A real internal disagreement on the threat assessment.

2. Media Positioning & Potential Bias

CNN's reporting fits into their broader narrative of emphasizing Russian and Chinese espionage threats, possibly to criticize Gabbard's stance. Fox News' coverage aligns with its history of supporting intelligence leadership that downplays external

interference risks. The article itself subtly suggests skepticism toward CNN's reporting by calling it "doubling down" and referencing a "partially redacted" document (implying selective disclosure or media exaggeration).

3. Political & Bureaucratic Context

If the intelligence community is undergoing significant purges, some factions within might use leaks to counter the new leadership. Gabbard, known for her anti-establishment stance, might be trying to restructure IC priorities, leading to internal pushback. The NCIS report could be real but exaggerated in importance, possibly as a bureaucratic move to challenge leadership changes.

4. Hidden Agenda?

There could be multiple layers of intent behind this: CNN & Intel Bureaucracy: Amplifying threats to discredit Gabbard's restructuring efforts. Fox News & IC Leadership: Downplaying the risk to support the new direction of intelligence leadership.

Actual Foreign Espionage Risk: This could be a real concern, but the way it's presented suggests an attempt to either raise alarm selectively or undermine the administration's narrative. This is not just normal intel-babble—there's likely an active bureaucratic fight within the IC, with media factions choosing sides. The concern itself is valid (disgruntled ex-intelligence officers are prime targets), but the framing suggests it's being used as a political weapon rather than a straightforward security warning.

Russian covert operations against the West are part of its foreign policy, and decision making for them is centralized in the Kremlin and led by an experienced hand in covert action, President Vladimir Putin. As an operative in the KGB, Putin served in the station (or резидентура) in Dresden, East Germany, and helped spearhead active measures against West Germany. He later became head of the Federal Security Service (FSB), a successor to the KGB involved in countering foreign intelligence services, combating organized crime, and ensuring economic and financial security.

Several European government agencies assessed that the Eagle S oil tanker belonged to Russia's shadow fleet and was engaged in sabotage operations against undersea power cables. Putin has long supported strategies and tactics below the threshold of conventional warfare. Within the Kremlin, there have been several reforms regarding the organization and implementation of active measures. Around 2022, Russian Presidential First Deputy Chief of Staff Sergey Kiriyenko established the Committees of Special Influence, which is responsible for assigning Russian special services with specific tasks in target countries.

In addition, activities such as violent provocations are authorized by a committee of the National Security Council under the guidance of its secretary, Sergei Shoigu.¹⁹ Sergey Kiriyyenko, Russian Presidential First Deputy Chief of Staff. The main Russian organization involved in active measures is the GRU, headed by Admiral Igor Kostyukov. In addition, Andrei Averyanov, deputy head of the GRU, is likely responsible for overseeing all active measures other than those targeting Ukrainian territory. Averyanov established the Service for Special Activities, which includes three main entities: Unit 29155, Unit 54654, and a headquarters and planning department for coordinating the Service for Special Activities.

Summary: Russian Intelligence Exploiting U.S. Intelligence Shakeup

Over the past 30 days, the Department of Justice's National Security Division has observed a surge in recruitment attempts targeting recently dismissed U.S. intelligence officers. This recruitment drive is being orchestrated by Russia's GRU Unit 54654 – Service for Special Activities, which specializes in covert influence and espionage operations. The unit is deploying “clearskins”—operatives with no known intelligence affiliations—to establish clandestine networks within the U.S. and approach disaffected former CIA, NSA, and ODNI personnel.

This escalation directly coincides with the ongoing reorganization of the U.S. intelligence community (IC) under the leadership of Director of National Intelligence (DNI) Tulsi Gabbard. Her reforms have led to the early retirement or dismissal of a significant number of intelligence officers, many of whom possess decades of expertise but are now cut off from classified material. The restructuring is aimed at reducing bureaucratic inefficiencies and eliminating internal monopolization of power within the IC, but it has also created a pool of vulnerable, experienced operatives who may feel discarded and undervalued.

While most former officers will reject foreign overtures, the probability that at least one or two will accept is high—whether out of resentment, financial desperation, or ideological drift. However, their actual intelligence value will be limited, as they no longer have access to classified programs, active operations, or current sources and methods. The real danger lies in their ability to train new assets, provide operational tradecraft insights, or identify weaknesses within U.S. intelligence defenses.

This situation highlights the inherent risk of large-scale personnel turnover within intelligence agencies. While the IC reorganization aims to create a leaner, more effective security apparatus, it has also inadvertently provided adversaries like Russia with a rare opportunity to expand their covert recruitment efforts on U.S. soil.

Recommended Actions for the Trump Administration & ODNI

The Trump administration and ODNI should take **immediate, multi-pronged action** to mitigate the risk posed by recently dismissed intelligence officers being targeted by foreign intelligence services, particularly Russia's GRU. The key problem is that these individuals—who were once trusted assets—are now **disenfranchised, financially unstable, and cut off from their professional identity**, making them prime recruitment targets.

1. Establish an Intelligence Officer Transition & Outreach Program

Currently, there is **no formalized transition program** for retired or dismissed intelligence officers, leaving them vulnerable. The administration should:

- **Create a structured transition program** similar to military TAP (Transition Assistance Program) to help former intelligence officers reintegrate into the private sector.
- **Provide financial counseling, job placement, and mental health resources** to mitigate the emotional and economic stressors that could make them susceptible to recruitment.
- **Offer classified and unclassified contracting opportunities** within private-sector national security firms to keep their skills in use without full clearance reinstatement.

2. Counterintelligence Briefings & Monitoring

- Require **mandatory exit debriefings** for all departing intelligence officers, emphasizing foreign recruitment risks.
- Conduct **periodic follow-ups** with high-risk individuals to maintain awareness of potential threats.
- Implement **low-profile counterintelligence monitoring** of recently dismissed officers to detect and disrupt recruitment attempts before they succeed.

3. Exploit the Situation for Counterintelligence Operations

- The administration should **turn this recruitment drive against Russia** by using select former officers as **double agents** in controlled counterintelligence operations.

- **Allow controlled leaks of outdated but misleading intelligence** to bait and compromise Russian clearskin recruiters.

4. Policy Reassessment on Intelligence Purges

While restructuring the IC is necessary, **a mass firing without proper safeguards is a national security liability**. ODNI should:

- **Reevaluate the dismissal process** to ensure that only those engaged in misconduct or obstruction are removed.
- **Offer alternative roles or security consulting positions** to retain institutional knowledge and prevent these individuals from becoming vulnerabilities.

Conclusion

If **no action is taken**, Russia and other adversarial intelligence agencies will continue exploiting this **rare influx of suddenly unemployed intelligence professionals** to gain tradecraft insights, recruit U.S. assets, and weaken national security from within. **A well-planned outreach, reintegration, and counterintelligence strategy** is essential to mitigate this risk and turn the situation into an advantage rather than a liability.