

CUNNINGHAM, CIFA, AND CHENEY, A NEW CHRONOLOGY

In light of the news that Alberto Gonzales granted Cheney presidential powers to snoop into ongoing investigations in May 2006, I thought it was time to update my chronology of the CIFA side of the Cunningham scandal.

- September 2002, then Deputy Secretary of Defense for Counter-Intelligence Burt establishes CIFA to oversee counterintelligence units of the armed services; consulting on the new agency was James King, recently retired director of National Imagery and Mapping Agency and MZM vice president
- Late 2002, Cunningham gets Mitchell Wade a data storage contract worth \$6 million, of which \$5.4 was profit
- January 2004, Cunningham adds \$16.5 million to defense authorization for a "collaboration center" that appears to include business for Wade's company
- June 27, 2005, James King takes over MZM
- August 2005 Veritas announces takeover of MZM—will become Athena

- November 28, 2005, Cunningham pleads guilty to bribery
- November 30, 2005, USNORTHCOM JPEN deletes all TALON reports
- December 2005, Pincus reveals a CIFA database contains raw intelligence data on peace activists (and, presumably, Jesus' General)
- March 2006, prosecutors in the Cunningham case are reviewing CIFA contracts to MZM
- March 2006, Stephen Cambone announces an investigation of CIFA's contracting
- Goss implicated in Cunningham scandal
- May 4, 2006, Gonzales gives himself authority to "communicate directly ... regarding any matter within the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice" to the Vice President, his Counsel, and Chief of Staff
- May 5, 2006, Porter Goss resigns under allegations of ties to the Wilkes/Wade bribery ring
- May 11, 2006, Kyle Sampson emails
- May 2006, House Intelligence

Committee (Peter Hoekstra's Committee) first moves to exercise oversight on CIFA (Hoekstra would eventually refuse to release the report on Cunningham)

- June 15, 2006, Commander USNORTHCOM signs order to terminate JPEN program
- August 2006, CIFA director David Burtt and deputy director Hefferon (who were instrumental in overriding staff complaints about Cunningham earmarks) resign

The point is this: the JPEN database disappeared just two days after Cunningham signed his plea agreement. Gonzales gave Cheney peeking rights into ongoing criminal investigations just as Goss and Foggo and MZM became targets. And all the earmarks that had supported the JPEN database dried up, just in time to close the program and hide the evidence of spying on Bush's enemies.

Think about it. This was a domestic spying program instituted under Rummy (and therefore Cheney) favorite Steven Cambone. If there are guardian angels for domestic spying programs in this administration, they are Cheney and Addington. And they got the ability to guard domestic spying a lot more closely just about the time it had to be dismantled for legal reasons.

And par for the course, Alberto Gonzales doesn't remember giving Cheney and Addington that power at all!