

THE BLACK BUDGET

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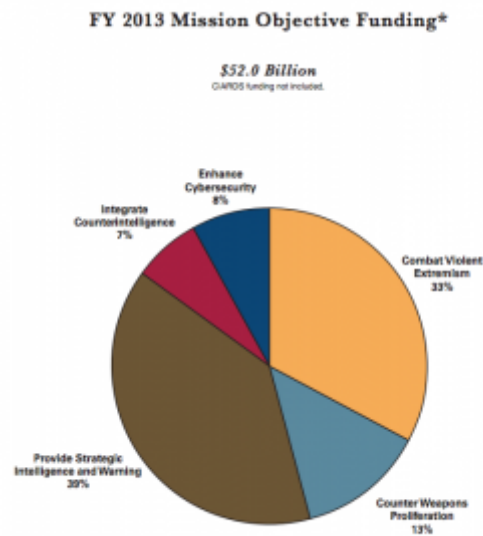
for
intelligence. I'm reading through the summary
now.

I'll put working comments below. But one of my
first impressions is that all of this is useful
information, and in some ways really encouraging
information (in others, horrifying).

For that reason, this is one of my favorite
parts of the story itself:

Lee Hamilton, an Indiana Democrat who
was a former chairman of the House
Intelligence Committee and co-chairman
of the commission that investigated the
Sept. 11 attacks, said that access to
budget figures has the potential to
enable an informed public debate on
intelligence spending for the first
time, much as Snowden's disclosures of
NSA surveillance programs brought
attention to operations that had
assembled data on nearly every U.S.
citizen.

"Much of the work that the intelligence
community does has a profound impact on
the life of ordinary Americans, and they
ought not to be excluded from the
process," he said.



“Nobody is arguing that we should be so transparent as to create dangers for the country,” he said. But, he said, “there is a mindset in the national security community – leave it to us, we can handle it, the American people have to trust us. They carry it to quite an extraordinary length so that they have resisted over a period of decades transparency. . . . The burden of persuasion as to keeping something secret should be on the intelligence community, the burden should not be on the American public.”

Hamilton is absolutely right. There’s no reason why information at this level of detail shouldn’t be shared with American taxpayers ponying up the \$52.6 billion to pay for it all.

Working comments on Budget Justifications

4: The IC is apparently going to start researching trade disputes. I assume that’ll be primarily targeted at China. But it’s an interesting development.