
INTELLIGENCE AS A PROFESSION: IAFIE SETS ITS SIGHTS

by Mark M. Lowenthal, Ph.D.

Executive Director, IAFIE

Intelligence has been an integral part of the U.S. government since 1940. Prior to that, it was an occasional and entirely military contributor. But intelligence as a recognized academic field of study and as a profession with all of the norms of a profession has lagged behind.

In June 2004 a small group, primarily academics who had an interest in intelligence and who taught courses on the subject, organized IAFIE, the **International Association for Intelligence Education** (www.iafie.org). A year later, IAFIE transformed itself, ready to step out and begin to implement its six founding goals:

- Expanding research, knowledge, and professional development in intelligence education;
- Providing a forum for the exchange of ideas and information for those interested in and concerned with intelligence education;
- Advancing the intelligence profession by setting standards, building resources, and sharing knowledge in intelligence studies;
- Fostering relationships and cultivating cooperation among intelligence professionals in academia, business, and government;
- Developing, disseminating, and promoting theory, curricula, methodologies, techniques, and best practices for pure and applied intelligence;
- Serving as a liaison between other professional organizations and centers of excellence.

Several factors prompted both the creation of IAFIE and its transformation in 2005. Although there have always been a few schools that have offered courses in intelligence, the subject has not yet achieved academic recognition as a legitimate field of study. Even as the number of schools offering such courses began to expand, the academic legitimacy problem remained. At the same time students, many of whom aspire to become members of the Intelligence Community, have expressed an increased interest in intelligence. Stronger enrollments have been fueled by the fact that since 2001, the Intelligence Community has been hiring new employees in record numbers, not only in the traditional agencies but also in

new ones, like the Department of Homeland Security, and in changed agencies, like the FBI. Finally, issues of professionalization are of increasing importance to the Intelligence Community, especially in the aftermath of 9/11 and the Iraq WMD controversy, as the agencies seek to learn from past mistakes and to create new occupational guidelines and doctrine.

IAFIE's model is based on other professional organizations, such as the American Bar Association and the American Medical Association. These associations were created by their own members, who believed that there was a need to create and enforce standards for their profession in terms of education, ethics, professional requirements and norms, etc. IAFIE believes that intelligence – broadly defined to include national, domestic, homeland security and law enforcement – is a profession and that this is the time for the same professional base to be created.

IAFIE is devoted to creating standards for the future of the Intelligence Community's personnel.

There are several intelligence-related organizations in existence. Many of them are industry-based or are venues for intelligence veterans to gather. IAFIE is the first association devoted to the education and professionalization of intelligence officers. More than any of the other associations or groups, it is devoted to creating standards for the future of the Intelligence Community's personnel.

IAFIE's membership is also committed to other important tenets. First, it will be a truly international organization. Although U.S. members may be predominant, at least for this early period, it will not be U.S.-centric. We take the "I" for international seriously. Second, within the U.S., Washington is the necessary center and will be the fly wheel of the association. But we are resolved to ensure that IAFIE has a broad base across the United States and that we have activities beyond the Washington area.

The past year has been a remarkable success. In February 2006, IAFIE had its first international conference, hosted in Stockholm by the Royal Criminal Police. What had been planned as a small gathering of perhaps 30 people had burgeoned, largely on word of mouth, to 220 attendees from Canada, Mexico, the United States and across Europe: Sweden, Norway, Poland, Austria, Britain, France, et al. Organizers and participants agreed that it was an extremely worthwhile meeting and underscored the need that IAFIE was quickly filling.

In April 2006, the first IAFIE chapter in the U.S. formed, representing the Washington area. The membership is now clearly more diverse than the association's academic origins, embracing academics, current and former intelligence officers and business people who either have worked in intelligence or now serve intelligence clients. IAFIE's transformational year concluded with the annual U.S. meeting, held in May 2006 and generously hosted by Booz Allen Hamilton in Virginia. Nearly 120 attendees, representing multiple aspects of a broadly conceived definition of intelligence, met for two days. Again, attendees represented several countries: the U.S., Canada, Brazil, Britain and Japan. It is worth noting that our concept of intelligence is firmly in line with changes in the U.S. government. The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act (IRTPA), enacted in 2004, moved beyond the old foreign vs. domestic intelligence distinction. The act, which established the new position of a Director of National Intelligence (DNI) notes that there is national intelligence, which includes foreign, domestic and homeland security intelligence.

...our concept of intelligence is firmly in line with changes in the U.S. government.

The panels included government officials, many of whom are involved in intelligence education at various agencies, academics and business intelligence professionals. We also were able to attract highest quality keynote speakers: Ambassador Pat Kennedy, the Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Management, whose portfolio includes education and training across the Intelligence Community; Dr. Graham Spanier, president of Penn State University, who also serves as chair of the National Security Higher Education Advisory Board and is a member of the National Counterintelligence Working Group; and Professor Christopher Andrew, Cambridge University, the leading historian of intelligence. A notable attendee was Carson Eoyang, newly appointed Chancellor of the National Intelligence University.

At the end of the formal sessions, the members went into a business meeting to plan for the coming year. Several issues were discussed and remain under active consideration. These invite wider participation. Those members who reside in broadly defined geographic clusters were urged to form local chapters. There are no formal requirements for chapters other than that everyone be a member of IAFIE and that IAFIE be informed. We envision the chapters as autonomous units who can run local programs while supporting the association's larger goals. The chapters also allow members to stay in touch more regularly throughout the year.

A great deal of time was spent on the issue of professional standards. This remains a key topic for IAFIE. We need to define what it means to be an intelligence professional, again keeping in mind the broad definitions of intelligence that now are operational. This is no different than other professions. Again, to use medicine as an example, all doctors take certain required courses and training but then branch out into specialties in their last year of medical school. But as a profession they will always have a core set of issues in common. This issue is important in and of itself, but it also leads to the issue of intelligence education. What are the core academic expectations of anyone who wants to work in intelligence, regardless of discipline? What would these courses look like? What would be the core readings? Beyond that, what types of education would be required as intelligence professionals begin to branch out into their specific disciplines? The Washington chapter is taking the lead in these issues but volunteers are always welcome.

Where to next? IAFIE expects to have another meeting in Europe early in 2007, perhaps in Vienna. And we will have another annual U.S. meeting, location still to be decided. But over the next several months the key work will be on the professional and education issues highlighted above. And the door is open. IAFIE hopes to engage new members in these important issues. Join us!



International Association for Intelligence Education

www.iafie.org

Telephone: 814-824-2131

Email: info@iafie.org