



# **THE STATE OF PLAY INVOLVING INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES, POLITICS AND ECONOMICS**

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"Crime is what those in power say it is".  
Turk, Austin. 1982. Political Criminality. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, certify that this thesis does incorporate any material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis, I give consent for the photocopying or borrowing of this thesis.

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## INTRODUCTION

This paper will introduce the reader to the relationship between the intelligence community and the policymakers. It will also examine how intelligence gathered by various government agencies can be used to buy votes in democracies like Australia and the United States. Legal interpretations and political ideologies blur the thin line that separates the role of the policymakers and intelligence agencies. Evolution in information technology has seen a vast increase in the use of communication systems by people around the world. It has opened the way to a world of knowledge and made it accessible to people who once could not afford to access that information. The most expensive commodity today is information. It has been referred to as 'electronic oil' and this e-oil flows freely in the communication arteries of cyber space, making it a lifeline to economic markets around the world. Markets that can create or destroy entire countries at the push of a button. These markets make it possible to trade all sorts of commodities faster and at low cost, making it the most efficient way to communicate information. In the communication systems there lies opportunities for uninvited guests to eavesdrop on conversations taking place between traders. Eavesdropping in the communication super-highway has its benefits. The question then arises, what stops governments from using intelligence for short term political gains? As Darwin the famous biologist so rightly put it, "only the fittest will survive". Today the fittest hold the key to accessing that information required to give them a leading edge in the market place, the most precious commodity ever to exist, and they are not ready to share that information. This paper asks the question: Should policymakers use intelligence to directly influence private sector businesses, to grow and compete globally whilst keeping jobs local for the voters who elected the politicians? How can the public be assured that our personal information is not being stolen and used by our political masters to feather their own nest? The way in which governments use intelligence agencies will change in each administration as the intelligence agencies will be subjected to government policies which are a reflection of political ideologies such as economic ideologies, free market, regulated market or a mixture of both. Providing private sector business with intelligence is complicated by the very nature of information itself. Just what kind of information would be supplied remains to be seen. Will the information be raw or analysed, who will analyse it and using what methods. If the argument for providing information to the private sector is providing choice, it begs the question what choice would consumers have if the information supplied to them would have been analysed in a way that favours an economic ideology? Clearly this is not providing choice but control of the market by deception. Economic competitiveness is a significant reason why intelligence agencies exist.

Economic problems arise due to a consequence of change. If things remain the same or move in a way which is expected then new problems don't arise, and so there is no need for reform and new policies. Today change is occurring rapidly, the pace at which technology is advancing is causing more problems than answers. We need not look further than medical science.

Policymakers are struggling to keep up with policies that fit the technology, similarly intelligence agencies are on a continuous path of evolution, driven by policies derived from economic ideologies and technology.

Chapter 2 will provide the reader with a brief overview of the Australian and American intelligence agencies, this information is important because it will provide the background to the roles of the agencies. Here the reader will see the close relationship which exist between the "men in power and their spies" Each agency is responsible for gathering specific information which is fed back to their political masters to help them develop policy. It should be noted that the author has provided more details on Australian than that of the American agencies. The reason lies in the fact that heads of the Australian intelligence agencies very rarely discuss issues pertaining to political matters in public. By knowing the history and the roles of the agencies it is possible to make intuitive appreciations on how the particular agency will react to certain government policies. Chapter 3 explains the role of the policymaker within the intelligence process. Often forgotten or not given the recognition it deserves in literature, policymakers play a vital role from beginning to end. In this paper policymakers consist of individuals who are located with a ministerial office, including the office holder or Minister, in essence this means that policymakers are those individuals who are dedicated to ensuring that the party policies are adhered and implemented. Human nature is most vulnerable when politics mixes with intelligence. Individual personalities are responsible for many political failures as opposed to the political process itself. To this end, chapter 3 will provide the reader with an Australian example where good policy was badly implemented by individuals resulting in the dismissal of a government. Intelligence agencies should form part of the eyes and ears of a nation, they should be apolitical. Problems arise when policymakers influence the intelligence agencies and or their directors.

Chapter 4 discusses whether or not the government should infiltrate the information super-highway to then distribute the information to particular private sector organisations. Economic information is a growth sector within the intelligence community, the combination of economic theories and technology is changing the way the world operates and in many respects the private sector is leading the charge. In democracies, executive, legislative and judicial branches exercise oversight of intelligence agencies and their activities. Intelligence agencies are an arm of the permanent bureaucracies attached to government. In this respect they act according to

policies of the government of the day and in pursuit of objectives relevant to the elected government policies. Should governments have the ability to create policies which encourages and support economic espionage then the agency is to follow. The very nature of the intelligence agencies is that they operate in secret however they must remain accountable for their actions.

Finally Chapter 5 will consider the implication of using economic espionage as a source to level the market playing field. Growing debate is occurring within the United States about using intelligence agencies to directly support private sector business, and Australia could find itself torn between global markets which will not trade with us because of its ability to intercept communications.