The September 11, 2001 Al Qaida terrorist attacks against the World Trade Center and Pentagon brutally taught Americans that our status as the world’s sole superpower does not immunize us against military attack. These attacks resulted in a partial loss in public access to government information as some federal agencies withdrew from their web sites material they regarded as sensitive for national security reasons.

Despite what will probably be the temporary removal of some sensitive national security information from government agency websites, a phenomenal amount of information about governmental national security policy issues, actions, directives, and research remains freely available to Americans on the Internet or in tangible print or microform format in the United States over 1,300 federal depository libraries including those depository collections found in Indiana public or academic libraries. This information is produced by all three branches (executive, legislative, and judicial) of the U.S. Government and by numerous independent agencies. This article will focus primarily on information produced by executive branch agencies such as the Executive Office of the President, the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, the nation’s intelligence agencies, with particular emphasis on the Central Intelligence Agency, Presidential or Congressionally appointed commissions, and the United States Congress and Congressional support agencies.

Print or microform copies of many of these publications can be found in some Indiana federal depository libraries since these libraries have received them from the U.S. Government Printing Office (G.P.O.), which is the agency managing the Federal Depository Library Program (F.D.L.P.). Given the growing influence of the Internet as the pre-eminent means of disseminating federal government information since the middle 1990s and in the interest in promoting expanded librarian and public knowledge of and access to these resources, this article will stress website addresses (e.g. Uniform Resource Locators (URL’s)) for finding these valuable resources produced with our tax dollars.

The U.S. Constitution designates the President as the Commander-in-Chief of the nation’s armed forces. During the twentieth century, Presidential power over the military and other issues has been discharged through the Executive Office of the President (E.O.P.) which represents White House policymaking offices as diverse as the National Security Council (N.S.C.), Office of Homeland Security, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and the President’s Council of Economic Advisors.

The George W. Bush White House website, www.whitehouse.gov, contains a variety of useful national security policy resources. These include the text, video and audio clips of Presidential speeches, Presidential executive orders such as the November 13, 2001 military order permitting military trials of terrorists captured by U.S. military forces. Historical national security information from the Clinton Administration may be found through the National Archives and Record Administration’s capture of all Clinton White House websites, http://search2.nara.gov, and the N.S.C. section of this site is a particularly fruitful information resource with documents such as International Crime Threat Assessment (2000).


Besides the N.S.C., another E.O.P. agency producing national security related information is the Office of Homeland Security created soon after the September 11 attacks. Its website, www.whitehouse.gov/homeland, contains a variety of information sources including homeland security budget proposal documentation, speeches and Congressional testimony by Homeland Security Director Tom Ridge, the text of the bill propos-
ing the creation of a Department of Homeland Security[7], and links to various state government homeland security agency websites including the Indiana Counter-Terrorism and Security Council, www.in.gov/c-tasc.

Another E.O.P. agency producing useful national security information is the Office of Management and Budget (O.M.B.). This agency, currently headed by Indiana native Mitch Daniels, is responsible for preparing the federal government’s proposed budget to Congress, making sure agencies comply with spending objectives, and promoting the President’s budgetary goals[8].

OMB is responsible for preparing many publications with the most important being the annual Budget of the United States Government. This multivolume work contains historical expenditures and current information, as well as future spending projections, for federal departments and agencies down to the level of individual offices and specific federal programs. For instance, it would be possible to track how much any branch of the armed services spent on an individual weapon system such as an artillery rocket, submarine, or jet fighter using the Budget of the United States Government. This federal budget information is accessible at OMB’s website, www.whitehouse.gov/omb.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

The Department of Defense (D.O.D.) is the principal producer of U.S. Government national security information. Its website, www.defenselink.link.mil, provides access to information produced by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, individual D.O.D. units such as the Defense Science Board, and individual branches of the armed services such as the Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps.

Overall, D.O.D. information that can be found at defenselink.mil includes interviews and speeches by Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld and other leading officials and news of D.O.D. and armed services events. The Office of Secretary of Defense website, www.defenselink.mil/osd, provides links to the offices of various Assistant Secretaries of Defense and D.O.D. organizational components such as the Office of Inspector General, which produces reports evaluating individual D.O.D. programs such as Acquisition: V-22 Osprey Hydraulic System (2002).


Numerous D.O.D. reports are legally mandated by Congress as part of annual budgetary authorizations and many of these reports are publicly accessible through defenselink.mil. Examples of such reports include Chemical and Biological Defense Program: Annual Report to Congress (1997-2002) and Quadrennial Defense Review Report (2001) as well as a host of other reports on various aspects of national security policy.

The individual armed service branches produce a wide variety of publicly accessible information on their websites. These sites provide news about ongoing service activities, information on joining these services, historical information, resources from their civilian departmental offices and educational institutions, and information on individual weapons systems. The Air Force website is www.af.mil, the Army website is www.army.mil, the Marine Corps website is www.usmc.mil, and the Navy website is www.navy.mil.


Another useful Air Force academic national security policy information resource is the Air University (A.U.) which is a part of the Air War College located at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. Serving as the Air Force’s principal graduate educational institute, A.U.’s website, www.au.af.mil, is a cornucopia of national security


An additional Army resource for intellectually high quality appraisals and thought provoking analysis of military strategic and operational issues is the Center for Army Lessons Learned (C.A.L.L.) at Fort Leavenworth, KS. C.A.L.L. analyzes data from current and historical Army operations and training exercises and produces research to apply lessons from these events to ongoing Army needs.


Newport, Rhode Island’s Naval War College is the navy’s principal graduate institution and a variety of useful resources are accessible through its website, www.nwc.navy.mil. Material accessible here includes course descriptions and some course syllabi, news about college events, the scholarly journal Naval War College Review, and monographic works such as International Environmental Law and Naval War: The Effect of Marine Safety and Pollution Conventions During International Armed Conflict (2000) and Asia and the Pacific: U.S. Strategic Traditions and Regional Realities (2001).


DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

The U.S. Department of Energy (D.O.E.) has numerous national security policy responsibilities including nuclear energy research and production and maintenance of the U.S.’s nuclear weapons arsenal, analyzing national security policy implications of energy commodities such as petroleum, coal, and nuclear energy, and reporting on and assessing the energy resources and policies of the U.S. and other countries. Many resources are accessible through D.O.E.’s website, www.energy.gov, and by D.O.E.’s component organizational units.

D.O.E.’s website includes general energy policy documents such as the Bush Administration’s National Energy Policy Development Group report Reliable, Affordable, and Environmentally Sound Energy for America’s Future (2001) which seeks to sculpt national energy policy.

The National Nuclear Security Administration, www.nnsa.doe.gov, is responsible for maintaining the security of U.S. nuclear weapons, promoting international nuclear safety and nuclear weapons nonproliferation. Its website features the testimony of N.N.S.A. officials before Congressional oversight committees and specific reports such as Report to Congress on the Organization and Operations of the National Nuclear Safety Administration (2002).

Information on various U.S. efforts to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction including nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons can be found at D.O.E.’s Center for International Threat Reduction, http://citri.y12.doe.gov. Detailed information about various aspects of U.S. national security policy can also be found on the websites of the various laboratories D.O.E. administers to conduct research on nuclear weapons and other scientific and technological subjects with national security implications. Examples of these laboratories and their websites include the Argonne National Laboratory near Chicago, www.anl.gov, the Los Alamos National Laboratory in Los Alamos, New Mexico, www.lanl.gov/worldview, and the Sandia National Laboratory in Albuquerque, New Mexico, www.sandia.gov. Additional information on D.O.E. nuclear research activities may be found through its Nuclear Explosion Monitoring Research and Engineering Program (N.E.M.R&E.) website, www.nemre.nn.doe.gov/nemre.

D.O.E. headquarters offices in Washington producing national security policy information include the Energy Information Administration (E.I.A.), www.eia.doe.gov, and the Office of Inspector General, www.ig.doe.gov. E.I.A. is D.O.E.’s statistical agency and it publishes a variety of statistical and analytical reports on U.S. and foreign energy trends and policy developments. E.I.A.’s Country Analysis Briefs provide detailed yet succinct coverage of individual countries energy reserves and governmental policies and other regular E.I.A. publications such as International Energy Annual provide detailed documentation and analysis of energy issues in text, charts, and graphs.

D.O.E.’s Office of Inspector General (O.I.G.) is responsible for evaluating the performance of D.O.E. programs[9]. It issues numerous reports for Congress on these programs and many of these reports cover D.O.E.’s administration of various national security related programs and policies. Examples of these reports that are accessible on the O.I.G.’s website include Accounting for Sealed Sources of Nuclear Material Provided to Foreign Countries (2002) and Personnel Security Clearances and Badge Access Controls at Department Headquarters (2002).

INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES

U.S. intelligence agencies are also valuable sources of national security policy information. Although the preponderance of information gathered by U.S. intelligence agency technologies and personnel must remain secret for national security reasons, a significant amount of this information is publicly accessible through these agency websites or in print format at depository libraries.

The Central Intelligence Agency (C.I.A.) is the principal U.S. Government intelligence agency. Its website www.odci.gov provides links to publications produced by the overall C.I.A. and by C.I.A. component organizations such as the Directorate of Intelligence, Center for the Study of Intelligence, Electronic Freedom of Information Act site, and National Intelligence Council. These sites provide reports on historical, current, and projected future intelligence and national security policy issues that have influenced, are influencing, and may influence the formulation and conduct of U.S. national security policy.


Another important U.S. intelligence agency is the Defense Intelligence Agency (D.I.A.). D.I.A.’s responsibilities, according to a 1981 executive order from
President Ronald Reagan, include collecting, providing, and coordinating military intelligence for the Secretary of Defense, Joint Chiefs of Staff and other defense components, and coordinating D.O.D. intelligence collection requirements[10].


The National Security Agency (N.S.A.) is the primary U.S. cryptology agency focusing on giving U.S. policymakers and war-fighters intelligence information obtained from code breaking activities and preventing U.S. signals and information systems from being exploited by foreign adversaries[11].

It’s highly sensitive work precludes major public dissemination by N.S.A. of its data gathering on its website, www.NSA.gov. There has been improvement in the amount of current information N.S.A. releases publicly on its website such as New Enterprise Team (NETeam) Recommendations: The Directors Work Plan for Change (1999) and material on computer security. N.S.A.’s website provides access to significant historic material on agency intelligence activities such as reports on Project Venona during World War II covering Soviet intelligence operations in the U.S., and Korean War era publications such as The Korean War: The Sigint Background (2000) and N.S.A. Korean War 1950-1953 Commemoration (2000).

GOVERNMENT COMMISSIONS

Governmental commissions are also useful national security policy information resources. These commissions can be appointed by the President or by Congress to issue reports containing recommendations for resolving problems with various public policy issues and last for limited life spans such as a year or two before their legal authorization expires. Whether commission recommendations are followed and enacted into law or governmental policy is another matter. Membership of these commissions generally consists of experts from all branches of the federal government, state or local government officials, and recognized authorities on this subject from academia, businesses, and nonprofit organizations[12].

There have been a number of recent governmental commission reports on national security policy reports and some of these reports are Internet accessible. An important series of national security policy reports were produced by the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century chaired by former Senators Gary Hart (D-CO) and Warren Rudman (R-NH). Known as the Hart-Rudman Commission, this commission’s reports including Seeking A National Strategy: A Concert For


Another recent commission report on national security policy covered the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO). This branch of the C.I.A. is responsible for gathering intelligence information through satellite photography of intelligence assets in other countries. A recently produced report containing recommendations on NRO’s future Report of the National Commission for the Review of the National Reconnaissance Office: The NRO at the Crossroads (2000) can be found at https://www.space.gov/commission/nro.pdf.


Concern over growing national security assertiveness by China prompted Congressional establishment of a U.S-China Security Review Commission in 2000[13]. The Commission’s website, www.uscc.gov, contains a variety of information resources including its Annual Report to Congress (2002), the text of papers contracted for by the commission, and meeting transcripts. The Advisory Panel to Assess Domestic Response Capabilities for Terrorism Involving Weapons of Mass Destruction is a final example of a recent governmental commission addressing a national security policy issue. Chaired by former Virginia Governor James Gilmore (R), this commission’s activities and three annual reports to Congress are available through the website of the Rand Corporation, a noted national security policy oriented research center, at www.rand.org/nsrd/terrpanel.

CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES

The U.S. Congress plays an important role in formulating national security policy. According to the U.S. Constitution, Congress is responsible for appropriating and borrowing money, declaring war, and supporting and maintaining U.S. military forces[14]. In furtherance of its constitutional mandates in these national security policy areas, individual Representatives and Senators and Congressional oversight committees will introduce bills and produce legislative and policymaking reports
on national security related issues such as military aid to foreign countries, officer promotion, weapons system procurement, and overall defense expenditures.

Congressional committees will also conduct hearings investigating the performance of various military programs. Witnesses testifying at these hearings include government officials, experts from businesses, universities, and research institutes, and even average citizens who can submit written statements and reports into hearing transcripts. These hearings produce voluminous quantities of information reflecting divergent viewpoints on national security issues which are publicly accessible through printed hearing and report transcripts, web versions of many of these publications, and, in some cases audio and video webcasts.

While there are specific Congressional committees conducting oversight of U.S. military forces and defense spending, the subject of national security policy is so interdisciplinary that additional Congressional committees have jurisdictional coverage over national security issues. This scope of Congressional national security policy coverage may increase further if legislation creating a Department of Homeland Security introduced during summer 2002 receives Congressional and Presidential approval[15].

This selective description of Congressional committees examining national security policy begins with the House Armed Services Committee. Indiana members of this committee include Representatives Baron Hill (D) and John Hostettler (R). Recent publications produced by this committee and its subcommittees include *Missile Defense Programs and Policy* (2001), *Patterns of Global Terrorism and Threats to the United States* (2001), and *Security Against Terrorism on U.S. Military Bases* (2001). The committee’s website, www.house.gov/hasc, provides information on Armed Services Committee activities including audio webcasts of selected hearings.


Resources such as these can be found on the committee’s website www.house.gov/reform which also features information on ongoing committee activities.

The House Select Homeland Security Committee created in 2002 is also becoming a useful resource for those studying national security policies. Its website, http://hsch.house.gov, contains information about Congressional bill H.R. 5005 which would establish a Department of Homeland Security, the opening statements of witnesses appearing at committee hearings, and information about upcoming committee hearings. The House Select Intelligence Committee conducts oversight over federal intelligence agencies and included former Indiana Rep. Tim Roemer (D) among its members. Examples of publicly accessible publications produced by this committee and its subcommittees include *IC 21: Intelligence Community in the 21st Century* (1996), *Protecting the Homeland from Asymmetric/Unconventional Threats* (2001), and *Counterterrorism Intelligence Capabilities and Performance Prior to 9-11* (2002). Current information for this committee may be found at http://intelligence.house.gov, while information produced by this committee during 1997-1998 can be found at www.access.gpo.gov/congress/house/house22.html.

U.S. Senate committees are also important national security policy information producers. The Senate Armed Services Committee is the most important of these committees and its responsibilities, unlike those of its House of Representatives counterpart, includes confirming Presidential nominations such as the Secretary of Defense[16].


The Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, like its counterpart the House Government Reform Committee, is responsible for overseeing the management performance of federal agency programs. This committee’s Subcommittee on International Security, Proliferation, and Federal Services conducts numerous national security related hearings which are published and available for public consumption.

Some of these hearings include *Iran’s Ballistic Missiles and Weapons of Mass Destruction Programs*
that CRS give primary support of to members of Congress and Congressional staff. This has the practical effect of restricting public access to these reports even though they are financed through tax dollars. Some members of Congress would like for this to change and for CRS reports to be publicly accessible on the Internet. Senators John McCain (R-AZ) and Patrick Leahy (D-VT) introduced S. Res. 21 on February 14, 2001 calling for the Senate Sergeant-at-Arms to Provide Internet access to CRS publications but no significant action on this legislation had occurred as of July 2002.

Although CRS does not provide Internet access to its reports some members of Congress, one government agency, and selected private organizations provide access to many CRS reports including those covering aspects of national security policy. Sites where CRS reports can be found include Rep. Christopher Shays (R-CT), www.house.gov.shays/CRS/CRSProducts.htm, the State Department’s Foreign Press Center is at http://fpc.state.gov/c4763.htm, and the Federation of American Scientists website is www.fas.org/man/crs.


CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT AGENCIES

In addition to committees with professionally trained staff to assist Congress in its work, there are three principal Congressional support agencies providing members of Congress with professional expertise on various public policy issues. These three organizations are the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), the Library of Congress’ Congressional Research Service (CRS), and the General Accounting Office (GAO). Each of these organizations produces national security policy publications that are publicly accessible although those produced by CRS require indirect means of access to locate.


CRS is Congress’ in-house research arm producing unbiased analytical reports on public policy reports for members of Congress. Its authorizing statute directs

The Senate Select Intelligence Committee conducts oversight hearings on intelligence agency operations and is responsible for confirming Presidential nominations to key policymaking positions such as the Director of Central Intelligence who heads the C.I.A. Indiana Senators Richard Lugar (R) and Evan Bayh (D) are members of this committee. Publicly available works released by this committee include Loss of National Security Information at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (2001) and Current and Projected Security Threats to the United States (2001). Information about selected committee activities may be found at its website http://intelligence.senate.gov and the following U.S. Government Printing Office (G.P.O.) website, www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/congress/senate/senate23.html, provides access to selected committee publications from 1997-2000.

Although CRS does not provide Internet access to its reports some members of Congress, one government agency, and selected private organizations provide access to many CRS reports including those covering aspects of national security policy. Sites where CRS reports can be found include Rep. Christopher Shays (R-CT), www.house.gov.shays/CRS/CRSProducts.htm, the State Department’s Foreign Press Center is at http://fpc.state.gov/c4763.htm, and the Federation of American Scientists website is www.fas.org/man/crs.


G.P.O. ACCESS

G.P.O. Access, www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs, is produced by the Government Printing Office (G.P.O.) and provides one-stop access to the U.S. Government’s major legal, legislative, and regulatory information resources. Those interested in national security policy can use G.P.O. Access to find the text of laws on military weapons purchase contracts in the *United States Code*, see the text of the latest defense spending law, read and track the status of Congressional bills in G.P.O. Access’ Congressional bills section, read House and Senate Congressional committee reports on legislation, consult the *Code of Federal Regulations* to find how much titanium is required in an Air Force bomber, or read the *Federal Register* to learn about proposed regulations for possible transportation of chemicals from the Army’s chemical weapons storage depot in Newport by logging onto G.P.O. Access.

Although not a government web site, those interested in national security policy and other governmental or political issues will benefit from using the Cable Systems Public Affairs Network (C-SPAN) website, www.c-span.org. C-SPAN’s website is an excellent information resource and provides webcasts of many of its programs in Real Player format.

CONCLUSION

Hopefully, this essay will prove a good introduction to the rich variety of publicly accessible national security policy information resources provided by U.S. Government agency websites or in print publications available at many federal depository libraries. National security policy is an extremely diverse and interdisciplinary subject that defies easy categorization. It includes what most people would regard as obvious characteristics of this topic such as war, fighting, killing, death, and individual weapons systems. However, its reach covers fields as diverse as budgetary spending, material acquisition and procurement, judicial procedure, governmental appropriations, environmental contamination and remediation, state of the art technological research. Also included are the most savage and noblest aspects of human nature, political courage and expediency, international political planning and strategy, as well as attempting to understand divergent national, regional, and religious cultural worldviews, terrorism, information warfare, arms control, and a plethora of normative, philosophical, historical, economic, political, and military issues. National security is too often a subject surrounded in mystery and, unfortunately, is often the target of paranoid and conspiratorial speculation since many aspects of it are necessarily shrouded for justifiable reasons of national security. Nevertheless, it is a subject that is good for Americans to be informed about and, hopefully, they’ll seek to take advantage of the rich array of government information resources that are available on this subject to enhance their understanding of national security and how national security policy has, is, and may be conducted by the U.S. Government during the opening years of the 21st century.

NOTES

[1] See American Library Association, Office of Government Relations, “Less Access to Less Information,” www.alawash/lessaccess.html; and OMB Watch, “Access to Government Information Post September 11,” www.ombwatch.org/article/archive/104 for ongoing coverage of post-September 11 government information access issues. Readers should note that the organizations presenting these perspectives represent advocacy organizations whose personnel have little, if any, substantive understanding or professional experience dealing with the operational, political, and ethical issues faced by governmental policymakers entrusted with protecting national security and the security of information resources needed to protect national security.


[14] See Article 1 Section 8 Clause 1 of the United States Constitution for Congressional power to provide for the common defense; United States Constitution Article 1 Section 8 Clause 2 for Congressional borrowing authority; and United States Constitution Article 1 Section 8 Clauses 11-18 for Congressional war declaration authority, military funding authority, and military legal and regulatory authority.


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