

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE  
WASHINGTON, DC 20511

NOV 05 2012

The Honorable Peter T. King  
Chairman  
Committee on Homeland Security  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman King:

Thank you for your letter of October 8, 2012, regarding the possible disclosure to members of the media of sensitive intelligence pertaining to the terrorist attacks on the U.S. Consulate and Annex in Benghazi, Libya. I am responding for myself and on behalf of Director Petraeus.

Neither the Office of the Director of National Intelligence nor the Central Intelligence Agency Public Affairs Offices provided Dr. Leslie Gelb with an intelligence briefing pertaining to these attacks.

We agree that this is a very serious matter and it has been referred to the appropriate staff for follow-up action. Our normal process for investigating such incidents begins with a preliminary inquiry to determine: (1) if the article in question contained classified information, (2) if the classified information has been publicly disclosed before, (3) the source material from which the classified information was derived, and (4) the agency that produced the source material. The results of the preliminary inquiry will inform the decision process as to whether the matter warrants referral to the Department of Justice for criminal investigation.

Once the preliminary inquiry has been completed and reviewed, we will be in a better position to respond to the questions in your letter. This will allow us to provide you with answers that are as complete and accurate as possible without awaiting the results of a full security or criminal investigation. As you will appreciate, full investigations occasionally identify facts that differ from those resulting from preliminary inquiries. We share and appreciate your concern over the damage caused by leaks to the media and will notify your office regarding the final disposition of this matter.

Sincerely,

  
James R. Clapper

cc: David H. Petraeus  
Director, CIA