

Gates Takes Over as Director of CIA

At Swearing-In Ceremony, Bush Vows to Keep Intelligence Strong

By George Lardner Jr.
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Robert M. Gates took over as director of central intelligence yesterday with a promise to "move forward boldly" but in a spirit of cooperation with CIA personnel who may be apprehensive about his appointment.

"We face a period of dramatic change," Gates said at swearing-in ceremonies in the bubble-topped auditorium at CIA headquarters. "No one person has all the answers, or the best ideas, on questions affecting our future.

"As we meet these challenges," Gates added, "we must do so as a team, involving our greatest asset, our people, in shaping this new future. We will move forward boldly, but with the interests and needs of our people as a top priority."

President Bush, who attended the ceremony, said in opening remarks that he intended to keep U.S. intelligence capabilities strong despite the end of the Cold War and that he is confident Gates will be "a very strong and effective manager" in making the transition to "the complex problems of the 21st century."

"Our world without the Cold War confrontation is a safer world," Bush said, "but it is no garden of Eden. . . . Intelligence remains our basic national instrument for antic-

ipating danger—military, political and economic."

Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor administered the oath of office. Gates, 48, was confirmed by the Senate last week by a vote of 64 to 31, ending a six-month fight over the nomination that centered on his candor with Congress about the Iran-contra scandal and his handling of intelligence analyses as a high-ranking CIA official in the 1980s.

He drew laughter yesterday in referring to the prolonged nomination struggle. "Twenty-six weeks ago today, the president announced his intention to nominate me," Gates said. "In the interval, the entire Soviet empire has collapsed."

As deputy director for intelligence and later as deputy CIA director, Gates had a reputation for a brusque managerial style that intimidated subordinates and inhibited dissent. Some of his critics at the confirmation hearings said they feared for the agency's morale if he were returned to Langley as director.

Evidently seeking to allay those fears in his brief remarks, Gates said the country was strong and its foreign policy of the past two generations was triumphant "in some substantial part because of the efforts and successes of the men and women of American intelligence. . . .

"We have always aspired here to be more than a team—to be a family," Gates said. "I hope this sense of family, with all that that implies, can be strengthened in the time ahead."

Gates also said at his confirmation hearings that the streamlining and the budget-cutting that lies ahead will be "painful." The \$30 billion U.S. intelligence budget could be reduced by as much as \$10 billion over the next few years, some sources report.

According to one former high-ranking CIA official, apprehensions at Langley are strongest in senior ranks, especially among the more than 800 highly paid "supergrade" officers of the senior intelligence service.

In plotting a course for the future, Gates has said he would ask the White House for a crash study "to determine the intelligence needs of the United States for the next decade or more, to the year 2005."

Among the changes he envisioned at his confirmation hearings were a dramatic expansion of clandestine human intelligence collection efforts, a goal reiterated by Bush yesterday; a decline in covert paramilitary actions around the world and better, but fewer, intelligence analyses for U.S. policymakers.