

25 November 2008

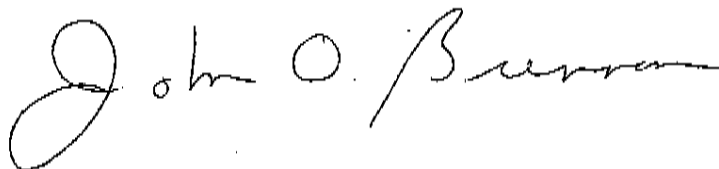
Dear President-Elect Barack Obama:

I am honored to have been involved in leading your Transition Team for the Intelligence Community, and I am deeply committed to ensuring that your Administration is well prepared to deal with the many challenges facing our Nation. My transition responsibilities have led to speculation that I am under consideration for a senior intelligence position in your Administration. Quite unfortunately, this speculation has led to strong criticism in some quarters prompted by my previous service with the Central Intelligence Agency.

It has been immaterial to the critics that I have been a strong opponent of many of the policies of the Bush Administration such as the preemptive war in Iraq and coercive interrogation tactics, to include waterboarding. The fact that I was not involved in the decisionmaking process for any of these controversial policies and actions has been ignored. Indeed, my criticism of these policies within government circles was the reason why I was twice considered for more senior-level positions in the current Administration only to be rebuffed by the White House.

I am extremely proud of my 25 year-record of intelligence work, and I am prouder still of the courageous and heroic work performed by the women and men of the CIA over the past 60 years. The Nation owes its CIA officers a tremendous debt of gratitude for the sacrifices they have made for their country, and they deserve strong and steady leadership in the years ahead.

Therefore, it is with profound regret that I respectfully ask that my name be withdrawn from consideration for a position within the Intelligence Community. The challenges ahead of our Nation are too daunting, and the role of the CIA too critical, for there to be any distraction from the vital work that lays ahead.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "John O. Brennan". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned at the bottom of the letter.