

equipping Predators with warheads, Clarke became even more enthusiastic about redeployment.²³⁷

The CTC chief, Cofer Black, argued against deploying the Predator for reconnaissance purposes. He recalled that the Taliban had spotted a Predator in the fall of 2000 and scrambled their MiG fighters. Black wanted to wait until the armed version was ready. "I do not believe the possible recon value outweighs the risk of possible program termination when the stakes are raised by the Taliban parading a charred Predator in front of CNN," he wrote. Military officers in the Joint Staff shared this concern.²³⁸ There is some dispute as to whether or not the Deputies Committee endorsed resuming reconnaissance flights at its April 30, 2001, meeting. In any event, Rice and Hadley ultimately went along with the CIA and the Pentagon, holding off on reconnaissance flights until the armed Predator was ready.²³⁹

The CIA's senior management saw problems with the armed Predator as well, problems that Clarke and even Black and Allen were inclined to minimize. One (which also applied to reconnaissance flights) was money. A Predator cost about \$3 million. If the CIA flew Predators for its own reconnaissance or covert action purposes, it might be able to borrow them from the Air Force, but it was not clear that the Air Force would bear the cost if a vehicle went down. Deputy Secretary of Defense Wolfowitz took the position that the CIA should have to pay for it; the CIA disagreed.²⁴⁰

Second, Tenet in particular questioned whether he, as Director of Central Intelligence, should operate an armed Predator. "This was new ground," he told us. Tenet ticked off key questions: What is the chain of command? Who takes the shot? Are America's leaders comfortable with the CIA doing this, going outside of normal military command and control? Charlie Allen told us that when these questions were discussed at the CIA, he and the Agency's executive director, A. B. "Buzzy" Krongard, had said that either one of them would be happy to pull the trigger, but Tenet was appalled, telling them that they had no authority to do it, nor did he.²⁴¹

Third, the Hellfire warhead carried by the Predator needed work. It had been built to hit tanks, not people. It needed to be designed to explode in a different way, and even then had to be targeted with extreme precision. In the configuration planned by the Air Force through mid-2001, the Predator's missile would not be able to hit a moving vehicle.²⁴²

White House officials had seen the Predator video of the "man in white." On July 11, Hadley tried to hurry along preparation of the armed system. He directed McLaughlin, Wolfowitz, and Joint Chiefs Vice Chairman Richard Myers to deploy Predators capable of being armed no later than September 1. He also directed that they have cost-sharing arrangements in place by August 1. Rice told us that this attempt by Hadley to dictate a solution had failed and that she eventually had to intervene herself.²⁴³

On August 1, the Deputies Committee met again to discuss the armed