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PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

Admiral Stansfield Turner

at the Harvard Club of Washington, D.C.

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Q: [Inaudible]. I'd just like to ask you if you can tell us how much of your effort is covert operations. Not -- without giving any secrets away.

And secondly, the thing that's bothering me is covert operations seem to have distracted the CIA from its primary mission, which I've always understood to be intelligence gathering.

And perhaps you could elaborate on that.

ADMIRAL STANSFIELD TURNER: Covert operations, to be sure we're all using the terminology the same, are efforts to influence events in a foreign country. And that really is not intelligence. Intelligence is gathering and understanding information, data about what's going on in foreign countries.

But the Central Intelligence Agency has been designated, from the beginning, as the element of the government that would conduct covert operations, that would try to influence events in foreign countries, if the country wanted to do so.

Those covert operations, I would add, are under very tight control, both by law and by executive directive. The President must personally agree to them, and I must then notify up to eight committees of the Congress of what we're doing. And so there isn't much that sneaks through the cracks.

I can't tell you how much of the agency's effort in the past was really designated for covert action. I get different answers when I probe into that, and it's hard to measure, of course, in a quantitative way. I can assure you that today it's a very small percentage. It takes some of my time and some of our staff's time, and we do do covert action today and we have a capability to do more if the country wants it. We don't determine that. The President, the National Security Council do.

It's my personal opinion that we must maintain a covert action capability. We must be equipped to do this kind of thing in the future. But in the two years I have been here, I have not seen many opportunities that looked very promising to me in the climate that exists in the world today and with the policies of this country and its attitudes toward its international responsibilities today.

There are many things that we could do in the past that you really can't do today. For instance, helping a democratically inclined politician with his campaign in a foreign country where his opponent is being funded by a Communist country. Many of

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those politicians that we funded in the past wouldn't want the money today, for fear it would leak out and it would be against them rather than for them, or something.

So, it's my personal view that we're not missing many opportunities today; there aren't as many there. But I wouldn't want to predict that in two, three, five years some of those opportunities wouldn't be here. And I want to be ready to fulfill them at that time.

Today, it does not, I believe, interfere with our activities in any substantial way.

Q: My question has to do with the collection of foreign political intelligence from open sources, pretty much open sources, and in manners which are legal in most countries. I've read in the paper criticisms of the CIA for alleged failures to warn the government of what was going to happen in Iran. And it seems to me that much of that intelligence was the sort that traditionally was gathered by the ambassador and the State Department.

And I wonder if you would like to comment and explain the relationship between the intelligence gathering of the CIA and the information gathering that is within the province of the State Department.

ADMIRAL TURNER: That's a very fine comment.

Can you all hear that in the back? I'll repeat questions if you raise your hands back there if you can't hear them.

A very astute question. When you usually say something like that, it means that I'm trying to think of the answer.

[Laughter]

ADMIRAL TURNER: Seriously, the State Department always has been and today is one of the major inputs to our information bank here. They share with us the reporting, clearly, of the ambassadors and others overseas. So do other departments of the government. It would be a crime for the government to have information and not make it available where needed.

The degree of coordination between the Central Intelligence Agency and the State Department has, I think, improved markedly in the last several years, and we've made a major effort in that direction, and it is a good relationship today.

You can now look back on Iran and say were we, between us; and between the Commerce Department, that has interests of a commercial nature in Iran; the Treasury Department, that has

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connections over there in the financial field; and so on: Were we all picking up the right nuggets of information, many of them, as you suggest, available totally openly, I think the answer is no, we weren't, as a country; that we hadn't focused on this over a period of five or six or eight years, probably. And, clearly, we're going to pay more attention to that kind of thing.

We were talking here, in Iran, about not military, not strictly economic, and in large measure not even what we normally consider political data -- that is, the process that the government was going through. What we needed to be looking for more was the social, cultural, religious trends in the country.

And just in passing, if I had stood up to an audience two or three years ago around this city and said I was going to go spy on some religious organizations around the world, I think I'd have a lot of tomatoes, probably. Attitudes change over time.

Seriously, predicting, socio-political trends and changes like this one are the most difficult part of our job. It's a lot more difficult than economic or military intelligence, where you have some hard data, some statistics, some pictures, and other things that you can deal with.

We'd like to have done better in this case. Most of the information necessary was available on the open market. I don't know anyone else who came out and really pulled it all together. It's tough. We're going to try harder.

Q: What's the likely impact of the situation in Iran on the Middle East negotiations?

ADMIRAL TURNER: The likely impact of the situation in Iran on the Middle East negotiations, the Camp David accords?

Well, we certainly all have our fingers crossed for the new Camp David meeting on the 21st Secretary Vance will chair with the foreign ministers of Egypt and Israel. Clearly, if you look at the Iranian situation, which destabilizes the overall Middle East picture, you have to be concerned as to whether it will make either of those parties more nervous about entering into such an agreement.

On the other hand, I think both of them and the countries around them will perceive that the need for resolving this historic problem between Israel and her Arab neighbors is even more urgent, is even more necessary when we have this unstable situation, ranging from martial law in Turkey to near chaos today in Iran to the terrible situation, with our ambassador murdered yesterday, in Afghanistan and a very Communist-oriented government in Afghanistan. That whole arc of the world is in danger, it's in danger of Communist penetration. And one

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hopes that that will make people appreciate the resolving of this other long-standing problem, so that people can turn their attention to this external threat to the region, will help carry the day on the 21st and thereafter.

Q: I want to turn back to covert action again. How closely do these congressional committees insist on examining these covert actions that you have to inform them about before you undertake them? And has there ever been an occasion when the National Security Council would have undertaken a covert action but did not do so because of the necessity of informing committees? And do you get any feel from the people on Capitol Hill that such detailed oversight may be counterproductive to our national security?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Can you hear that? How much detail do we go into in covert action when informing the congressional committees? Are there times when the National Security Council will not go ahead with a covert action because of having to inform it? And do I get a feeling from Capitol Hill that perhaps it's not in the national interest, sometimes, to disclose this information?

It's a very delicate issue because I'm charged by law, personally, to protect our sources of collecting intelligence information and our methods, these technical systems. That is, to prevent other powers from learning who and how we collect our information. And it's a responsibility I have to take very, very seriously. People's lives depend on it. Very expensive collection systems can be compromised and made much greater -- lesser utility to our country if we give away their characteristics.

The Congress has been very helpful and understanding here. When we inform them of covert actions, we have to draw a very fine line between exposing these sources and methods and putting people's lives and expensive systems at risk.

I'm confident, and I think they would affirm this, that they get very adequate information to conduct their oversight. I'm also comfortable, and I have to be comfortable because I have to sleep at night with these decisions, that I'm not giving away more than I think is in the national interest here.

But in all candor to your second question I haven't seen an instance where we've actually, in the National Security Council, said, "No, we don't do this because of the possibility of exposure through a congressional reporting requirement." But that wouldn't come up that way. It would be cut off, probably, before it got there.

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And, yes, there are instances in which that consideration has to play. And I think it plays primarily when there is a partisan political issue involved here, as opposed to just keeping a national secret.

It's a very delicate area, but I'm comfortable at the moment that we haven't lost anything of great significance to the country that isn't compensated by the benefits of the accountability that comes from this reporting.

Q: Admiral, my question concerns the intelligence capabilities of our allies, which you haven't mentioned and which aren't mentioned very frequently.

Two questions: Are they going through developments that are comparable to the kind you've described here at the CIA? And secondly, to what extent do they supplement our knowledge? Take a case like Iran. They also appear to not have picked up the nuggets you described.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, there's a lot behind that question, and I don't want to take all night on it, because it's a very important one.

They, the other intelligence activities of this world, are not able to follow all the things that we and the Soviets do. It's too expensive to be in the full panoply of intelligence today. Not everybody can have satellites and big signals intelligence posts, and so on.

So, our allies, while making a major contribution to us in their limited spheres, are very dependent upon us because only we can provide satellite photography or things like this. So we have a good relationship.

Some of them are worried about the degree of unwanted exposure that we get. I haven't found that inhibiting at this stage. I would be worried if it continues too long.

But I think a part of your question is: are they going through some of these same changes? And, yes, many of them are. In several European countries, this oversight process is being established. The Germans have a Bundestag committee that oversees their intelligence now. The Italians have moved intelligence out from just in the military to in the Prime Minister's office. It's a process that is evolving.

I believe we are developing in this country a model, a uniquely American model for intelligence that the Free World, the democratic countries will all be progressing toward in the years ahead; that we are setting the pace, and how we do it over the next four or five years will be very important. not

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only to us, but to them.

Q: Admiral, in your judgment, have there been a significant number of leaks which can be directly -- which are a direct result of the expanded oversight function of the Congress?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No. No. I don't -- I don't think that's been a major factor. I think there have been some leaks. But I would confess to you, I think there are leaks from right here in this building, too. And I don't point fingers at anybody. My motto is, "Clean up your own house on the leak situation," and I tell that to the other people. I say, "Now, when I tell you I'd like you to clean up yours, don't tell me mine is dirty. I'm doing your best. Now, you take care of yours."

And that's the only way you can get at this thing, is each guy has got to take his little piece of it and try hard.

Q: ...remarks about [unintelligible] recruiting. I was wondering if you might comment about whether the political events in the late '60s and early '70s affected your recruiting efforts much, and how you stand today on bringing in a new generation of people.

ADMIRAL TURNER: You're going to get me onto some dangerous territory here, because when I answer this question, I usually say I'm very pleased and proud of the young people of our country because the recruiting applications have not gone down, even in the height of the criticism, except in the Ivy League. And we don't get the Harvard and Yale and Princeton applicants today that we used to. And I'm disappointed in that.

But we do get the quality and the quantity of applicants that we've always had. And in some instances the applications are higher than ever before. Last May we put an ad in The New York Times and we were swamped with 2 1/2 times as many applicants that month as we'd ever had.

Yes, ma'am.

Q: I'm interested about the career structure. And you mentioned that you were looking for new leaders from the future generation. And what I was wondering was, is it easy for people to move in and out of the CIA? Do you expect that people will be recruited into the CIA and then have their whole career within it? Or can people move easily in and out from other agencies...

ADMIRAL TURNER: A very good question.

We have three distinct activities out here, in a sort of oversimplified sense, anyway. We have Dr. Bowie's research

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department, analysis, assessment. And it's very much like research, as I think Fred mentioned, on a university campus. And, yes, you can move in and out of that, as you can any research organization. And we encourage that. We certainly want a very substantial career cadre to have a corporate memory and to carry on the basic work. But we also feel that, as in any research organization, you need outside stimulus to come in. And we do that partly by consultants, we do it partly by encouraging some lateral entry at different levels.

And I think a lot of scholars, in particular, find it exciting to come here for two or three or four or five years, and then go on back to other pursuits.

Our second activity involves this technical intelligence, and it's a very scientific one: inventing and running very complicated technical systems. And here again, we can and do encourage movement in and out, because the skills are, you know, basic scientific skills.

In our human intelligence, clandestine activity, no, we don't find a lot of room for bringing people and teaching them to know all the arts of this trade at the higher levels. It's a very demanding professional experience that you almost have to grow up with. And so there's very little lateral entry there.

Q: The southern African countries represent a particularly volatile region, where there are a number of independence movements, and the possibility of East-West confrontation also. It strikes me that this is a particularly difficult area to gather intelligence in. And I wonder, given the experience of Iran behind us, can you say anything about whether in this part of the world we are taking steps to gather adequate intelligence about what is going on?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes, I think we are. But I don't want to appear complacent. Long before the Iranian thing bubbled over, we had been putting more emphasis on collecting information in Africa. President Carter has put more attention, I think, on Africa than in many years. And we've had to try to respond in addition.

Just as the question that was down here in the front, much of that is either open information or easily available from State Department sources, and so on.

But, again, we're trying to make sure that we're bringing that together well.

Q: On the subject of leaks, that you mentioned, harmful to the national security that might reach our adversaries through

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the media, do you think there's need for any new legislation or controls along the line of the British Official Secrets Act? It hasn't been popular to talk about that in recent times in Washington, but I would just like to hear what you have to say about that.

ADMIRAL TURNER: I don't favor a British Official Secrets Act, which even in Britain is being challenged. It's one of these changes that I was mention -- I didn't mention, but it was related to these others about how are the other intelligence agencies faring today. That's a little too sweeping.

But I do favor some more restricted legislation that, in particular, would take people who have accepted the obligation of retaining secrets by virtue of their having applied for and obtained employment with us, and have some penalties if they don't follow that.

And today, if somebody goes out of here and passes out information and doesn't give it to a foreign power, just to a newspaper, I'm powerless.

We have taken Mr. Frank Snepp to trial for violation of his secrecy agreement, not as a criminal matter, but as a matter of failing to carry out a contract. And we have won that case, but it's in the appellate procedures right now and we're waiting to see if that s upheld, and certainly hope it will be.

So, that's a small step in the right direction, but we need something with more teeth, I think, for the people who have accepted that obligation.

There's a very close tie here with the freedom of the press in our country, and we don't advocate getting into a position where if the press doesn't disclose who told them that, the press goes to jail, because that would cause all kinds of problems.

Q: Admiral, how much does the normalization of relations with Mainland China present a new problem for the agency?

ADMIRAL TURNER: How does the normalization of relations with China present a new problem to us?

Well, we've had very little contact with China since 1949. And now, with many Chinese coming to this country, with many more Americans going to China. I think the total national consciousness and knowledge of China is going to increase. And I think that's sort of this unclassified basic foundation on which we all need to work and understand. And I think it's going to help us a great deal in just plain understanding China. And we need to do that more. We need to be able to recognize what

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direction China is going.

You can tell that in the United States by walking down the street and listening to the radio and the television, and so on, and reading the newspapers. But we've been totally blocked out of that kind of atmosphere from China. Having many more people from that country here, and vice versa, is going to help us in this basic foundation.

Q: You mentioned Frank Snepp, taking Mr. Snepp to court. As I understand Mr. Snepp's book, it was unauthorized, it was not cleared with the agency. Yet, apparently, Snepp made at least some attempt to disguise the indentities of the undercover operatives that were in the book.

Why did the agency take Snepp to court rather than someone like Agee or Stockwell, who very blatantly uncovered the identities of a number of your operatives?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Mr. Agee has not been willing to come back to this country so we can get our hands on him. And there are some very complicated legal procedures why we can't we do this while he's overseas. We've looked into that.

Q: [Inaudible question about extradition]

ADMIRAL TURNER: No, I don't think you can for this kind of an offense. And that's in part because we don't have a law that really has teeth in it here for this situation.

We got to Mr. Snepp first. We d have to use the same procedure against Mr. Stockwell or any of the other authors. And there's no sense going ahead with anything till we get the Snepp one fully resolved.

So, we'll look at all the others that have done about the same thing, or maybe a more heinous thing than Mr. Snepp, in due course.

Q: Admiral, how do you handle diverse opinions and divergent analyses and competitive analyses within the production element?

ADMIRAL TURNER: How do we handle divergent analytic opinions?

First of all, in the organization of the community, the reorganization of it that President Carter effected January 1978, we made efforts to give me more authority to coordinate all these collecting activities that I've talked about, so that we do not take unnecessary risks, spend unnecessary money.

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We did not make any effort to bring together all the analytic organizations. There's a big one in the Defense Department. There's a big one here. There's a modest one in the State Department. And there are smaller ones in other departments of the government. And we want that competition. We want that divergency of views to come forward.

Beyond that, one of the things that I have particularly emphasized is the importance of highlighting those divergent views in the analytic product. And it used to be done by putting footnotes down there. I've insisted that if it's worthy of mention, it goes up in the main body of the text, so that you have a concurrent or side-by-side presentation of the primary view and any divergent views, so that you can compare them readily.

Those are some of the principal things we're doing, but we think it's very important to maintain that competitive attitude.

I also happen to believe that doing an intelligence estimate that simply says, "We believe there's a 72 percent probability that this will happen tomorrow" is much less valuable to our decision-makers than to say, "We think there are the following three pressures that will make this happen tomorrow, and there are the following two pressures that will make it be delayed for a week," and to discuss the pros and cons of whether it's going to happen tomorrow. Even if you end up saying, "We think 72 percent is the final best figure that we can come up with," or best estimate, you want the decision-maker to understand what made you come to that 72 percent by telling him what drove you towards it and what also made you hesitand so you didn t go to 100 percent. And that's what Bob Bowie and I are trying to encourage into the analytic process here, to get people to be more concerned with explicating the issue than coming up with some real decisive answer to it.

Q: What has been the impact of the changing intelligence environment on the internal operations of the CIA over the last two years or so?

ADMIRAL TURNER: What's been the impact of this changing environment on the internal operations? I'm trying to see how you want me to answer that.

I've tried to describe the fact that it's been difficult on the personnel. It's been difficult because when you've dedicated your life to an organization that was very highly respected, very patriotic, and you suddenly find it chastised over and over and over again, ad nauseam, in the media, you know, it's tough on you and your family, because you have a very high regard for it. This is an organization of greater dedication than anything I know.

Similarly, it's very hard, when you have been in this

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very secretive operation out here, suddenly to understand how you adjust to a greater degree of exposure and openness. And, clearly, it's unsettling when you've had many years of doing business in one way, and over a period of time, now, there are these substantial shifts.

So, this has impacted on morale and attitude.

I find it turning around. And as I said to you, I think the public attitude towards intelligence is turning around. And with that, our sense of self-respect, of pride will begin to return. It is beginning to return. But it's a difficult period to carry this amount of change in a relatively short time.

Q: [Inaudible]

ADMIRAL TURNER: I do not think it has affected our product. That's a very subjective evaluation, obviously, and one in which I'm probably the least -- I'm not in a good position to be the unbiased judge. But let me say that my observation of the capabilities and the dedication of the personnel in the Central Intelligence Agency has been that of a very high standard. And despite impact on their morale, despite their wondering where we're going, in some instances, and just why we're doing things that we have to do today, I find that if you come here at two o'clock in the morning tomorrow, when there's another flap in Iran or Afghanistan, boy, they're all there. There are about 20 percent more than need to be there. You know, they just are very dedicated.

So, I don't think the product is hurt. But we've got to bring the respect for this place and the morale of it back up again in order to continue for the long run, and particularly to attract into it and to continue into it the right kind of people.

Q: Is there a policy that has been laid down to our people abroad, whether CIA or embassy people, what have you, to keep aloof and not to develop contacts with dissident movements? Because it seems to me that if our people had listened to these various voices in Iran, they would have -- and kept their eyes open and their ears, they would have realized the depth of what was going on...[inaudible].

ADMIRAL TURNER: We weren't...

[Laughter]

ADMIRAL TURNER: We weren't caught flat-footed.

Q: [Inaudible]

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ADMIRAL TURNER: Your question's very constructive, and I'm joking here. But we really weren't caught flat-footed. We clearly were letting the decision-makers know that there were problems in Iran. Of course, that was obvious for a long period of time.

What happened, in our opinion, in Iran was that suddenly, after many, many years in which the Shah and his father had been in power -- except for a short period, over 50 years -- they had effectively been able to handle dissidence as it arose. And it was a very authoritarian state. It had a very pervasive police organization. And one -- most of us assumed that when it got too close to the critical point, there would be a crackdown.

And we saw these areas of dissidence developing. There were some for religious reasons. There were some for economic reasons. There were some because they weren't part of the political process. There were some for cultural reasons. And I've sort of described it like a series of small volcanoes. But we didn't think they would all come together and be one volcano. We thought that the authority there was sufficient to damp them down.

Q: [Inaudible]...is there some sort of policy now telling our people to keep aloof, you know, from these...

ADMIRAL TURNER: No, there's no policy telling our people to keep aloof from understanding the mainstream of events in their countries.

Q: [Inaudible]

ADMIRAL TURNER: Now, in each country of the world, we have to look on the degree of contacts we have with dissidents, with opposition to the established government in a different light. I don't think any of you would be upset if I were trying to penetrate and understand the opposition movement inside the Kremlin, would you? If I was told you I was doing the same thing in Great Britain, you'd think I was nuts, and it wouldn't be very nice. Because we're such close friends with the British, we ask them what their attitudes and policies are, and we get that information by an open exchange.

Every -- somewhere in between these two extremes, of not being able to get anything from a government, virtually, openly, and being able to have a full exchange, we have to treat each individual country in the world differently with regard to how risky we will be in trying to obtain the necessary level of information, and how important it is for us to obtain that information.

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So, whether it's Iran or any other country, we have to judge: Is it worth the risk? Do we need that information? And should we be working undercover to obtain it?

You can look at each set of decisions which are made and remade almost monthly, annually; and I'm sure, in hindsight, you can question lots of them. Maybe we didn't go far enough in Iran. Maybe we went as far as we could have and should have.

I can only say to you there's no easy way I can answer your question or give you a formula, because each country, each instance is unique into itself. And as we go about our business, we have the reputation of our country on our backs, and we have to look at it and weigh the risks we take for that against the value of what we're going to obtain in a particular circumstance.

Q: [Inaudible]...in today's political climate, do you think there's anything we could have done [unintelligible]?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No.

[Laughter and applause]

ADMIRAL TURNER: I think that if four or five years ago we'd been more perceptive in saying it's bound to go in this way -- and I'm not talking now personalities or administrations -- that it still would have been difficult to get the government to face up to a set of very difficult choices that would have tried to treat the Shah like a child and tell him how to run his country.

And so I think it would have been difficult, and I think the odds would have been slim that we would have done it. That doesn't mean I shouldn't or wouldn't have wanted, if I had been here four or five years ago, to have been that guy, or even two years ago, when I was here, that I shouldn't have been doing that. I'm just saying it's a tough political decision to make.

Q: Admiral, are there internal correctives to distinguish, say, unpopular judgments from erroneous ones, such as 30 years ago afflicted the whole generation of China specialists?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Are there procedures to differentiate between unpopular and erroneous analyses and recommendations?

Well, one hopes so, but it's very difficult to lay down the measure there. It comes back to the previous, very good question about how much do you tolerate divergent, dissenting views. And I can only say that we think and are really sincerely trying to encourage the presentation of such views so as not to make mistakes like were made with the so-called China lobby, the China watchers 30 years ago, by cutting off a very realistic, reasonable line of dissenting view.

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I find that one of the more difficult but important responsibilities I have is to be the bearer of bad tidings. and to be able to walk in and say, "Boss, I don't think it's going the way you think it's going." And if I don't have the fortitude to do that, I'm not doing my job, and I probably won't be asked to do it too much longer. So I feel that's a very important task.

Q: First of all, a question from the point of view of the taxpayer. You've made reference to the oversight function in the Legislative and Executive Branches. My question is one of budgetary oversight. And I'm wondering whether we've more in that direction recently than has existed in the past. That's the general question.

We all know that various aspects of the CIA's budget are obscured from public view. I'm wondering also, specifically, whether this vast expense in technical hardware and apparatus in the intelligence and communications functions of the agency are available to clients outside the intelligence community -- for instance, in the private sector -- knowing that some of the satellite technology and communications technology that's available to the CIA would undoubtedly be extremely useful in a lot of non-intelligence functions in the private sector.

ADMIRAL TURNER: The first part of your question: Yes, we get a very, very thorough budget review by the Congress, in great detail. But that is not disclosed. It's available to all members of the Congress. The committees who work on it are the ones who principally pay attention to it. But within their chambers, within the confines of keeping the material under secure handling, other members of the Congress may come and read what we present, or ask questions and be informed.

Whether the technology of our collection systems can be made available to the private sector is a question I can't answer with a yes or no. Clearly, there are things we develop that are easily transferred over. There are others where it would do what I said before, give away and compromise a system, and cost you and me, as taxpayers, billions or millions to no avail. That is, most technical systems can be countered if you work hard enough at it and if you know enough about them. And they almost all are, over time. But you get that lead and you hang on to it by not giving out some of that information.

We try to share where we can. Clearly, the manufacturers who make things for us make things for the civilian side or the non-classified side of their businesses. And to the extent we can allow them to transfer the technology over, we are happy to do so.

And one of the things we're trying to do -- it isn't

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quite an answer to your question -- but we are trying to make more of our product available to the American public. We've issued more studies, more analyses on an unclassified basis than ever before, because we think the public deserves to benefit by that. If we have that information, if it doesn't need to be kept secretive and if it does help the American public and enlighten the quality of debate on important topics, we like to try to publish it and make it available.

One last question, please.

Q: In that connection, can you say anything about how well we can verify the SALT agreements, and what can be done to get the public to understand what our capabilities are?

ADMIRAL TURNER: You're going to get me in trouble, Pete.

SALT verification is an extremely complex issue, and it is my personal view that I will be able to give the Senate a very precise view of our capabilities to monitor each of the many, many provisions of the treaty.

It is also my view that there will be rather little of that that I can share with the public without opening up a Pandora's Box of disclosure of information that will cost us in terms of national security, in terms of compromise of these systems over the long run.

There will be efforts made -- and I appointed a committee just yesterday, as a matter of fact -- to explore any particular area of this -- you know, what we can say in a public forum. I'm afraid -- I suspect the answer will come out, "Rather little." This is an instance when we're going to have to rely on our democratic process of the legislature representing the people and being fully informed. And we are well prepared to give them, and are already giving them, information as to our verification capabilities.

It's going to be a very delicate, tough spring as we go through this debate. And we need very much to protect that which must remain secret in the interest of preserving the capability of the very systems that will do the verification. And yet we do need, of course, to be sure that all those senators who vote on this, and, of course, any members of the House who are concerned also, have the information they need to make a very important judgment for our country.

Your questions have been stimulating to me, and indicate the depth of your interest and knowledge in this area. It's really most important to us that we have this kind of interchange

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and that we have your support and understanding as we go ahead in attempting to support our country to the very best of our ability.

Thank you very much for coming out.

[Applause]

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HARVARD CLUB OF WASHINGTON, D.C.
14 February 1979

"CIA and the New Model of Intelligence"

Good evening and thank you for coming out on this snowy evening. I won't be as modest as Fred, I'm a Harvard man too. I didn't get a B.A. degree, I didn't earn a law degree, I went to one of those 13 week courses for old men called the Advanced Management Program. But I'll take credit for being a graduate of Harvard because they made me one and they remind me of it every year with their donation. I'll never forget that, they made such a big to do when we completed that little course which didn't have any examinations. But you are now an alumnus of Harvard University and I didn't quite understand that until six months later when the first billing came.

Despite the newspapers which try to pit me against President Bok all too frequently, I get along with Derek Bok well--had breakfast with him in December--and I think have a very common understanding where we differ and where we agree and the differing isn't as big as the press would like to make it out. But I have a tremendous respect for Harvard and tremendous sense of love for Harvard having spent at least a few weeks on the campus there and come to feel the great intellectual vibrancy of Cambridge and the whole Harvard University campus.

I'd like tonight to respond to your questions but I thought it would be best if I set a little background by giving you my view of the state of intelligence in the Central Intelligence Agency and in our Intelligence Community in general. And I would characterize that very briefly as

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being a state of transition, a state of change. And what I'd like to talk about are five of the areas in which we are experiencing change and why and what kind in the intelligence world of our country today.

The first is an area of what we call oversight. Today we have far greater oversight, supervision, checking on what we are doing in the entire intelligence activities of our country than ever before. Presidents have always overseen the Directors of Central Intelligence, but we now have a very specific signed Executive Order by the President which lays down the ground rules for that oversight and various mechanisms for carrying it out. And I know rather precisely what I'm allowed to do, what I must check with various other elements of the National Security Council, and what I must check with the President. And I can assure you that President Carter keeps close tabs on me. But mainly and seriously, he is very interested in what we are doing, he gives me of his personal time at least once a week and gives me good guidance and a sense that I am able to keep him well informed of what we are doing and why we are doing it, so that there is no chance that I am trying to go in one direction and the President wants me to go in another.

The President has also established something called the Intelligence Oversight Board. An independent group of three men--a distinguished former Senator, Senator Gore; a distinguished former Governor, Governor Scranton; a lawyer from Washington, D.C., Mr. Tom Farmer. This Board is to look into the propriety and legality of what the Intelligence Community is doing. They report only to the President and they are a very independent form of oversight, a very useful one.

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Most revolutionary, however, is the reinvigoration in recent years of Congressional oversight. Of course, the Congress has always had a role of overseeing any activity of the government but in years past, because of the necessary secrecy, the oversight function was I think performed in a reasonably perfunctory manner with a relatively few members of the House and the Senate being well informed on what was going on. Today we have two committees very expressly, or just exclusively, dedicated to the oversight function. They are very helpful to us on the one hand but they are also a definite supervisory body on the other. They are after us to answer questions, to keep them posted, to inquire into anything they hear of that they think may not be going the way they think it should. In addition, we report to appropriations committees of the Congress in much more detail than ever before in order to justify our annual funds and although those are not made public, I can assure you that the appropriate committees and members of the Congress know in detail what we are getting, why we are getting it, and what we're going to do with it.

I mention this in some detail to you because the advent of oversight into an organization that has not had it in great quantity is a very traumatic experience. It has forced a whole change of outlook, particularly here in the Central Intelligence Agency. When I first came here for instance, one of the most frustrating things was to find some statistical data. Because not having had to produce it in many instances before, it wasn't put together. It was available but it had to be culled out, sorted and organized into forms that would be useful for

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presentation to Congress for approval. All these mechanisms are being built but it is a considerable change in the way of life in the organization.

There are good points to it. I happen to believe that being held accountable is very important, particularly to an organization that deals in risky, secretive matters. With this sense of accountability we are more judicious in the decisions we make because we know that one day we're very likely going to have to stand up and account for them. That, of course, has its downside. If we end up with intelligence by timidity and are unwilling to take risks in this country in order to obtain the information that is needed in order to make those proper decisions of foreign policy, we won't be in the intelligence business at all. It's a matter of finding the right balance. I think we're moving in that direction, it's too early to tell whether we're going to end up there. I'm certainly aiming to and I think we're going to, but it's going to take several more years of experience.

In addition, there's another benefit and that is with this greater oversight, particularly inside the Executive Branch, things like the Executive Order requiring that certain of our activities be checked with the Department of State. We are more certain that the directions in which the Central Intelligence Agency is helping to move the country in international affairs are, in fact, fully in league with those of the State Department, that we're not in any way accidentally working at cross purposes. I think this is very important to all of us.

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There is, of course, one other risk in oversight and that is the danger of leaks. The more people who know a secret, the more likely it is to leak out. I'm not casting fingers on any of the oversight mechanisms I've just described to you. I don't think any one of them is any more or any less leaky than the Central Intelligence Agency itself and the Department of Defense intelligence or anyone else. But there is just a mathematical formula that applies here--the number of people who know a secret, as it increases, the danger of a leak is greater and greater. And, again, if we cannot keep those secrets which truly are secrets, we're not going to have a suitable intelligence capability for our country. And in passing I would note that this is perhaps the greatest danger to our intelligence capability in my opinion today is thealacrity with which classified information finds its way into the press.

A second change that is going on is closely related and that's a greater public exposure of the intelligence activities of our country. You are here tonight, I'm with you tonight in ways that probably wouldn't have taken place five, ten years ago. We get both wanted and unwanted public exposure today. The wanted public exposure comes from a personal conviction that any agency of the government must have its roots, its support in the people of this country. And the people of this country supported an intelligence activity for many years simply on faith, on an understanding that there were things that had to be done in secret. After the many exposures--some of them true, some of them untrue--of recent years, I think the foundation of that faith has been shaken and that we now owe it to the people to be as forthcoming as we can so that

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their support. For a good intelligence organization in our country has a foundation or has an understanding. So we are opening up more within clearly delineated bounds. There is certainly no intent to just open doors and ask people to come in and share all of the secrets that we have. But there are more things that we can do and say, Herb Hetu can respond more to the press without giving away things that it would be against the national interest to expose.

I'm afraid we also get far too much unwanted exposure in the public media. On the one hand I feel that we are still suffering in this country from a post-Watergate mentality in the media. A mentality that says anyone who works for the government, any public servant, is automatically suspect. And they start from that assumption and work onward from there. And I find it very discouraging to see the degree of distortion that this frequently leads to in the public media.

We also are suffering today from what I would gather or describe as an attitude of vengeance. People like Phillip Agee who are out writing books deliberately exposing people who work for the Central Intelligence Agency, hazarding their lives, considerably hindering their professional opportunities. These exposures, both from the media prying and drawing conclusions that are unwarranted and from people who are just deliberately trying to undermine the intelligence activities of our country, have had a tremendous depressing affect on the attitude and the morale in the Central Intelligence Agency. Put yourself in the shoes of someone who came to work here perhaps 15 years ago, dedicated himself to something of real value to his country, went overseas repeatedly, kept

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himself from exposure where he worked at great cost to himself and his family, trying to cover his employment so that it wasn't known he worked in the Central Intelligence Agency, and suddenly his name appears in a book or a newspaper or a magazine. And after coming close to the apex of his career, his usefulness to us is suddenly diminished by a large fraction at no fault of his own. He's gone a long way down his career track and he is cut off in many ways in his actual usefulness to us. This is terribly, terribly bad for our people and for their dedication and the sacrifices which they really must make in this kind of an organization. I hope we can staunch this kind of flow before many more months and years go by because it is very injurious.

The third change is related to these first two and that's that we're reaching what I would call a generational period in the Agency's history, if you look on a working generation as perhaps being 30 years of employment. We've been in operation now out here, or not here but in the Central Intelligence Agency, since 1947 so we're a little over 30 years old and many of the very stalwart, capable people who came into the organization in its early years are passing through and on into retirement or other employment. We are now having to see how we bring up a new leadership, a new leadership that is able and willing and understanding of adjusting to living under new rules of oversight, to living in a more public exposure, to shifting the focus of activities here from the cold war attitudes and the cold war targets and the cold war analyses we were so accustomed to in the past, to the new environment in which we have to live today. It is a challenge, again, to find the people who are

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flexible, adaptable, understanding of these shifts and emphasis, these changes I'm trying to describe to you, and who will pick up the mantle of leadership of this Agency in the years just ahead.

And, indeed, a fourth change that we are experiencing is a change in the priorities of what we do. We started out 32 years ago with a large focus on Soviet military intelligence, or intelligence about Soviet military activities. Look how the world has changed around us in these 32 years. Yes, we are intently interested today on Soviet military activities. We have to be. But look at how many other countries in the world appear on the front page of our newspaper, how many with whom we have commercial relationships of one sort and another. Look at how much of our activity in many, many of these other countries is not military at all. Our relationships with most of them are economic or political. The excitement, the challenge, the stimulation here to shift, to develop the expertise, the academic qualifications in all sorts of fields that challenge us today as we move more and more into political, economic analysis, into questions of terrorism, narcotics, psychology of foreign leaders, health and medical predictions on foreign personalities and so on. It's a really very exciting expansion of our activities.

I see Dr. Bowie, a famous Harvard man, in the audience. I don't know why he's here because he could give this lecture better than I, but he is our Director of assessment, analysis and every time I talk to him about this he reminds me that I haven't given him any more resources, any more people to do this expansion. And we are all interested in

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keeping the bureaucracy small but we have a real challenge here to find the right balance as we take on these new responsibilities, these new areas of requirement for our country and still maintain that necessary expertise, that necessary degree of detail into the military side as well. It is a very demanding challenge for us but also a very exciting one as well.

Finally, we're changing in our capabilities to do the job. Over the last 10 or 15 years there has been a near revolution in the techniques for collecting intelligence information. And we now have burgeoning technical systems that collect intelligence as well, of course, as the tried and traditional human spy that has been with us since biblical days. Today we have the satellites that take pictures, we have what we call signals intelligence listening capabilities. As you know as well as I there are air waves going through this room right now and if you put an antenna up you could pick up different kinds of signals. Well that is a way of collecting intelligence. There are many, many kinds of signals from radio communications to radars and so on that are of interest to us in one way or another. The quantity of information that is available to us today from these technical collection systems because of the great sophistication of American technology in American industry is just amazing and it continues to grow. And it presents us with a real problem. How do we process, handle, store, retrieve and use this information? We have to rely much more on data processing techniques. We have to be much more clever at sorting and sifting and being sure that we don't throw the diamonds out with all the chaff. It's another very demanding challenge.

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And yet, at the same time, the old traditional human intelligence element continues with as much importance as ever before. Because in a very general sense what happens here is that when you use one of these technical systems it tells you about things that happened sometime in the past. You can use that to project what happen in the future sometimes, but if you really want to try to delve into why people are doing things and what they are likely to do tomorrow, what you want is the traditonal human intelligence activity. And so I find that as the capabilities of the technical systems grow and give us more information with which to deal, the need to complement that with the why and the how and the what next questions through the human intelligence side is greater than ever before. And one of the real challenges we face today is to mesh all of these--the technical and the human--into a real teamwork effort to be sure that we don't charge you and me as taxpayers more than is necessary by overcollecting but to be equally sure that we don't let it drop through the cracks because we haven't coordinated these capabilities.

These are the principal changes we're facing. We are collecting more information. We're analyzing it over a wider sphere of disciplines and geographical areas. We're really adapting both the collection and the analysis to what this country is going to need in the future not just what it collected and analyzed, primarily military intelligence, in the past. We are much more accountable to you the public. We are much more accountable to the various oversight procedures in our government. And I hope that out of the greater exposure that we are receiving

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today--both good and bad--there is a [illegible] public under-standing and appreciation of the importance of what we do. I have felt that that has shifted in the last year. The fact that you are here and interested in hearing more about your intelligence activities is indicative of that I believe and I appreciate the fact that you have taken the time to come out and be with us and let me now try to respond to your questions more specifically.

Thank you.

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