

for RSM

TRANSCRIPT OF
DCI REMARKS TO
FORDHAM UNIVERSITY ALUMNI
14 November 1984

APPROVED FOR RELEASE □ DATE:
12-03-2008

Good evening, thank you very much. I welcome you all to the Central Intelligence Agency, we're very pleased to have you here. Besides myself, there are 71 Fordham Alumni in this organization. Some here at Headquarters, others scattered around the world. We received 37 applications this year from Fordham graduates, and as I will develop later, we welcome more. Earlier this year I entertained Father Finley here for a day along with 11 other college presidents for the purpose of explaining and to academia what we are and what we do and also for the purpose of encouraging bright young people to look at intelligence as a career. We do this about four times a year.

This evening I will briefly try to tell you something about our business. More of our people work in libraries or at computer terminals than in the seedy bars and run-down hotels as you see in the spy movies. While most intelligence activity is not nearly as dangerous or glamorous as a Robert Ludlum novel, it is a critical factor in our national security. We believe that intelligence serves as the nation's first line of defense.

What then is intelligence? It's information, but a very special kind of information. Other nations, especially those who are our adversaries, hide activities, events, or plans that

may be harmful to the United States or its citizens. As your intelligence service, we work hard to obtain that information. The nature of the measures we use--our sources and methods of intelligence, how we collect it, what we do with it--that's what is secret about our business.

Intelligence collection and analysis is as old as the nation. George Washington was a one-man intelligence service. Without his instinct for intelligence and indeed covert action, his tiny ragtail army would never have held out over seven years against the largest expeditionary force that the most powerful nation in the world at that time sent over here. For many years we down-played the need for intelligence and after World War I, we dismantled the intelligence apparatus established for that occasion. However, the disaster of Pearl Harbor once again underscored the importance of having accurate and timely information on our adversaries' intentions and plans.

Today the Central Intelligence Agency is responsible for collecting a wide variety of information including the clandestine collection of facts and figures not available through open and diplomatic channels. We maintain an all-source database and provide objective, nonpartisan research and analysis for the President and other national leaders. CIA also provides technical and other services of common concern to the rest of the Intelligence Community and is responsible for carrying out U.S. policy in those circumstances where unattributable activity is required.

Now it's important to realize that while CIA and the Intelligence Community play a very important role in the policy and decision-making process, intelligence does not make policy. That's the prerogative of the President, the National Security Council, and the Congress. Our mission is to provide those officials with the best, most accurate, and timely information that we can on events around the world.

We do about 1,000 major research projects every year on a nearly inconceivable range of subjects from Soviet weapons systems to political instability, the new worldwide reach of the Soviet Union, heroin production and distribution, black market arms trade, population and debt problems, and so on. All in addition to the regular stream of periodicals--dailies, weeklies, monthlies, and quarterlies--keeping the policymaking, the military, and the diplomatic communities abreast of the forces emerging and operating worldwide.

It's the diversity of problems we deal with today that makes intelligence, in part, different than it was 20 or even 10 years ago. The Soviet Union is still the primary concern, as it was in the immediate post World War II, but other targets have become important. Today many of the things that we worry about operate underground dealing in drugs, terror, car bombs, stolen blueprints, as well as weapons and subversion across international borders and wherever instability and revolution can be fomented.

The problem of narcotics is engaging a great deal of our attention. Illicit drugs threaten the stability of our society and the world's drug traffickers are corrupting Third World governments and their economies. American drug money also gets into the hands of terrorists and insurgents and fuels that threat.

We worry about nuclear proliferation. In the future, a conflict in Asia might involve nuclear threats from Pakistan, India, China, Iraq, possibly even the USSR and other Arab states. More countries are beginning to export nuclear materials. Brokers, skilled at circumventing government export policies, now specialize in buying, selling, and moving through custom restrictions, nuclear related-equipment. The time between making fissionable material and building a weapon, making a bomb out of it, is shrinking drastically -- leaving those who have to deal with nuclear proliferation less time for diplomatic action.

Terrorists can abruptly change alliances, negate sensitive negotiating, disrupt the world political balance far out of proportion to their intrinsic power. International terrorism is a force which is obliterating the distinction between war and peace. We put a lot of effort into following major terrorist organizations of whom there are a great many. The training camps that train terrorist in radical Arab and Iron Curtain countries and all these forces are available to

the Communists and the radical Arab states which use terrorism as an instrument of foreign policy. And this will be an increasing problem in the future.

However, despite the growing importance of these hidden weapons or hidden activities, we still devote most of our resources and efforts to the Soviet Union. It is the one country in the world which has the ability to deliver a devastating nuclear blow against us. We work hard to understand its leadership, its objectives, its plans, and problems. For the greater part of the last decade, the Kremlin has functioned under the leadership of three very sick and dying men, its policy made by a gerontocracy of men going into their eighties. As Chernenko fades in health and power, they seem today to be locked in a succession struggle featuring a competition in hurling hostile rhetoric at the United States.

Their economy is faltering; there is a growing sense of malaise in the society. Health care is eroding. The Soviet Union is the only industrialized country in the world in which the life expectancy of men is actually declining. Alcohol addiction and corruption are rampant. The net effect of all this is that we're quite confident their economy will only at about 1 1/2 to 2 percent per year for the next decade or so--a significant departure from the previous decade in which they were growing at twice that rate.

Despite these economic constraints, the centralized planning guarantees a steady flow of resources into the military. Chiefs of civilian ministries find it difficult, if not dangerous, to challenge the military priorities. Few officials are privy to the details of defense plans and budgets. Soviet Union military industrial establishment now includes several hundred major R&D facilities and major final assembly plants as well as defense-related R&D and component or support facilities. The floor space at weapon production facilities is expanding more rapidly than at any time since the mid-60s, twenty years ago.

So over the last two decades, this has resulted in deployment of well over a hundred major new weapon systems every ten years. They continue to expand a large arsenal of nuclear weapons aimed at the United States, Western Europe, and East Asia. New missiles and missile-carrying aircraft and submarines are being designed, developed, tested, and deployed in utterly amazing profusion. This is augmented by work carried on missile defense. While in Europe, the Warsaw Pact forces, the conventional forces, already have three times as many men as we have, four times as many tanks, four times as much artillery, and three times as many armored personnel carriers.

But despite this enormous military buildup, the threat from the Soviet Union is much broader than the direct military threat. The Soviets view the East-West relationship as a total, all-encompassing struggle involving economic, social,

and ideological factors which they call "the correlation of forces." In the last decade, they have used a mix of tactics-- political and diplomatic subversion, terrorism, and insurgency, fomenting instability--to expand their influence and destabilize weak governments. It's a no-lose proposition because they can stay half hidden in the background. Exploiting Third World social and economic discontents gives them a wedge into a country, a base to feed the malaise that fosters insurgencies and in this they work in concert with Cuba, and to some extent East Germany, Libya, North Korea, Angola, South Yemen, Vietnam, Ethiopia, and Nicaragua, and a whole battery of proxies which really give them a worldwide spread.

The cost of all this, the instability that's generated, the insurgencies that are created, the wars of national liberation that follow, have been enormous in terms of human despair and population displacement. There are some 100,000 Nicaraguan refugees in Honduras and Costa Rica. Salvadoran refugees number in the hundreds of thousands. At least 25 percent of the Afghan population has left the country; some 3 million are in Pakistan, and a million or so in Iran, and others in Europe. Millions of Vietnamese have fled from Indochina and the many thousands of others are incarcerated in that country in "reeducation camps," the Vietnamese version of the Gulag. Then there are the Ethiopians and Sudanese who have been driven from their homes. This a great spectacle of misery on all continents.

Yet over the last four years a difference has developed. In the 1960s and 1970s when all this was being generated, anti-Western causes attracted recruits throughout the Third World. The 1980s have emerged as the decade of guerrillas resisting Communist regimes. Today in Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, Ethiopia, and Nicaragua thousands of ordinary people are volunteers in irregular wars against the Soviet Army or Soviet-supported regimes. More than a quarter of a million people have taken up arms against Communist oppression in these countries.

This challenge in the Third World underscores our need for a strong worldwide, effective intelligence service to combat the multiple threats that I've very quickly sketched out for you. In the last few years, we have been hard at work rebuilding our intelligence capabilities. There appears to be a general conviction among our people that the Intelligence Community has never been in better shape. We have rebounded from the cuts of the 1970s during which our budget was slashed some 40 percent, and our personnel some 50 percent. We have a growing and dedicated workforce. A new headquarters building completed for the Defense Intelligence Agency and another under construction on this CIA campus. A higher budget. Improved morale. I think we are fit, healthy, and as an institution have rededicated ourselves to excellence.

The bottom line of all this work--the large organization, huge batteries of computers, technical marvels that

scoop up facts through the arts of photography, acoustics, and seismic sensing, and communications, electronics, the work of our corps of analysts who have more Ph.D.'s and masters degrees than any university--are the national estimates for the President and National Security Council and other policy-makers. These estimates are reviewed by the Chiefs of all the components of the Intelligence Community. These men sit together as a Board of Estimates and they are encouraged and charged to provide the judgments developed in their organizations, and to stake out dissenting views.

These assessments are not produced in an ivory tower atmosphere. The debates and clash of ideas sometimes are rough. No one's views--from the Director down to the lowliest analyst--are protected from challenge and criticism. It is not a place for delicate egos or mediocrity or people with a special agenda. But out of that process, despite its imperfections, comes the best, most comprehensive, most objective intelligence in the world. And our critics help keep it that way by keeping us on our toes.

Intelligence, despite the criticism from the media, Congress, elsewhere, rides high with the American public. Keeping this performance of ours up over the long term, depends on attracting some of the best young people in America. We are hiring about one out of every hundred who want to tackle the challenge of our work and even less if we're talking about operations or analytical corps. Our recruitment work is ex-

acting and exhaustive but we keep our standards high and continue to do so. I believe the fact that some 150,000 people applied for employment last year is testimony to the public's positive attitude towards our work and the need for effective intelligence work in the national interests. I want you to know that we're always on the lookout for bright and educated young people and appreciate anything any of you can do to interest young people in intelligence as a career.

So, I am please to have you come. The challenges ahead for our country are many and it will take the combined efforts of all of us to preserve our way of life and our freedoms.

Thank you very much.