

Approved For Release 2004/11/01 : CIA-RDP88-01315R000300680003-5
CIA 4.01 Covert Activities

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Article appeared on page 13, 38

CIA: Tighter Security, Greater Openness

CIA's 'Openness' Policy

THE FOCUS of the media with respect to intelligence for almost four years now has been on actual and alleged abuses of the past. I sincerely believe the threat to our country of excesses in intelligence operations is far less today than any time in our history. The real danger is that we will be unable to conduct necessary operations because of the risk that they would be disclosed. Let me give you some examples.

First, allied intelligence services are losing confidence that we can keep a secret. We suspect that some are holding back information. One recently withdrew a proposal for a joint covert action which would have been beneficial to both nations. It did so when reminded that I must notify eight committees of the Congress of every covert action. They could not imagine that the plan would not leak.

Beyond this, agents overseas who risk their lives to support our country even though they are not even citizens of it ask, "When will my name appear in your press?" This is not a transient problem — it is a trend that could undermine our human intelligence capabilities for a decade or more.

Accordingly, we can and are tightening our internal security procedures. We are also doing things externally. We have a policy of greater openness.

How will openness help us preserve secrets? Well, simply by reducing the excessive corpus of secrets that now exists within our government.

Today so much information is unnecessarily classified that we have lost respect for the classified label. By making as much as possible available to the public, we reduce the amount that is kept secret. In turn, this makes it easier to engender respect for that which remains classified.

It takes more than openness, however, to preserve secrets. Basically, there must be some renewed acknowledgment in the media and in the public that secrecy is legitimate.

Clearly there is a very fine line which we must tread. Too much secrecy can impede justice or staunch the flow of information within our society. Too little secrecy can give away data that is of vital importance to our nation.

It is a delicate balance. — Adm. Stansfield Turner, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, speech at National Press Club in Washington, October 25.

War by Other Means

The American capacity for intelligence has been systematically shattered by attacks from Congress, from its own employees and from — it is now widely believed — the penetration of Soviet agents high into the CIA itself. Meanwhile, West German intelligence estimates that the Soviet KGB maintains more than 100,000 agents in Western Europe. In recent years, Soviet penetration reached as high as Chancellor Willy Brandt's personal secretary. It also netted a top general in Switzerland. "Liberation armies" in a score of countries are given salaries and supplied from outside.

Peace, nowadays, is war carried out by other means. If the U.S. does not have the capability to conduct covert operations, it has no intermediate instrument between diplomatic rhetoric and open warfare. This is acceptable to those who believe that international politics is conducted by reasonable and moral men. In a humane and reasonable world, some believe, force is an improper instrument of policy. But this is a serious mistake.

Reasonable discourse is always affected by superior force. To those with lesser force, the person with greater force begins to sound reasonable. When the costs of disagreement go up, the weak quietly acquiesce. It becomes reasonable to choose surrender rather than useless bloodshed.

Global warfare is unpleasant to contemplate. Better to jog, to sip wine and nibble cheese, to search for one's own identity, and to believe that the world is run by morality and reason. Call those who worry about the superior capabilities of the enemy "Cold War warriors."

But this is not the Cold War. The Cold War ended years ago, when the Soviet Union was relatively weak. Now the Soviet Union is a military empire governed by secret police, with capabilities for covert and overt action on every continent and in every ocean.

have put the Cold War behind us. We lost it. What we face now is too awful to contemplate. Most prefer not to.

Young PhDs looking for jobs might well consider the CIA — or preferably, a new and more efficient organization. We need a covert force of high-minded and skillful talents. We need it urgently. — Michael Novak, *Washington Star*, October 1.

How Much is Enough?

It is usually evident in most discussions on national defense that none of the debaters truly appreciates the value of military force in achieving our national security objectives. Rather, most such debates concentrate on military budgets, the merits of the nuclear carrier, small ships against big ships, the trade-offs against equipping NATO forces and so on.

In fact, there is no generally held view of what constitutes a sufficiency of military power. We don't know what to expect or want our military forces to accomplish. And we don't understand how to relate military power to other components of national power — political, psychological, technological and economic power.

We rattle numbers in assessing the values of deterrence without any idea about what deters whom, and why. We debate the value of a U.S. military presence in Korea and Europe without an appreciation of whether or not forward deployed forces really give us a strategic advantage. We negotiate on arms control by trading off weapons systems by bean count instead of assessing the broader implications of the systems on defense.

Why do we have such a poor understanding of the contemporary value of military force?

One reason is that the contemporary world (fortunately) lacks a body of evidence upon which to make judgments about the nature of nuclear war. The post-1945 power of nuclear weaponry is incredible because it has never been used. — John C. Scharfen, *Baltimore Sun*, October 29.