

ORIG 1 NATIONAL TOWN Meeting

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HARRISON SALISBURY: The National Town Meeting is now in session. We're meeting today at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., and we have a very important question on our agenda. It's the question of the CIA and Congress. And to discuss that with our Town Meeting we have a panel which includes Senator James Abourezk of South Dakota; Tom Braden, syndicated news columnist; and we have Dr. Harold Ford, who is a former official of the CIA itself.

Gentlemen, I'd like to pose the first question to you, if I may. The CIA has had a great deal of publicity in recent times. Most of it, I'm afraid, has been rather negative, and a great deal of it has been generated by its activities in Chile, where it was operating a program of some size -- the exact nature we don't know all the details of -- against the Allende Government, which has since been replaced by a military dictatorship.

I'm wondering this: Whether the CIA's judgment must have been that the Allende Government was more negative to American interests than a military dictatorship, and if so, do we have any notion of what basis it may have had for forming this conclusion?

Senator, would you care to respond to that first?

SENATOR JAMES ABOUREZK: Well, Secretary Kissinger once said in jest that Chile under Allende was a dagger pointing straight at the heart of Antarctica, and he was probably more right than he actually thought he was when he was making that joke, 'cause I don't know of any threat that a small country with hardly any military power would have to the United States of America, to the security of this country.

I asked Dr. Kissinger, during a talk he gave at

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the Democratic Caucus in the Senate one day, what interest we were trying to protect by overthrowing the Allende regime, which was a popularly elected regime, and replacing it with a right-wing regime which has murdered many people, quite a number of people, has imprisoned and tortured many thousands more. And the response I got was a very brief one. Dr. Kissinger said that he did not want -- or, the United States did not want, which meant he did not want -- another country in Latin America like Cuba that exported revolution, which to me was an amazing statement from a man such as the Secretary who is making every effort that he can now to renew relations with Cuba, to the extent that -- well, to me, it's another inconsistency, another way to explain a very bad situation.

SALISBURY: I don't think that that casts too much light on this decision, if there was such a decision.

Mr. Braden, at one time you had some connection with intelligence affairs. I don't know whether it was with the CIA or its predecessor, the OSS. Do you know very much about this rationale, or could you give us -- cast some light on it for us?

TOM BRADEN: No, I'm sorry. I can't. I don't know why they decided to go into Chile and to try to destabilize it. I'd like to make one comment on it, if I may.

It seems to me that when you undertake a covert operation, whether it's going to be the Congress or the Secretary of State or the CIA, you ought to ask yourself four questions.

The question is: How important to the United States is the covert operation under consideration?

And the second question is: What is the risk of exposure?

And the third is: What is the impact of exposure?

And the fourth is: How much effort does the operation require?

I would think that if anybody had asked themselves those very serious questions, we would not have tried to destabilize Allende.

SALISBURY: Mr. Ford, you have been in the CIA, though, I believe, not in the covert operations department.

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Is there any light you can cast for us on this subject?

DR. HAROLD FORD: If I remember your question correctly, it was: What judgments must the CIA have made?

It seems to me that the judgments were not made by objective analysts within the CIA, but the judgments were apparently made by the U.S. Government at the presidential or at the Kissinger level, because the CIA operations were only part of a total orchestrated effort, many overt actions being taken by the U.S. Government, to try to destabilize the Allende regime.

As to why and what lay back of that, my guess is several. One, that this was in the area of the Monroe Doctrine, and this is our backyard, just as Czechoslovakia and so on is the USSR's.

Secondly, I think U.S. Governments, Democratic and Republican, have had a great fear of anything that sounds or looks like, quote, leftist, and certainly Allende was that, and therefore he had to go.

I'm disturbed by this kind of thinking, and to me it adds up to a kind of paternalistic imperial-type thinking on the part of U.S. governments that we know what's best for the other people of the world. And that's why, in my personal opinion, I think we need more effective oversight of some kind of the CIA, both for intelligence purposes, but in my judgment, much more importantly because we need additional constitutional checks on the U.S. Executive.

SALISBURY: I noticed that in some of the discussion of the intervention in Chile that remarks were made about trying to help out various democratic institutions -- the freedom of the press and things of that kind. And I wondered if you gentlemen were aware of any efforts that are now being made to assist democratic institutions in Chile, where they seem to have been quite widely suppressed by the current government.

Senator, have you heard of anything being done by the CIA to try and help out the democratic elements down there?

SENATOR ABOUREZK: No, I hadn't heard, and as a matter of fact, because I hadn't heard, I wrote a letter to President Ford after his press conference in which he justified our intervention in Chile by the CIA to, in his words, protect opposition political parties and opposition press.

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I asked a number of questions -- which parties were trying to be suppressed by Allende? Which newspapers were trying to be suppressed by Allende? And which newspapers and political parties were we trying to get back in business that had been suppressed by Allende? And I'm sorry to report I got no answer from President Ford. I got a letter saying that he had received my letter, and that was the extent of it.

SALISBURY: Well, that's good.

I think we'll go to the floor. This young man here has a question.

MAN: My name is Stewart Motshine from the State University of New York Washington Semester Program, and I'd like to direct this question specifically to the Senator.

It seems to be the general consensus that a stronger congressional oversight committee of the CIA is needed. Now, how would you specifically propose to set up one that would reconcile both input from and accountability to the American people and would also take into account national security interests? And I'd like you to sort of take it from the procedural questions involved.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: Well, I'm unable to do that because I'm opposed to an oversight committee on the dirty tricks branch of CIA. The reason I'm opposed to an oversight committee is that I am for the total abolition of the dirty tricks portion of CIA. And the reason that I'm opposed to it is that it's the direct antithesis of a democratic system.

There's no way you can have an undercover covert operations and have the U.S. Constitution operating the way it ought to be operating and the way it was intended to operate. The reason is because the Constitution presumes, or presupposes, that the decisions on foreign policy, as well as domestic policy, will be made in open debate in public, with the participation of all those people who want to participate. I don't know of any way that you could have a covert operations, whether it's with the entire Congress overseeing it, that you take part and that the country could take part in a debate on what the CIA is going to do in some foreign country or what they might have been doing or will do in this country, for that matter. We just don't know.

So, I'm against an oversight committee. I think that they would be sworn to secrecy and they'd be swallowed up, just like the existing oversight committees have been swallowed up.

SALISBURY: I wonder, Mr. Braden, if you would

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agree with the Senator that we should have no covert operations at all. As I recall the early days of the CIA, set up at the height of the Cold War, at a time when we were desperately afraid of Communist subversion of democracies, it was felt that we had to have some arm or some tool or some weapon which was the equivalent of the international operations on the Communist side. Do you think that rationale really holds...

BRADEN: I think it holds up. I think it held up in history. And I disagree with the Senator because I think you can imagine some examples of how it might hold up now.

Let me, if I may, just give a couple of suppositions. Let us suppose that we get very sure information that the PLO is today planning an operation within the United States. Say they want to blow up a school with some nice kids in it or they want to kidnap the President, or some other euphemism for a negotiation which the PLO might devise. And let us suppose that we have a covert arm in that country. What should we do? Should we wait until the attempt is made here and then try to arrest the culprits? Would it not be a good idea to at least consider the use of a covert arm to stamp the thing out where it began?

Let me give you perhaps another illustration. Suppose that the situation gets very bad in a democratic country; let's suppose, just for example, Italy. We have a party that's about to take power which -- the aim of which is to cut off relations with the United States, incarcerate the citizens, expropriate the property, deny the ports to U.S. ships. Would it not be a good thing to have -- if we had a covert arm in that country, and I suppose we do, to give a little aid to the opposition?

I think that it's probably impossible in today's world for a major power to run foreign policy without having the possibility, the capacity, the means to use covert action, and so I disagree with Senator Abourezk, and I see that most of the Senate did too.

SALISBURY: Mr. Ford, I think you had a word you wanted...

!Applause!

DR. FORD: If I may in a gentlemanly manner differ with both of my colleagues. In the Senate, if I read the debates there correctly, there were a number of people who differed

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with you, and those did not include just what you might say were the feudal barons, but some who, if the resolution had been worded differently, might have come along. For example, do we cut off everything, boom, right now? Do we vote something, boom, right now? Or do we vote something after some careful study is made? And by careful study I do not mean pigeon-holing, but I mean something...

SENATOR ABOUREZK: That's usually what's meant in the Senate.

DR. FORD: I know that's what has been the case, but does not necessarily have to continue to be the case.

On the cutting off the covert arm, perhaps my position is somewhere in between. I line up with those members of the Congress who feel that yes, covert operations should be cut back practically to zill [sic], keeping perhaps only contingent capability for a time of war or the coming of war.

And as for the theoretical ones that Mr. Braden names, there are covert arms abroad now in the form of intelligence-gathering. And if they're doing their job and if the U.S. press and other U.S. representatives abroad are doing their job, they'll learn about things that are going to happen in this country, word can be flashed here, and then our own law enforcement agencies can take care of them.

SALISBURY: There's a question down here.

MAN: I'm John Marks from the Center for National Security Studies in Washington. I'd like to address the question to Senator Abourezk.

Senator, do you think that it's possible for us as a country to continue to train thousands of people in skills like bribery, subversion, other criminal skills like this, and send them overseas as representatives of the U.S. Government, and then be surprised when they come home again in incidents like the Watergate, when you find people who were trained in these skills by the U.S. Government? Is it possible to avoid a domestic spillover when you do these things overseas?

SENATOR ABOUREZK: I don't know of any way to avoid a domestic spillover from the kind of training that our CIA agents, our dirty tricks operators get to use on government s overseas. We saw during the Watergate disclosures here that the people who did all of the dirty work in the Watergate were former CIA agents, some of them who thought they were defending

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the country by virtue of the way they tried to do in the opposition political party.

And I wonder if I might, Mr. Moderator, respond to Mr. Ford and Mr. Braden with regard to their hypotheticals. I suppose that in order to tickle or stimulate everybody's political bone, we could use as a hypothetical that the Jewish Defense League might be ready to blow up something in this country and that we might then want to send the CIA dirty tricks operation over to Israel to prevent somebody in the Israeli Government, or whoever directs the Jewish Defense League, to prevent them from -- as a matter of fact, we could just as easily have taken over the Israeli Government in this kind of a hypothetical. But I think we have to get down to actual specific cases, because I don't know -- I can't conceive of a hypothetical where it justifies the United States, a land of democracy, a coun -- the land of the free, from sending people to take over another government, to do in an opposition political party.

If we are so ashamed of defending the United States so that we have -- that the result is that we send people over covertly, rather than overtly, then I don't know if the United States would be worth defending. I'm not ashamed of defending this country and I'm not ashamed of defending myself. If there is such a circumstance that arises, then I think we ought to use the military forces and we ought to declare war, as the Constitution requires, 'cause that's simply all we're doing, is running an undeclared war by sending secret operatives to do the kind of things that the military ought to be doing.

SALISBURY: Isn't one good way of evaluating the covert program of the CIA and its consequences the actual record of the operations that have been -- have surfaced in the past and what has been achieved by them? And it seems to me that we see that where they have indeed eliminated so-called threats from the left, or possible threats from the left, almost invariably it has swung over hard to the very opposite extreme of the right. And it is to me, at any rate -- maybe you gentlemen can enlighten me -- difficult to understand, for example, why it was such a great coup to overthrow Mossadegh, for example, in Iran in 1954 and then in the end we wind up with a very authoritarian regime which in its policies seem to me to be far more hostile to American interests, at least so far as oil is concerned, than Mossadegh ever could have dreamed of being back in 1954.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: Well, I think every time we

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win one of those, we lose, so far as our democracy is concerned.

SALISBURY: What do you think about that, Mr. Ford.

DR. FORD: Yeah. I think this gets to our government's republican and democratic definition of what is democracy, and in various decades it always seems to come out the same: Democracy abroad is that regime or those parties who stand for, quote, stability, meaning that U.S. military rights will continue; U.S. intelligence rights will continue; nothing will happen to upset the stage, and therefore we back them.

I agree that -- I think in many cases that this kind of approach to the world has prevented peaceful change, and when there is not peaceful change, you get very authoritarian regimes, and ultimately a very radical change.

SALISBURY: It causes more violence in the shifts back and forth, doesn't it?

DR. FORD: Also I would add that I think there are times that not only covertly, but overtly as well, I think our country has been guilty of overestimating what it is we think we can accomplish abroad and not realizing that in most instances the fate of this or that society or situation is going to be answered by those people in that society and not by what we do or what the Russians do.

SALISBURY: Let's go to the floor for a question over here.

MAN: I'm Bill Jackson. I'm interested in accountability. The question I have for the panel is this: Is there a secret charter for the Central Intelligence Agency established by National Security Council directives that permits activities not contemplated by Congress when they wrote the laws establishing the CIA?

SALISBURY: Any of you gentlemen answer to that?

BRADEN: Well my answer is yes, there is a charter, CIA. It's National Security Council Directive 10/2, if I recall the exact terminology. And I think that although scholars may dispute my assertion, I think that the record of setting up the agency in 1947 makes it pretty clear that the Congress knew what it was doing and that the Congress intended that from time to time the CIA might engage in a covert operation.

DR. FORD: There have been some add-ons since

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that time, but they have all come from and within the Executive Branch. And on accountability, it's not only the CIA but the Executive Branch and the Office of the President that is not, at least in my opinion, as accountable, and certainly to the Congress, as it should be.

SALISBURY: What about the so-called 40 Committee, which is supposed to approve all covert operations? How does that work?

DR. FORD: I'd say it works often by enthusiasm. You get in a crisis and then someone has a great idea, either from within the CIA that bubbles up and they go sell it, or some great idea, and especially in recent years, from the top down, from the President or from his Prime Minister.

[Laughter]

DR. FORD: And we go off on a fine little adventure somewhere.

SALISBURY: Guess who the Prime Minister is.

Have you any comment on the operation of the 40 Committee, Senator?

BRADEN: I beg your pardon?

SALISBURY: I was asking the Senator whether he had any comment on the operation of the 40 Committee.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: Well, it's merely an arm of the President and the Secretary of State, as I understand it. It's run by the Secretary of State.

And in answer to Mr. Jackson's question on accountability, there is no accountability. I think that's pretty obvious. If the congressional oversight committees that some people have proposed, and those that are in existence, were to oversee the operations of the 40 Committee or the CIA, there still is no accountability, because those people are directed internally, in a great many cases. As a politician, I happen to know that unless a constituency that is able to throw you out of office directs you to do something one way or the other, you'll do about what you want to do. And if you don't have to account to the public for the operations of the CIA as a congressional oversight committee member, there is no way that that can be called accountability. There just -- there is no way.

BRADEN: Can I just make a...

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SALISBURY: Yes.

BRADEN: It seems to me, Senator, that you're setting up a puppet. If the Congress accepted responsibility for the operations of the CIA -- and I agree that it hasn't yet, but suppose it did -- you'd have to do something that congressmen don't like to do -- congressmen and senators -- you'd have to do two things.

First of all, you'd have to keep a secret, and...

[Laughter]

BRADEN: I don't know why a congressman can't keep a secret, but the fact is none of them ever have.

And secondly, they'd have to go home and accept responsibility for failures, because when operations fail, as operations often will, then somebody has to go back to his constituents and say, "All right. It's my fault. I thought it was a good idea, I voted for it, I approved it, I have to take the rap." And that's very difficult for congressmen and senators to do, too.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: I just want to respond. He's right. It is difficult for a congressman, just like a columnist, to admit responsibility for mistakes.

[Laughter and applause]

SENATOR ABOUREZK: However, I have never been told any secrets since I've been in the Congress for four years. So I can't test that theory out. I have no way to do that.

SALISBURY: Well, you're getting more seniority and it'll begin soon.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: I hope so.

SALISBURY: What about the Joint Atomic Energy Committee? Haven't they kept secrets pretty well since they've been established? And doesn't that provide somewhat of a model for a Joint Intelligence Committee?

SENATOR ABOUREZK: Well, I don't -- if I -- I don't think we're talking about the ability to keep secrets. I think, in all seriousness, some congressmen can and some can't, just like everyone else. But I don't think that ought to be the question, of whether we can keep the secret. I think the question is accountability and can you be accountable to

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your constituency, which is the way this place is supposed to run, up on the Hill.

SALISBURY: I've noticed that some senators and some -- and perhaps they're representatives -- on the present CIA oversight committee have made a point of saying that there are many things they don't want to know about, and they particularly told the CIA "Don't tell me anything about that. I don't want to."

Now, isn't this actually a denial. They don't want to be in the position of accountability.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: That's right.

BRADEN: It's a very important point, and it's exactly what's wrong with Senator Weicker's and Senator Baker's bill to make Congress responsible. Those two gentlemen introduced a bill -- Senator, I disagreed with your bill. I disagreed with this one even more strongly because they're unable to say whether or not they want to see the operation in advance. They're going to sort of oversee the budget. Well, that isn't going to get us anywhere.

So, I think that your point, Mr. Moderator, is very well taken.

SALISBURY: Let's go to the floor.

WOMAN: My question has to do with immigration, and I am very curious about whether the CIA has made any inquiries into the deviations from the intent of our immigration laws. I wrote my question to Senator Abourezk. Are you interested in what some consider to be serious deviations from the intent of our immigration laws which were alleged to provide new seed for the population? I refer to such tricks as allowing parolees, I believe they're called, so called, to exit from one country on the pretext of going to another specified country when in fact they come here and become sort of, I don't know what you call them, and sit.

Also, I'm concerned about the lobby efforts being made to negate work requirements. I cite as a specific on that efforts currently being made to allow non-immigrants to make application for our Civil Service system.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: I don't know about those specific issues that you've brought up and I don't know if they deal with the CIA at all. I'm unable to answer that.

SALISBURY: I happen to know about it, and perhaps

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if the moderator can respond to your question -- maybe other members of the panel do, too. But I believe that it has been a practice in the past, when the CIA was dealing with certain agents or defectors, they had certain privileges of bringing them into the country sort of outside a quota and taking care of them and settling them in this country in one way or another. Isn't that right, Mr. Braden?

BRADEN: Yes, that's right. And I didn't quite hear all the question, but it seems to me that that's a very natural and inevitable result of running intelligence operations. If you have a defector, you really have to take care of him, and I'm glad we do.

FORD (?): But how widespread it is, I don't think...

SALISBURY: I don't think there's any indication that it's very...

BRADEN: It's not going to thwart the immigration rules.

SALISBURY: Let's go to the floor over here.

WOMAN: I'd like to ask the Senator and Mr. Braden how they would propose to conduct our affairs overseas and control various other countries' covert military or paramilitary operations if we had absolutely no covert arms, which are basically now intelligence-gathering systems, how we would manage to function while every other country in the world has got covert operations here.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: Well, you're asking how we would control other countries without a covert operations branch?

WOMAN: No.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: What was your question, then?

WOMAN: Not how we'd control the countries. How we would know what was going on.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: Well, I'm not talking about intelligence-gathering. I think that's a very legitimate thing to do. And, of course, when I offered the amendment to abolish dirty tricks, I specifically said that intelligence-gathering was to be excepted from that.

SALISBURY: Perhaps, Senator, you might define the difference between covert operations, as they're being

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discussed here, and intelligence operations. I don't think everyone is clear about that.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: Well, my understanding of intelligence-gathering is the collection of information about the activities of foreign governments with respect to the United States, and that's done by either persons -- most of it, I understand, is done in the Library of Congress, 95% of that kind of intelligence-gathering, I'm told, and I don't know; I'm subject to correction on that. Some of it is done by satellite, of taking photographs of other countries to find out what is happening with regard to missile construction and so on. And that's different from dirty tricks, which is the operation of American agents in other countries to change the outcome of some political function in that other country.

Let's take Chile for an example. We poured money into the truck drivers union over there to encourage a strike. We put money into various opposition groups to Allende in an effort -- and we don't know exactly everything that went on over there, but this much came out in the public. We did every thing we could to assist in the overthrow of Allende, which eventually came about. That's what I call dirty tricks.

BRADEN: May I just amend the Senator's definition. You used the phrase dirty tricks, Senator, and sometimes they are. But I think you would agree that all covert operations are not dirty tricks. I think if you'd consult the history right after World War II, where we had a Europe that was simply prostrate, and the CIA gave some money to European labor unions to get them started. I wouldn't really call that a dirty trick, although it was a covert operation.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: Most of them are dirty tricks.

DR. FORD: Let me add this: It's very important to differentiate between intelligence-gathering and covert operations. And as the Senator says, much of it is overt -- that is, materials that are available to everyone. It isn't necessarily all done in the Library of Congress. That big gray building in Langley, Virginia, a lot of overt materials there. But it also includes traditional espionage and also the newer methods that you mentioned, of satellite and other electronic things. And they do indeed do much to help protect the country. They also make possible the SALT accords, and there are lots of holes in those and they're not as good as they might be, but at least it's a step in the right direction. And both the Soviet Government and the American Government are taking a chance that they know enough about the other society that they're willing to have a go.

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Covert operations are an entirely different thing, where you're trying to influence the politics of another society, and they can range all the way from things that are, you know, fairly benign, as Mr. Braden mentions, to landing on the beach of Cuba. And it's that latter kind of thing -- or, more recently, intervening in the politics of Chile -- that has caused the present concern. In fact, it's probably caused this meeting here today.

SALISBURY: It seems to me that I remember when Mr. Khrushchev came over here, in his famous visit in '60, and had a conversation with the late President Eisenhower. In one of those conversations he suggested to Eisenhower that they get together on their intelligence operations. He said, "After all, we're each paying out enormous sums and we're probably buying the information from the same agents. Why don't we just pool this information and save each other trouble and money?"

Was there any sense in that idea?

DR. FORD: Oh, some. There are some great intelligence fabricators around the world, and if you want intelligence, they'll produce it. And I'm sure there are occasions where both sides are paying.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: From a congressional point of view, that's a violation of the antitrust laws.

[Laughter]

SALISBURY: Let's go to the floor.

MAN: My name is Fred Branfson and I work with the Indochina Research Center. I lived out in Indochina for four years and had a chance to see the CIA really on a daily basis very close-up, and I was quite appalled to discover that, for example, in South Vietnam they had instituted a deliberate assassination program called Phoenix, which by Mr. Colby's own definition has assassinated 20,000 Vietnamese civilians on grounds of being Communist; that they'd instituted national I.D. card programs forcing every Vietnamese to carry -- over 15 to carry an I.D. card linked to a centralized computer by a dossier; that they have been funding South Vietnamese police, which regularly carry out torture; and that they've funded a judicial system which sends people to jail for years without any kind of trial.

And my question is this -- first to Mr. Braden

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and then to Senator Abourezk. Mr. Braden, if the people running the CIA have no moral scruples about doing this kind of thing to Asians, what is there to lead us to believe that they would have any kind of moral scruples against doing this thing, these kinds of things, to Americans? And I particularly think when Mr. Braden was in the international affairs section of the CIA funding the NSA in this country, what -- when he raised his four questions before, he didn't ask any moral questions and he kind of -- should this operation -- is this operation in accord with our Constitution, in accord with common morality? And I'm wondering is this kind of indicative of the kind of mentality we're facing from the CIA.

To Senator Abourezk: Does the U.S. Congress right now have any way of knowing what the CIA is doing, for example in Cambodia or South Vietnam, other than what CIA officials tell? And why isn't the Congress more upset at this what I consider very imminent threat of the CIA in this country doing things that would abhor every American to Americans, let alone abroad? And why aren't they doing more? And what can we do about it?

BRADEN: If I understand the question, I care, I suppose you do too, a great deal about the survival and the security and the independence and the well-being of the United States of America, and I hope that's moral.

I would think that your statements about Bill Colby operating a murder program in Vietnam is -- and then adding that he himself has announced this -- I think extremely questionable. I'm not going to get into the long discussion of the Phoenix program, but under no circumstances can it be said that Bill Colby has said that it was an assassination program.

SALISBURY: Senator Abourezk.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: I -- in answer to the question, first of all, I don't know why the Congress isn't doing more about it. I would like to know that myself.

And I'd like to, if I could, respond to a couple of things Tom Braden has said. He keeps coming back to this idea that the survival of the United States of America is moral, and he's right in that. But he's not right with respect to the way that the CIA operates and calls it moral and even calls it survival, because I don't believe that you would necessarily call an operation of assassination or of any other form of sabotage in a foreign country necessary to the survival of this country. I think that's a figment of the imagination of those people who have the power in the State Department,

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in the Administration and in the CIA. And I think they dream these up like -- at times like children with small toys. They dream up an operation that enhances their political power within their own circles, such as operating in Chile, operating in Laos and Vietnam.

Nobody yet, to my knowledge, has given a good reason why we should become involved in Indochina in any way, whether overtly or covertly, and this country, the people of this country, totally rejected that concept over a period of a great many years. Once the Vietnam War, once the Indochina War became a matter of public debate, it was rejected by the people.

Now, that's one thing that I would like to emphasize very strongly. It -- the covert operation in Indochina or in Chile or in anywhere else that we're operating covertly I firmly believe would be rejected outright by the people of this country if they knew about it, but there's no chance under this present system that they're ever going to know about it.

SALISBURY: Mr. Ford.

DR. FORD: Yes. A personal note. My own credentials in the national estimates business a decade ago -- and some of you may have read the Pentagon Papers to the effect that the CIA estimators at the time were saying that those who wished to go big in Indochina were doing a foolish thing, and I very strongly agreed with and wrote many of those estimates myself.

As far as the whole U.S. covert operations in Indochina go, this is not and has not been just a CIA decision, but it was a U.S. governmental decision to try and fight a certain kind of war in Laos, an un-war, a limited war, an unusual kind of war in which the executive agent was the CIA and, in turn, certain minority tribesmen who fought very well.

The same thing with the Phoenix program. There, this is a U.S. governmental decision. It also reflects the fact that when you get into a dirty hot war, it is a hot war, and that particular war, very difficult to tell who was a soldier and who wasn't.

All kinds of Americans were doing very questionable things and very immoral things, including many in uniform, and we have just read of the Peers Report here recently finally being surfaced about the Mylai massacre. And I think these things should be kept in mind, not to whitewash the CIA, but simply to put it in the larger context.

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And I would add that, having said that, there does seem to have been a trait on the part of our society to look at Asians and to feel that they do not bleed and they do not have mothers and they are different from us, and that is a racist attitude, but it is not just the CIA. It has been the whole society.

SALISBURY: Could I ask a question allied to what you gentlemen were just discussing, and this is the question of existence of an arm of the CIA which is capable of carrying out these covert operations. I wonder if the very existence of this mechanism doesn't sometimes cause the Executive Branch of the government -- the President, let's say -- to opt for a program carried out covertly which he knows, if he went public with, he could not possibly get through, either for political reasons in this country or because it would cause such consternation on the international scene?

BRADEN: Yes, of course that's true. And it's also true that fools and romantics and adventurers can make up ideas, and sometimes foolish people approve them, which is why I think it's important to talk about the Congress and the Congress's responsibility for United States programs, and I'd like to see a congressional responsibility for CIA.

DR FORD: Amen.

SALISBURY: Let's go to the floor.

MAN: I'm A. John Alexander. I'm currently a private citizen, but I did work for the Defense Intelligence Agency at one time. I think that it is really a disgrace and an outrage that three extraordinarily well-informed individuals, such as the three people we have on this platform, are unable in this democratic country to tell us why we went into Chile. And I'm sure that the moderator himself has doubts.

We do not have an open foreign policy. We do not have an open government. And I think it's all right to be amused that these people, including a senator, cannot get an answer as to why we did something, but I really think that we ought to be considerably outraged.

I am a Wilsonian idealist in some respects in that I do believe in an open foreign policy. And I would like to see us go back to the days when -- when we didn't like Peron, the State Department issued a blue book that said Peron is no good for Argentina. This backfired.

SALISBURY: Do you have a question?

MAN: We didn't like the Communists running for office in Italy and almost getting elected, and what happened? The U.S. Approved For Release 2004/10/13 : CIA-RDP88-01315R000300730012-9

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a Communist regime, and thousands, hundreds of thousands of Americans wrote letters and intervened in Italy.

SALISBURY: It seems to me you're making a speech and not asking a question. Do you have a question?

MAN: Yes.

SALISBURY: Could you put it?

MAN: The question is: How can we -- how can Congress get back to the open development and the open proclamation of a foreign policy?

SENATOR ABOUREZK: There's nothing wonderful or sacred about a Wilsonian policy. Certainly, President Wilson himself and the U.S. Government made a lot of mistakes there, and you cannot conduct diplomacy as openly as he would have wished. It is ideal. But I think in reaction against it over the years, to the other end of the spectrum, say to, quote, realism, this country has gone much too far.

And to answer your first question: Why did we go into Chile? My guess as a citizen is that the decision-making powers within our country have contracted to such a minuscule number of people at the very top, probably as much or more than any other society in the whole world, including the Politburo in Russia, and I think this - I agree with you; this is unhealthy. And I think the pressure of Congress is already having some effect. I hope that the new Congress will put on more pressure and there will be more effect, because there should be a broader consensus when we undertake some of these things.

SALISBURY: This young man here.

MAN: My name is Scott Copeland. I'm a student on the Washington Semester Program. I go to Beloit College in Wisconsin, and I'm personally doing a research paper on the CIA, on oversight. And my question is directed at Senator Abourezk.

The bill that you proposed did not pass, and we have three panelists here who have three differing opinions on how to deal with covert operations, and that was rather evident in how the Senate wanted to deal with covert operations when the bill came up to be voted on.

Now, we have these different views. How can we

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make these views unified and how can we end covert operations?

SALISBURY: Senator?

SENATOR ABOUREZK: Well, you can -- I don't know how you can make the views unified. I've no way of knowing how to do that. I do know how to end covert operations, and that is for enough people in the United States to tell their congressmen and their senators and the President that they want it ended. And when that happens, that's when it will be ended, very seriously.

It sounds like a very simple solution. It's a complicated way to getting there, but that's actually what has to be done. And it's got to be a political movement on the part of the people of this country who disagree with a covert or dirty tricks operation, and they have to make their voices heard.

SALISBURY: How about a question here?

MAN: Yes. I'm Stephen Taylor of Montgomery Blair High School, and I would like to know if - direct this question to Dr. Ford. Could you tell us if the CIA is making any attempt to restoring good diplomatic relations with Cuba?

DR. FORD: Is the United States making any attempt to restore diplomatic relations with Cuba?

MAN: With Cuba.

DR. FORD: It's my understanding yes, that feelers are being made, but not by the CIA, but by the U.S. Government. There've been a congressional team visiting there lately. My personal guess is that it's only a matter of time and we will restore regular relations with Cuba. Also, my guess as a citizen is that this has nothing directly to do with the CIA.

SALISBURY: I wonder if I could ask you a question, Mr. Ford, and maybe it's appropriate. When we have a CIA which is roughly divided into two departments -- one is intelligence and the other is covert operations -- and I suppose there is some kind of a division there and that the intelligence doesn't know about all the covert operations, how does the intelligence division protect itself in making its analysis, let's say, of the political situation in Cuba or in Chile? There may be a big movement seeming to be going on in Chile, but it may be funded by the CIA itself. How can you keep from grinding that into your intelligence estimates?

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DR. FORD: That's a very legitimate question. There have been occasions where something was stirring in another country. If the analyst is any good, he has a dirty mind, and that is, before he sends something up the line to higher authority, he checks with his pals down the hall. And, you know, sometimes he'll find out and sometimes he...

[Confusion of voices]

DR. FORD: On occasion, it has caused a little difficulty. In most occasions, there is enough knowledge and sophistication to carry the day, but there have been some occasions, yes.

SALISBURY: Thank you. Let's go to the floor.

WOMAN: My name is Ann Curtin and I'm from the State University of New York. And I was wondering whether the panelists could comment on the continuation of U.S. funds, including military aid, to the military junta in Chile now. It appears that without U.S. aid the junta could not exist.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: It appears that the U.S. aid is what? I didn't hear the last part.

WOMAN: ...U.S. aid, the military dictatorship could not exist in Chile at the present time.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: I would assume that's right, that the Chilean junta could not exist without the U.S. aid. And by way of further comment on the amount of aid we're giving to the government of Chile, that's the kind of decision-making on the part of our officials that Mr. Ford was talking about that it's withdrawn. The number of people making foreign policy decisions is so small now that you then become -- the result of that kind of decision-making is what we saw in Chile, that we helped to overthrow an elected regime and put in a right-wing, virtually one-man government, or a junta, in Chile that is carrying on the most repressive kind of measures. And that -- once again, that decision-making then persuades us to provide all kind of aid to that government -- not all that they want, perhaps, but a great deal of aid and a great deal more aid than we ever gave to a democratically elected government in Chile.

But that's the kind of thinking that we have in our top levels of government right now, and I believe that's the result of their isolation from open debate and the way a foreign policy ought to be conducted. And that -- the incident in Chile we know about because of a series of events where the actions there were disclosed. But what is happening in

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the other dictatorships that we support that we don't know about? What's going on in those? That's something we really ought to find out about.

We spend several billions of dollars in foreign aid on one-man dictatorships all over the country -- all over the world, rather.

DR. FORD: I think that demonstrates, too, that the U.S. actions against Chile were government-wide on the U.S. side -- that is, overt and covert at all levels. And now -- I agree with the Senator -- to a lot of apparently highly placed official American thought we have a, quote, stable regime in Chile, and it has been bought at a considerable price.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: A considerable price of human freedom.

DR. FORD: That's exactly what I mean.

SALISBURY: This gentleman here.

MAN: My name is Michael Turner from the State University of New York Washington Semester Program. My concern is with the almost exclusive focus here on covert operations. It seems to me that we're neglecting to consider how effective the intelligence-gathering activities of the CIA actually are.

Now, Victor Marchetti has suggested in his book that the impulse for CIA covert operations came in fact from CIA failures in the intelligence-gathering area. For example, he points out the CIA failed to recruit high-level operators in Moscow. The success -- Colonel Penkovsky was recruited by the British.

Similarly in the Indochina War, we failed to recruit in Hanoi and in Peking.

Would the panel care to assess how effective, or, to put it another way, how ineffective has the CIA been in its area of intelligence-gathering?

DR. FORD: I'll take a crack at that, if I may. Vic Marchetti was a colleague of mine and an able analyst. I don't agree with him on that particular point. Some of the things in his book I do agree.

I'd list it this way: I think we should be reminded that total U.S. foreign intelligence is a very wide, vast and complex and very expensive thing, of which the CIA is only part. And in terms of money and in terms of people, it's a modest part.

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Now, it gets all the news because -- of covert operations and the fact that they blow and embarrass and so on, and that's all right, I think, as a democratic society. I'm just sorry personally that there hasn't been more such discussion:

Yes, there are very difficult targets to recruit top level Soviet and Chinese and anyone else. That's a fact of life. I don't think it follows that various covert operations have necessarily been followed because those things were difficult.

On intelligence-gathering, some things we know quite well from overt materials, from trade statistics, from various kinds of photographs and electronic things. When you get into political motivation, that's where it's very difficult to judge. You know, what is Mao going to do tomorrow? And perhaps you know tonight, but he changes his mind during the night.

But I don't think it does a whole lot of good to berate CIA failures in that scheme.

SALISBURY: I wonder, gentlemen -- we haven't touched on another controversial aspect of CIA, except briefly, and that is, the CIA, as I understand it, is forbidden to engage in operations in the continental United States, or in the United States itself, except perhaps -- and I'm not sure about even this -- perhaps in intelligence-gathering. And yet we've had repeated reports in recent years that there have been various kinds of CIA operations functioning in the United States. There was a great scandal about the National Students Union and the funding of various publications and things of that kind.

Do you have any views on whether the CIA should or should not operate in the United States?

BRADEN: I'll take that one. It shouldn't operate in the United States. The law which set it up said it must not operate in the United States, with one exception, and I think perhaps, Mr. Salisbury, you mentioned the exception.

You have to start an operation somewhere, if we're going to say that we'll have operations, contrary to Senator Abourezk's desire, but if you're going to have them, you have to start somewhere, so you have to have a base. You have to have an organization or an office or something to start the operation. Therefore, it has been regarded as within the agency's charter, which forbids domestic operations, to have a floor here in order to conduct operations abroad. And I think that's the way the National Student Association was regarded. Here

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was an organization which was doing work abroad, but in order to get it do do work abroad, you had to go see them here in this country.

Now, I think it's possible that that exception has been stretched pretty far, but that's what it is.

SALISBURY: What about the so-called proprietary organizations, the actual businesses run by the CIA, a number of which are obviously located in the United States?

BRADEN: Correct. The same idea as -- the same justification is made, that you have to have a floor here. They're not supposed to conduct operations here.

DR. FORD: If you're engaged in various kinds of large and complex operations abroad, it takes all kinds of mechanisms to make those work, and the proprietaries are one kind of thing.

There is a slopping over of what is domestic and what is foreign, and I agree that it has gone too far and should be policed much more carefully than it has been.

SALISBURY: Senator?

SENATOR ABOUREZK: Well, the attempted justification for a floor for CIA covert operations in this country, specifically, funding a students organization, is perhaps the best argument for abolishing, again, the coverts branch.

What we have done with this floor is to train young people in this country, or anybody who joins the CIA, trains them how to cheat, how to corrupt, how to bribe, how to murder, how to assassinate. That's all of the things that the covert...

BRADEN: Come on.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: Well, really.

BRADEN: Now come on, Senator.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: That's what the covert operations branch teaches people in this country.

[Applause]

BRADEN: Senator, I happen to know something about that particular operation. I happen to know a lot about it.

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In fact, I ran it. So let me tell you -- let me tell you that there wasn't anybody -- there wasn't anybody cheating and there wasn't anybody assassinating and we didn't take nice young American boys and teach them dirty tricks.

What we did was this.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: Who teaches them, then?

BRADEN: Let me tell you what happened. Let me tell you what happened. We had an organization abroad, based in East Germany and in the Soviet Union, which was a youth league, a students league put up by the Soviet Union, and it was conducting propaganda in all Western European countries and they were holding large meetings where people would stand up and denounce the imperialist, no good United States.

All right. Now what happened was that some students in this country were encouraged to go abroad and stand up and speak at the meetings. Most of them didn't know they were in the employ of the CIA. Maybe only one or two did.

So, I don't -- I think you're exaggerating when you're talking about assassinating and dirty tricks. This was a fellow going over to Paris and making a speech in favor of the Marshall Plan, say. Are you against that?

SENATOR ABOUREZK: The Marshall Plan? No, I'm for it.

[Laughter]

SENATOR ABOUREZK: And I wonder, do we need -- do we need the CIA to fund somebody to go overseas and speak for the United States.

BRADEN: Well, how are they going to get there?

SENATOR ABOUREZK: I suppose the government could do it openly; the State Department could do it openly. What I question is why does it have to be in secret? What else is going on that this whole operation has to be secret?

BRADEN: It would have to be. If it had been openly funded by the United States Government, that student would never have been admitted into the conference. This was a private organization, and those Russians, of course, were not funded by their government. They came as freely traveling students, as all Russian students always do.

SENATOR ABOUREZK: A lot of this is a generation

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ago. The world has changed and we should change, too.

BRADEN: I agree, but I just wanted to get the assassination point across.

SALISBURY: Could you make it brief?

MAN: It was reported that an American Army Special Forces soldier was killed leading a military detachment of the Chilean Government just recently. What authority gives the CIA the right to use American soldiers in foreign lands like that?

SALISBURY: Any answer?

DR. FORD: I don't know anything about that particular report. I'll assume it's authentic. But if it is, it's highly unusual, and if it is, it's totally illegal.

SALISBURY: I'm afraid we have to bring the discussion to an end here. I'm terribly sorry, but we've run out of time and we'll have to conclude this National Town Meeting.

I want to thank the audience here at the Kennedy Center in Washington and those who have been listening on television and radio. And we invite you all to be with us the next time when the National Town Meeting will come live to you from Atlanta, Georgia, where our topic will be "Is the South Really Changing?"