

PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, Frank Carlucci

Question & Answer Session

The Channel City Club

Santa Barbara, California

Friday, November 17, 1978

MR. LANCASTER: ...Since we're in a theater, it's very appropriate to have some attractive scenery for you to look at during our proceeding. And we're very happy to have the wife of our distinguished guest, Mr. Carlucci.

[Applause]

And the president of the Woman's Forum.

[Applause]

In all of our years and all of our speakers, we've never had an official of the CIA. Since accurate intelligence is always necessary, and in today's sophisticated weaponry it's vital, we're delighted to have the Deputy Director of the CIA here with us today. However, our guest has had such an impressive career that we would have welcomed him without the CIA connection.

A graduate of Princeton, Harvard Graduate School of Business, he joined the U. S. Foreign Service in 1956. He served in South Africa, the Congo, Zanzibar, Brazil, and then returned to Washington where he was the operations officer of the Office of Economic Opportunity. He was then made Associate, and then Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget. That was BBL, Before Bert Lance.

[Laughter]

After that he became Undersecretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and, in 1974, was appointed our Ambassador to Portugal. Last February, he was appointed Deputy Director of the CIA. There're only one or two men who I can recall, like Elliott Richardson and James Schlesinger, who have held more top positions in Washington. So he's going to talk to us today on good intelligence, all of whose importance today is vital.

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It's a real honor to present to you the Honorable Frank C. Carlucci.

[Applause.]

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[ADDRESS BY DEPUTY DIRECTOR FRANK CARLUCCI]

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LANCASTER: Thank you very much for a very interesting and informative address. Mr. Carlucci has agreed to answer questions for a few minutes. I think you'll have to lay down a couple of rules. There're a lot of people here, so please make your questions short. Since there're no microphones out there, you'll have to speak up so we can hear them up here on the platform.

The meeting's now thrown open for questions.

Well, either one.

Q: I wonder who is responsible for the Freedom of Information Act.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR CARLUCCI: The question is, who was responsible for the Freedom of Information Act? And it was enacted -- passed by the Congress during the tenure of President Ford. And he vetoed it, and his veto was overridden. I don't think it would serve any particular purpose to enter the names of the individual sponsors of the act. It was overwhelmingly passed by the Congress.

The President -- part of the reason for the President's veto, for President Ford's veto was that he felt the act was inapplicable to the intelligence agencies. But this argument did not prevail. We are making it again with the Congress. And I think it's fair to say that at least in the discussions I've had, I've found a fair amount of sympathy for our position.

Yes, go ahead. Yes, ma'am.

Q: On the subject of the Russian's gross national product, I'd like to know how you determine that, and who is responsible for that?

DEPUTY DIRECTOR CARLUCCI: Well, we in the CIA -- the question is the Soviet Union's gross national product, who is responsible for determining it, and how do you determine it?

We have an economic unit, quite a good one, in the Central Intelligence Agency. That unit, in conjunction with various

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other intelligence organizations, tries to put the information together. The information can come from any number of sources: open publications, although the Soviets don't publish very much, of course; information from our embassies overseas; information that we pick up from returning businessmen, people in the economic sector who have some knowledge of developments in the Soviet Union; consultation with the academic world. We have certain technical ways, certain models that we can build for crop forecasting, one important element. We gather information on the various indices in the Soviet Union. Some of our information is clandestine intelligence; some of it is gathered by technical means. And it is our job in the Central Intelligence Agency to pull all that together and to try and make the best estimates that we can.

I might say that it's a difficult task, and we make extensive use of computer in doing this kind of thing, because our information comes from such a wide variety of sources.

Yes, sir.

Q: You have characterized Soviet Russia as the adversary. What about Red China?

DEPUTY DIRECTOR CARLUCCI: Well, there're certainly....

MAN: Question, please.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR CARLUCCI: The question, I'm sorry -- the question is, I have characterized the Soviet Union as the adversary. What about Red China?

There's no question that they represent a potential threat. But measured in quantitative terms, there really is no comparison between the two. The military might of the Soviet Union is far superior to that of Communist China. This doesn't mean that we don't need to keep a watch on Communist China, or indeed, with modern technology and nuclear weapons, we have to keep our eye on a number of countries around the world, because obviously one of our chief concerns is that a country with irresponsible leadership would develop a nuclear weapon.

So that's one of the things that makes the intelligence business a lot more complex today than it was a number of years ago when we really only had to watch the Soviet Union. You're quite correct. We do have to watch a number of other countries as well.

Yes, sir, right here.

Q: Does the Freedom of Information Act apply to unpublished information as well as published?

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DEPUTY DIRECTOR CARLUCCI: Oh, yes, sir. That's the -- what happens -- he asks, does the Freedom of Information Act apply to unpublished as well as published information?

What happens is that if you want to write in and say to the CIA, "Please give me all the information you have on the Berlin Tunnel," and indeed one person did do this and wrote a book out of the information that he got, or "Please give me all the information that you have on me," we are required, under that act, to search all our files and take the information, review it, and then we are entitled to take out anything that is national security information. If you then believe we've taken out too much, you can go to court and sue us. And the judge then makes the decision. If the decision goes against us, there is a requirement that that particular government employee who took out the information be disciplined.

So the fact is that when your request comes in, we have to search as many as 23 different filing systems, because one of the principles of an intelligence organization is what we call compartmentation. We don't want to have all our information together. We want to keep one part of our organization from knowing what another part of the organization is doing, for security reasons. We operate on the "need to know" principle. So that means we, far more than any other government agency, have to go through a number of different files.

And quite frankly, what you get out of it I think is of very little value, unless you really do plan to write a book. I was told of a case the other day where we've had one person employed for four years answering freedom of information requests on a man who's writing a book on a particular subject in Germany.

Yes, sir.

Q: Is the CIA concerned with UFOs to any degree?

DEPUTY DIRECTOR CARLUCCI: Is the CIA concerned about UFOs in any degree? The answer to that is, no, that's really the Air Force's responsibility. We haven't had any reports of any lately.

I'll take a question way in the back there.

Q: Did the CIA ever authorize the assassination of Castro?

[Laughter]

DEPUTY DIRECTOR CARLUCCI: Of course, then, I think you all heard it. Did the CIA ever authorize the assassination of Castro?

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The CIA, as an organization, does not have the power to authorize doing any activity of that nature, other than intelligence collection. In virtually every case, as I indicated in my earlier remarks, as verified by the Pike Committee and the Church Committee, the activities CIA engaged in were as a result of a political decision at a higher level. The fact is that, according to the hearings -- and I wasn't involved in the CIA at the time -- there was a plan along those lines. The assassination attempts never took place. I personally think it's reprehensible, but the planning took place.

But in any event, President Carter has issued an executive order making it very clear that the CIA will not engage in assassinations pursuant to directions from anyone.

Yes, ma'am.

Q: What do you see as our [words inaudible] the apparent inroads that the Soviet Union is making into Africa?

DEPUTY DIRECTOR CARLUCCI: Your question is, what do we need to do to include [sic] the apparent inroads that the Soviet Union is making into Africa?

I myself spent a number of years in Africa, and I wish I could answer that question easily. It really is a policy question which would be better addressed to the Secretary of State or the President. We as an intelligence organization are only charged with the responsibility of following the developments in Africa, analyzing them and reporting them to the President, the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, along with possibly suggesting options. But we do not get in the policy-making process.

Having said that, let me just note once again that the Soviet Union obviously thinks it is gaining some leverage by its activities in Africa. Castro obviously thinks that he is enhancing his image among the non-aligned. My own view is that it is very important to stress that this, in no sense of the world -- by this, I mean the Soviet and Cuban activity -- can be considered non-aligned. The Cuban activities in Africa are very clearly aligned with a big power, and it's important that the non-aligned countries, the truly non-aligned countries of the world understand that. And it seems to me important that the countries of Africa understand that if these activities continue, their hard won independence could be in some danger.

We'll take one over here this time.

Q: I wonder who is the lesser person who can give you an order on what to do?

DEPUTY DIRECTOR CARLUCCI: Well, the Director of Central

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Intelligence -- "Who is the lesser person who can give us an order what to do?"

You have to make a distinction here between intelligence collection and what are called special activities, non-intelligence collection. In terms of intelligence collection, the priorities are set through the National Security Council mechanism. The Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, Adviser for National Security Affairs, Director of Central Intelligence meet, decide what are the critical items of information that they need to make a decision. And that's reported to the President, and he then establishes the priorities.

In terms of special activity, that is other than collection activities which have been authorized by executive order and are authorized under the 1947 statute, there is a process that has been set up which requires a meeting of the National Security Council, a presidential determination, and a briefing of those seven committees of Congress that I described.

In terms of line of command, the Director of Central Intelligence reports to the President through the National Security Council.

Yes, sir.

Q: How does your agency feel about President Carter's willingness to release the satellite photos?

DEPUTY DIRECTOR CARLUCCI: The question is, how does our agency feel about President Carter's willingness to release satellite photos? Correction. The President made a statement in which he acknowledged the fact of overhead photographic systems. He did not indicate that he was going to release the information gained through those systems. He did indicate that those systems would be important in verification of the SALT treaties. And we certainly agree with that, and we support his decision to make known the fact that we do have these satellites.

Yes, sir.

Q: I understand that the Civil Defense is planning to evacuate cities in the event of nuclear attack. Do you think it's possible to get a warning early enough to do this?

DEPUTY DIRECTOR CARLUCCI: It is possible, yes. And indeed that -- the question is, is it possible to get a warning early enough to evacuate our cities in the event of a nuclear attack?

Yes, it is possible. That's one of our missions. Warning, though, can be as much as a year's leadtime if you

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start to analyze some of the troop deployments, some of the industrial production, or it could be -- if you miss something, it could be as short as a couple of hours. And that is precisely why it's important that we continue to have an effective intelligence organization.

By and large, I think we have the capacity to give our country sufficient warning. But given the nature of modern technology, I can't give you a categorical assurance that you would have four or five days' warning to evacuate cities. Certainly we would have enough warning to be able to retaliate. And our current doctrine is based on strategic retaliation. That is, and this is not a very pleasant subject, after they hit us, we still have enough left over to do very severe damage to them. And that is the ultimate deterrent. And certainly our warning is sufficient to give us that.

[Applause; end of Q&A]