

Remarks at *TIME* Executive News Conference

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April 18, 1989

Thank you very much, Bruce.* It's nice to be introduced by Bruce Van Voorst. When I think of *TIME* I always think of Richard Van Voo Vees, who was the famous voice of the March of Time when I was a child growing up. I always assumed that anyone with a name like that and a voice like that must know what he was talking about.

I have just a few remarks to make this morning. I really came to welcome you here and to hear Roz Ridgway and some of the others whom you have gathered most wisely to talk about issues, and so my remarks will be rather unstructured and I hope you'll bear with me.

It's such a beautiful morning. I started off in the Rose Garden this morning, and it's really fun to report to someone who has had this job before. The interchange, the requests for additional information shedding light, and the interaction are stimulating to us.

We send regular briefers to the White House, and I go often to get a sense of the reaction of the President and his immediate advisors, General Scowcroft and John Sununu, and to sense whether we are doing our job and whether they are hearing our message.

We don't make policy. We try to present useful, timely, and objective intelligence to policymakers so that they can make wise decisions in the interest of our country. But we do insist that they hear it and that they not alter it, and I'll talk about that in just a moment.

I want to welcome you to what is called "The Bubble" here, not because it looks like a bubble, but because I suppose it's symbolic of what we call those places around the world that have been made as secure as we can make them for communications in our embassies—we call them "The Bubble."

They often look like bubbles. Occasionally, in the ones I've visited, I've been required to take off my shoes. This is because there have been diplomats who have found that when they've sent their shoes to be repaired in hostile environments, there has been a transmitter placed in the heel or somewhere else. So shoes are left outside "The Bubble."

There is also an awareness in our embassies that we do have things that cannot be trusted to a conventional environment. I think it makes us all a little

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more conscious of the importance of intelligence and counterintelligence, the hostile target working against us.

Well, this is an interesting time to be in this profession and all of the related professions, including the diplomatic profession, from whom you're going to hear today. Things are happening in the world that many would not have anticipated, and this is requiring all our best efforts. These events require all our capabilities—our human intelligence, our signals intelligence, and our imagery intelligence—to make sense out of what is happening and, where we can, to anticipate, both on a near term and on a long term basis, what is apt to come from those areas in which ordinary intelligence has heretofore been denied us, except by the most active clandestine efforts on our part.

The elections last month in the Soviet Union are a good example of that. These were the freest elections in the Soviet Union since 1917, and citizens really had a chance to express their happiness or discontent. I think of the prominent political figure in Leningrad who was defeated without opposition. When I was a young lawyer, we used to say that the one thing we feared the most was losing an uncontested divorce suit. In the Soviet Union, people are expressing the fact that perestroika has not yet become real to them. They are not seeing the benefits of economic reform in terms of the food on their table and other quality of life improvements, whereas they are grasping quickly the opportunities of glasnost to express themselves.

And we are seeing that all over the Soviet republics—the Baltic, the Armenian and Azerbaijani states, and more recently indications of similar activity in Georgia and in the Ukraine.

It is an exciting time for those who have followed Soviet events to try to understand what all this means. I agree with Henry Kissinger, who contends that in many cases Gorbachev does not really know what he plans to do next. He is stirring the stew, creating opportunities for new solutions, without what we would consider to be a long-term game plan. And so it makes it more difficult for intelligence experts to anticipate—and we get a lot of pressure from the White House and other places to anticipate—what he's going to do next.

We're not bad at forecasting. We may know he's likely to announce some unilateral troop withdrawals or some unacceptable quid pro quos, such as giving up Cam Ranh Bay and Subic Bay—things that have kept him in the political limelight, given the aura of detente and reasonableness.

At the same time, we've had great difficulty in predicting with specificity what he's going to do. And I think one of the reasons is he doesn't know what he's going to do very far ahead of what he does. But it's very effective.

We try in intelligence to look not just at political issues, but at economic capabilities as well. Political issues, though, are important because there is so much focus on this man and perestroika and reform in the way they're describing.

And with all the arms talks, a considerable amount of our resources are dedicated to arms control and that companion question, the ability to monitor or verify arms agreements, which is crucial in terms of congressional ratification of treaties and public acceptance. This puts the Intelligence Community very much on the spot as we try as objectively as we can to tell the Congress the level of confidence that we have in our ability to monitor agreements as they are being negotiated. We worked our way through the INF Treaty. The START negotiations present enormously magnified problems for us.

You may think that we're spending all of our time on the Soviet Union. That's not true. Historically, we've spent between 85 and 90 percent of our resources in this area, and we may be working our way back up to that, thanks to Gorbachev.

But more recently, the activities in other parts of the world—and you'll hear about some of that this morning—have commanded a good deal of our attention. We call those Third World or regional developments and occasionally regional conflicts. We see them—the events in Africa, in Latin America, in the Far East, especially in Cambodia. And we're watching economic developments as well.

Bruce mentioned my concern about biological and chemical warfare and the proliferation of that capability along with missiles in the Middle East, and that is a major concern. And I surfaced it not to suggest a policy, but to develop an awareness of what was otherwise being legitimized by silence while the Iraqis and Iranians were killing each other with chemical weapons. Every other nation in the Middle East was trying to develop chemical weapons for themselves, because they saw a good, cheap deal and they wanted to take advantage of it.

Added to the regional conflicts, regional developments, and of course the main Soviet problem, are the transnational issues of counternarcotics, counterterrorism, and counterintelligence. These are taking up a good deal of our time. We've reorganized the Agency and the Intelligence Community efforts to be able to produce a better and more timely result for our government, and I think that we are staying ahead of this curve, particularly the Bill Bennett curve. I want to be sure the Intelligence Community is ready, willing, and able to serve, because I don't want to be at the other end of his whiplash when he mounts his bully pulpit to say what's wrong with what has heretofore been a not too well coordinated drug effort around the world. We're taking our place in that. We know where we can help, and the new Counternarcotics Center is the Intelligence Community's contribution to the effort.

Well, these are some of the things that are keeping our attention. We are not just here at Langley. The Intelligence Community is much broader. The National Security Agency, NSA, has more employees than we do and is doing magnificent work in cryptology and signals intelligence at Fort Meade and other places.

We have the Defense Intelligence Agency. The Department of State, INR, has its own very helpful and useful intelligence and analytical capabilities. And each of the military services is working to have a better understanding, primarily in defensive and offensive warfare—we call some of that indications and warnings. I might take just a minute to mention what I mean by that, because it's vitally important and it's geared to some of the things that Gorbachev is doing now.

When Gorbachev says he's pulling his tanks back, when he's removing his bridge-crossing equipment, when he's taking 500,000 troops back into Russia, he is telling us that the warning period is going to expand. We are in a much better position to deal with force structure, with threat, with all the problems that go with the tension of not knowing when a major assault from the enemy could occur. So we're busy developing our ability to detect changes, adverse changes, little things that might signal to our defense forces that the Soviets are getting ready to do something hostile in our direction. And the military services work very closely with us.

We call all this the Intelligence Community. I think the Intelligence Community is working better together than it has for a long, long time. The leaders of the Intelligence Community meet on a regular basis, as do the ordinary Intelligence Community Staff sections, not only to devise among ourselves the manner in which our overall budget will be applied for the most benefit to the country, but also to shake out the little problems, turf problems, other kinds of problems to avoid unnecessary redundancy and become more effective.

We are talking together, and I think we are talking together very well. As a part of that, we have the National Intelligence Council, made up of National Intelligence Officers who are specialists in major fields and who produce the National Intelligence Estimates, which are the broader-gauge look at the major intelligence problems around the world.

And as a community, we pass judgment on these estimates, reflecting the differences of view and nuances that each intelligence agency wants to record in the estimates, putting them where the reader can find them, not burying them, and then submitting them to the policymakers, who are asked to read it, to understand it, to take our material—use it, throw it away, do anything but change it. In that way, I think the old expression of "cooking the books" can go out the window. I haven't heard that expression since I've been here, and I don't intend to hear it.

We want to be as useful as we can in the way I have described. We give the Congress 1,000 briefings a year, which may come as some surprise to you. It certainly did to me. And I'm not sure that may not be too many. But it is important that we be responsive to the Congress and at the same time protect the responsibility that we have to guard our sources and our methods. It's just a function of numbers: when too many people know about things that are required to be kept secret, the risk of such information finding its way into the hands of those who have a right to print it expands.

And so we are working to make sure that the oversight committees of the Congress and the Intelligence Community closely coordinate secrets, always telling the truth, but not telling things that are at greatest risk. I won't go into how I do that with the leadership, but so far I think it's working.

You are going to hear about East-West relations and North-South relations from policymakers and intelligence experts, and I hope to be here for part of it because I'm very much interested in what they're going to say.

And on behalf of the Intelligence Community, I want to thank all of you who have taken time from your busy agendas and your companies to try to understand a little more about what is happening in the world and what our major problems are, so that you, too, can lend some support to us.

Many of you are already providing the Intelligence Community with your assessments of meetings of leaders and businessmen in other parts of the world—assessments that would not be available to the ordinary spy, but are available because of glasnost and other access and business relationships. And these help us to understand better what is going on in the world, so that we can make our intelligence analysis more useful to the Administration.

So I want to close by thanking you for what you do for us. Welcome to "The Bubble."