PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

3 FEBRUARY 1981

ADMIRAL STANSFIELD TURNER INTERVIEW
WITH DAN RATHER - 60 MINUTES

DAN RATHER: Well, first I want you to take me on a world tour. I'm told that you have a world tour that you want to take me on. Let's take that tour.

[Asides]

RATHER: Where do you see the -- for rank-and-file Americans in their living rooms, where do are the future potential trouble spots? And let's touch on important spots: Moscow, Western Europe. Tell me what's at hand.

ADMIRAL STANSFIELD TURNER: I'd like to touch on three that I think are long-range but very important fundamental problems for the United States, Dan.

The first one is, I think we've, as a world, underestimated the impact on world economies of the increasing price of energy.

The second is, I think there's a real challenge for United States leadership today in dealing with our NATO allies. They are much more independent. They have much less confidence in the United States than they did, perhaps, a decade ago.

And finally, I think we have to become more sophisticated in our dealings with the Soviet Union. I believe we're going to have to learn to have a grain embargo on the Soviets on the one hand, and sell them pipeline to build gas transmission systems on the other; on the one hand, to criticize them [unintelligible] their invasion of Afghanistan, on the other hand, to negotiate a SALT II. It isn't going to be all blacks and whites.

RATHER: Now, when you say our NATO allies don't have the confidence in us they had 10 years ago, why is that? And is one of the reasons such things as our failure with the desert raid in Iran?

ADMIRAL TURNER: That certainly is contributory. But I think, more important, they feel that the overall military balance has been shifting against us. I think they feel that U.S. policy hasn't been constant enough -- hasn't been constant enough.

RATHER: Now, when you talk about NATO, do you include France as part of NATO? They are not a NATO member.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, they're a member of NATO. They don't participate on the military side. So, yes, I feel that they're part of...

RATHER: You include them in that.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Oh, yes.

RATHER: What have been the other contributory factors in the loss of confidence?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well I think that it goes to the fundamentals of the economics. They don't see the U.S. economy as strong as it was in the past, as dominant in the world economy than previously. They saw us, in effect, defeated in Vietnam. And they then saw this country take a hands-off position and create a virtual vacuum into which the Soviets could move after Vietnam. And you saw them move into Angola, from there to Ethiopia, from there to Yemen, Cambodia, and finally Afghanistan.

RATHER: I'm a little surprised to hear you say under the heading of "we have to be more sophisticated in our handling of the Soviets," that we would on the one hand, give them pipelines. I would think you'd be unalterably opposed to that.

ADMIRAL TURNER: That s an exception to the rule, in my book. Because I believe that the world is going to have trouble bringing our economies out of recession for lack of adequate energy supply. And therefore I think it's in everybody's interest to produce as much energy, whether it comes from the Soviet Union or Saudi Arabia, as possible.

RATHER: Well, haven't we already given the Soviets much more of our technology than is healthy for us?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes, I believe so. And I would not want to transfer more high technology to them at this time.

RATHER: And you wouldn't consider the pipeline high

technology.

ADMIRAL TURNER: No.

RATHER: Let s talk about a subject most people, or many people are tired of talking about, and that's Iran. It might be instructive if you could tell us in retrospect, from your vantage point, what went wrong with American policy in Iran.

ADMIRAL TURNER: American policy in Iran. I think we became too wedded to the Shah. We felt that he could solve too many problems for us. We didn't recognize that we have a responsibility in the Persian Gulf/Indian Ocean area to insure the flow of oil to the Free World from that area. It s vital to us. It's vital to our allies. We never should have thought of trying to turn that responsibility for keeping that safe over to anyone else.

RATHER: Which is basically what we did in the early 1970s.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes. And I think that was a mistake, and I think we are now caught short, because we have a vital national interest in that area and we simply cannot bring adequate military power to bear.

I'm not suggesting, Dan, that we need to fight there. But I am suggesting that it's axiomatic, if you have a vital national interest, you've got to be able to threaten or use military force if necessary. If you can't, the Secretary of State has fewer tools with which to handle the problem.

RATHER: Are you saying to me that if we were to make a threat in that area now it would be a hollow threat?

ADMIRAL TURNER: It wouldn't be adequate to some of the problems that might arise there.

RATHER: Again, we're talking from the standpoint of hindsight, which is always a advantage. What else went wrong in Iran?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, in Iran overall, you have the same problem you have in many lesser-developed countries with oil resources even today. You have a high infusion of money and you have a corresponding societal change that is taking place. And it s very difficult to control. It's something that we don't understand; I don't think the Shah understood, and it got the best of him.

RATHER: Now, does Iran stand as an intelligence failure, not just during your tour at the Central Intelligence Agency,

but for American intelligence as a whole? Does it represent a failure?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I don't really think so. I think that's an oversimplification of the issue. And I'm not trying to be defensive here.

I think that intelligence in this country, over a long period of time, generally kept the policymakers aware that there were problems developing in Iran. When you come to predicting an actual revolution or coup, that's another thing, and it's much more difficult, much more problematic. But the real fundamental issue is, were we telling the policymakers that there were difficult situations in Iran that were going to cause trouble in the future? And I think we generally were.

RATHER: How could the CIA be so wrong in its own assessment of what was going on in Iran? Well now, keep in mind in August of '77 -- I want to quote -- the CIA reported that, quote, the Shah will be an active participant in Iranian life well into the 1980s, end of quotation. That was in August 1977. And a year later the CIA said, quote, Iran is not in a revolutionary or even a pre-revolutionary situation, end quote. That was in 1978.

ADMIRAL TURNER: The report you're talking about is not a CIA report. I've had that quoted to me before. That was a draft which never saw the light of day. And it is not the CIA's position that you've quoted there.

RATHER: It was not the CIA's position at that time?

ADMIRAL TURNER: It was not the CIA's position...

RATHER: Well, explain about that. You know the source of that. It's a congressional source which describes it as a CIA report. What you're saying, it's a draft -- it was a draft and not a report.

ADMIRAL TURNER: That's correct. And I personally rejected that draft, and so I know it is not true.

RATHER: Well, during that time, what was -- in general, what was the CIA telling the American policymakers?

ADMIRAL TURNER: We were telling them that there were all kinds of opposition to the Shah, some on cultural, some on religious, some on economic, some on political grounds.

What we did not predict was that all of these forms of opposition would coalesce under the aegis of a 78-year-old cleric who has been an expatriate for 16 years, and would become more than the Shah could handle, when he had large military and police

powers to back him up. In short, we thought that when the crunch came and these dissident groups rose to greater power, the Shah would step in at the right time and knock it down. He didn t.

Dan, I still don't know why. I suspect it may have had something to do with his illness.

RATHER: Is it -- does it remain your view that had he stepped in, had the Shah stepped in at that time, he could have put it down; that there was a moment when, if he had chosen to do so, he could have hammered it down?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well there certainly was. But the time he faced that issue, as we understand it, it would have been very, very bloody very, very painful to have done it. Had he stepped in earlier, I think he could have.

But again, let me come back to the fact, there was a societal change taking place in this country. It wouldn't have been suppressed forever.

RATHER: What mistakes did the Central Intelligence Agency make, and, more importantly, I think, the intelligence community as a whole in this country make vis-a-vis Iran? And you've mentioned, that you didn't foresee these various elements coalescing behind Khomeini. What other mistakes did the intelligence community make?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I think -- I think that s hardly a mistake, even. I think that our analysis showed what was happening, but we did not come to the conclusion that this was suddenly going to turn into a successful revolution.

Now we would like to have been able to predict that. But I would suggest to you that if you measure the quality of intelligence in any country against that kind of a standard you're going to come up with a low batting average. I think predicting those is 25 percent chance.

Again I go back to the point that what we should be measured against is are we six or 12 months ahead of an event like that, telling the policymakers that there is a problem and what options they may have under those circumstances. Because six or 12 months ahead of time, they can do something. If you tell them that there s going to be a revolution tomorrow it s too late, and that's of much less importance.

RATHER: I've heard -- and, now, let s try to set the record straight -- French intelligence was predicting what happened well before. Is that true?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No. Well if they were they didn't

tell us. I mean all of these other intelligence services who claimed they had great insight into this were not telling anybody else about it if they did. I can't tell you what they were talking about in their home camp. But the media, the academics, the other intelligence services, none of them were on line that this was as serious a problem for the Shah as it turned out to be.

RATHER: Does that include Israeli intelligence?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Absolutely.

RATHER: Because one of the things I've heard is that Israeli intelligence was telling our intelligence, look, this was coming, and that we rejected it. Now, does that square...

ADMIRAL TURNER: That's absolutely false.

RATHER: One of the most important questions to me about Iran, and one that you would know about, is, was the takeover of the U.S. Embassy in Teheran something done by local militants and students, or was it something planned and done on a larger scale? Were outside terrorists involved?

ADMIRAL TURNER: My best estimate at this point, and we have a few fragments from the hostages who have just returned, is that it really was an Islamic student movement. Clearly, any movement like that gets infiltrated over a period of time [unintelligible]. I don't believe it ever got infiltrated to the point it was controlled by outside terrorist-type people.

RATHER: The best available information indicates what, if any, complicity by an international conspiracy?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Very little, or none. I don't have any indication of that.

RATHER: You have no indication of that.

ADMIRAL TURNER: No.

RATHER: That would include the PLO.

ADMIRAL TURNER That's correct.

RATHER: And the Soviets?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Now, that does not mean that there weren't students in there who had been trained by the PLO or been to PLO camps, and one thing, in the course of their life. But as far as directing and having a major influence on that, we don't believe the Soviets or the PLO did.

RATHER: Now, was -- unquestionably, there was some confusion about that in the early days and weeks of the takeover.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Oh, yes.

RATHER: Were you at one time of the opinion that there must be some international conspiracy involved?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No, I was not.

RATHER: What was the early read from your own people?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Our people initially believed that this was a student movement of right-wing Islamic bent.

RATHER: And you think subsequently that that was proven out.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes I do.

RATHER: Now, the question gets important, as you know, because the new Secretary of State, General Alexander Haig, who you know reasonably well, said at his first news conference that the Soviet Union is sponsoring and supporting and expanding international terrorism throughout the world.

ADMIRAL TURNER: When the Soviets are willing to supply arms to a country like Libya, which is obviously causing problems in terrorism and many other ways all around the world, it's a real troublemaker you have to associate the Soviet Union with that type of activity. They are in complicity with the Libyans.

RATHER: Insofar as you can make out, were the Soviets involved in the embassy takeover in Iran?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No. They were surprised about it too.

RATHER: You think they were surprised as well.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes. Because, of course, their embassy as attacked a few weeks after ours, and repulsed by the Iranian government.

The big issue here is the Iranian government did not stand behind international law and protecting the diplomatic premises

RATHER: Of the U.S. Embassy.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Of the U.S.

RATHER: But they did to the Soviets.

ADMIRAL TURNER: That's correct.

RATHER: Now what does that tell us?

ADMIRAL TURNER: That tells us either that they awakened in between and realized that they had to do this, or they were preferential, in that case, to the Soviets.

Since then, however, even this dastardly government of Khomeini has not taken a pro-Soviet stance. I think that's fortunate for us. They obviously aren't pro-American. They're trying to stay in between.

RATHER: Your best estimates of their chances of surviving as a government.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Very low. Khomeini is incapable with his clerics, of bringing that country into order, running a successful economy. He's bound to fall one of these days.

That doesn't mean we're going to suddenly have a pro-U.S. or a pro-West government fall into place there. I think we have to be patient. We have to realize that someday Iran is going to recognize that they re going to need the support of the United States because they're so threatened by the Soviet Union. And, of course, the United States needs Iran too. So there is an area of mutual interest here that will revive someday.

RATHER: Someday. But that day is [inaudible].

I recognize we're pretty far afield. But in your personal opinion, is that day going to be any time soon?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No. I think it's some time off. The United States is going to have to be patient.

And in the interim, there's going to be a real risk, a real risk that the Soviets may gain a dominant position in Iran by subversion or by military force. And I think that's why we have to be prepared to use military force in that area if it's absolutely necessary.

RATHER: And it's your judgment we're not now prepared to do that.

ADMIRAL TURNER: We're making good progress and getting ready. But I don't think we are there. I think, over a period of years, we have neglected this type of capability in favor of concentrating all of our interest and attention on the military field on supporting the main front in Europe.

RATHER: Admiral, when the Soviets first moved into

Afghanistan, was it your counsel to the President of the United States at that time, based on intelligence information, that they were making a push toward the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, I'm not going to, even after the fact, talk about specific recommendations to the President. I think that's [unintelligible] he's entitled to his privacy there.

I believe the Soviets went into Iran -- into Afghanistan primarily because they saw a socialist-oriented government right on their border about to collapse because it wasn't hacking the job in the country. And I think they felt that was more than they should tolerate. And I think they felt, based on the precedent of Angola, Ethiopia, Yemen, Cambodia, that the United States would not stand up very strong if they did go in.

RATHER: That's a different thing than making a push toward the Indian Ocean and the historic desire for a warm-water port.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes. I think that was a secondary consideration. They certainly want that. They wanted it historically. And the fact that this opportunity was there that didn't -- that aided or abetted their willingness to go into Afghanistan. But I believe the primary pressures were more local, more current than that.

RATHER: Based on what you know, is it your opinion that they're still interested in pushing toward the Indian Ocean, or that they'll stop short of that?

ADMIRAL TURNER: The czars were interested in that, and the Russian people are still the same, the Soviet people are still the same today.

RATHER: I know you're not a wagering man. But if you had to bet, the Soviets move into Iran, or not?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I think that with their problems in Afghanistan, with their problems in Poland, with their knowledge that there would be an intense reaction from the United States and the rest of the Free World, they will be very, very hesitant to do that in the foreseeable future.

RATHER: Let's talk about Poland for a moment. Was our intelligence wrong about Poland?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No, I think our intelligence was very good about Poland. We watched the buildup of the Soviet forces there, to the point where in early December, I believe, they were ready to go. And we reported that.

RATHER: In early December you thought they were ready to go.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes, early to mid-December.

RATHER: Did you think the chances were strong that they might indeed go?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes, I think they were.

RATHER: That is, the Soviets invade Poland?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I still think the Soviets had every intention of going at that time.

RATHER: What stopped them?

ADMIRAL TURNER: What stopped them was that this was a quite different situation from the Czechoslovakian one because there was so much attention and publicity to the possibility of their coming in. The labor unions in Poland, the government in Poland, the Catholic Church in Poland all saw this high probability of a Soviet invasion, when they all recognized that that wouldn't do any one of their interests any good. So the willingness to make some kind of an accommodation came up.

The Soviets, I think, because of all this publicity, also recognized how damaging it would be to them politically; and also it would be very costly to them economically.

So I think there has, since the height of the attention in early December, there's been a greater willingness on both sides to try to find some accommodation. But they haven't found it for good yet.

[Asides]

RATHER: We were talking about Poland. Has the threat of Soviet invasion abated?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Oh, I think for the time being. But it's my personal view, Dan, that the institution of free labor unions in Poland and other steps toward more freedom have gone further than the Soviets can tolerate. They must be counting on the Polish government being able to

RATHER: We were talking about Poland. Has the threat of Soviet invasion abated?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Oh I think for the time being. But it's my personal view, Dan, that the institution of free labor unions in Poland and other steps toward more freedom have gone further than the Soviets can tolerate. They must be counting on the Polish government being able to walk those back, to erase some of those gains that the freedom people have made in Poland. I doubt that they're going to be able to. So I think the crunch is going to come somewhere down the pike.

RATHER: If you think, in your words, the crunch is going to come somewhere down the pike in Eastern Europe, that strikes me as very dangerous for us, in terms of our own national security.

ADMIRAL TURNER: I don t think it's that dangerous. Anything like that can explode and be a problem. But it's mainly a problem for the Soviet Union and how they re going to continue to control their Eastern European empire. If they have to go into Poland it s going to tie down forces and it s going to cost them a great deal of money, because they'll have to practically absorb the 20-some billion dollars of Polish debt. They ll have to run the Polish economy. And the Soviet economy is already in trouble.

It's going to be a very costly thing, and will be a big impediment to Soviet interference around the rest of the world.

RATHER: Now is this for our own propaganda uses that we keep talking about the weakness of the Soviet economy, or is based on what you consider to be hard facts gathered by intelligence?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I think it's very hard facts. We ve talked over the years about the Soviet economic problems. I think they really are much greater today.

But more importantly, they are systemic, not cyclical economic problems. By that I mean they can't produce enough for the consumers, who are the workers to induce the workers to work harder, because there's no reward for it. And therefore productivity is going down inside the Soviet Union. And when productivity goes down, they have less to provide to their consumers and they're in a cycle that they can t break out of.

RATHER: Is this one reason they're so concerned about Poland?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, I think it's more though that they have to keep that Eastern European empire intact. That's

their line of communication across to Western Europe and it's utterly vital to them to hold Poland.

No, I think it's more a geopolitical problem with Poland.

RATHER: We hear a lot of talk -- and I'm interested in what intelligence is telling us -- that the Soviet are very worried about their own Islamic population. We tend to forget there are millions, 70 million or above, people of Islamic heritage inside the Soviet Union. What does our intelligence tell us about how concerned they are about the Islamic revolution in Iran and the circles that's creating throughout the area right on the Soviet Union s border?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I don't see that as a major concern of the Soviets. I think they have their own Islamic people under reasonable control I think it s a consideration, but a secondary one to a much greater in Iran, the oil and the access to the warm water.

RATHER: While we're talking about the Soviets I d like to get back to Secretary Haig. I began this line of questioning a moment ago and I want to get back again.

Surely Secretary Haig knows what he's talking about, as long as he was in the military as long as he's been in the U.S. Government. And you've just completed four years as the CIA Director. Could you pinpoint for us where and how the Soviets have supported international terrorist activities. Now, you mentioned Libya as one. Any place else?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No. I think I'll leave that to Secretary Haig to support, because I think he's right that the Soviets have encouraged revolutionary movements in many countries that have ended up with some form of terrorism...

[Dog barking]

ADMIRAL TURNER: I d rather let him buttress his own argument.

[Asides]

RATHER: I asked you about the embassy takeover and the comments that the Soviets fostered international terrorism. And I'm asking you now to -- do you agree with General Haig that they have done that?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes.

RATHER: I asked you for an example and you gave me Libya. Any others that you can give?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, I think they ve supported the PLO. I think they've supported some revolutionary movements around the world that have ended up with some form of terrorism.

RATHER: But again, is this a fact based on hard intelligence, what you consider to be hard intelligence, that the Soviets have helped to sponsor the Palestine Liberation Organization?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I think there's reasonable intelligence that there have been lots of contacts between the two. And there's certainly hard intelligence on the strong Libyan connection with the Soviets.

RATHER: How much of that can you tell me? What is the connection between the Soviets and the Libyans and Libyan sponsorship of terrorism?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, the connection between the Soviets and the Libyans is in the supply or the sale of excessive amounts of military equipment, far beyond what the Libyans can possibly use on their own. And therefore the Soviets must certainly realize that the Libyans are going to put this to nefarious employment.

RATHER: Any hard intelligence information that leaders of the Palestine Liberation Organization or other terrorist groups have been trained in Moscow or inside the Soviet Union?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Nothing I can discuss, no.

RATHER: And when you say nothing you can discuss I respect that. But that leaves the clear inference that there is such evidence in existence.

ADMIRAL TURNER: I wouldn't draw that inference. It isn't necessarily the case. But there are limits even though I'm out of the intelligence business Dan, as to what I can discuss.

RATHER: You see where the main thrust of this is that it's serious, to say the least, when the Secretary of State says -- for that matter, the President of the United States says -- that the Soviet Union lies and cheats; the Secretary of State says they're involved in international terrorism. Those are very serious charges to make against a society and a people and a government.

ADMIRAL TURNER: I ve given you all that I can in backup for that, within the limits of security.

RATHER: Well about the Libyan connection. Where does that manifest itself? You say it's clear the Soviets have given

the Libyans massive supplies of arms, you said an overabundance of arms. But where does that manifest itself in international terrorism?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, Libya has traditionally over the years supported international terrorism. I will say that it's gone up and down at different periods in their history. They've been more and less active. I think they've become more active in recent years.

RATHER: The scale is up.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes.

RATHER: Where has most of their activity been centered, in Africa itself?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, no. It s worldwide not just terrorism, but their interference. They're causing problems in Central America. They're funding the Moslem liberation groups in the Philippines. They're all over the world causing difficulties.

RATHER: Well, let s talk about that as much as you can, and first about Central America, which is one of those areas of the world obviously I wanted to cover. It comes as news to me that the Libyans are involved in any way in Central America.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, the critical thing going on in Central America today is the internationalization of revolutions down there, the outside support that is coming for all these revolutionary movements, in Nicaragua and El Salvador and Guatemala, and so on. And I think this is a very dangerous trend for the United States, and one that's right on our back doorstep.

RATHER: Well, again, how much can you tell me about that? You say the internationalization. How does that manifest itself?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, I think you certainly recognize that it's the Cuban hand, in funneling much of this equipment to the revolutionaries, that has been much of the cause of the problem. Now, the Cubans don't have the resources to provide much of anything to anybody. Their economy s in very bad condition. They're getting that from the Libyans, from the Soviets, others.

RATHER: Now, again, is this based on hard intelligence fact? Because one will get some argument about this. The argument goes along the lines that the Cubans and Soviets get credit for doing a lot more than they in fact do in Central America.

ADMIRAL TURNER: I think the argument is that what the

Cubans have had to do has not been massive, but it's been critical. It s tipped the balance. In short, they didn't have to provide great boatloads of arms to tip the balance in the Nicaraguan revolution, but what they did do for support was utterly critical to its success.

RATHER: What did they do?

ADMIRAL TURNER: They provided arms and advisers.

RATHER: Cuban advisers?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes.

RATHER: On the ground in Nicaragua, or are you talking about training people back in Cuba?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I think more training. Of course there are all kinds of Cubans in Nicaragua now.

RATHER: That's since the revolution.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Since the revolution. Yes

RATHER: Again in retrospect, what mistakes did we make in Nicaragua?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Nicaragua is typical of the kind of problem we are facing in many countries of the world. We want to support the incumbent government, with whom we have relations and who are doing a reasonable job, but we find it difficult to encourage them to modernize and democratize their country as rapidly as the demand is coming from the left. And I think it's an age-old problem. It's going to continue to be with us. And I don't know an easy solution to it.

You can say in each instance, "You made the wrong judgment. You didn't force them fast enough." If you force them too fast -- maybe the Shah -- you have a problem also.

RATHER: Again in retrospect, did our intelligence fail us in Nicaragua?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No. I think we indicated that there were very deep problems there. I think we provided a good background for what was going on there.

RATHER: Including the shakiness of the Somoza regime?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Oh, yes. You only had to read the newspapers, practically to know that, Dan. That was very apparent to everybody.

RATHER: Now I'm interested, as nearly everyone is at least to a degree, in what's happening in El Salvador. And I'm confused. On the one hand, the outgoing ambassador, U S. Ambassador in El Salvador, says it's his judgment that the amount of arms coming in from the outside, from Cuba and elsewhere, has been relatively small. On the other hand, I keep seeing reports, some of which originate with the Central Intelligence Agency, that the...

ADMIRAL TURNER: I hope you re not seeing the Central Intelligence Agency reports.

RATHER: Not the reports themselves. But it s very obvious where they come from -- that the amount of arms that are coming in there very strong.

Now for any citizen of this country this gets to be very important. I mean where is the truth in this situation?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I think it's just like what we talked about a second ago on the Nicaraguan situation. You don't have to have huge supplies of arms in these kinds of situations. These are very small countries. There are very small numbers of insurgents.

The whole question, in my mind is the Cubans are funneling equipment into El Salvador on a regular basis. But that, again, is not big boatloads.

So I think the truth is in between what you're saying.

RATHER: From an intelligence community standpoint, does the future look as dark in Central America as it does to many of us outside the intelligence community?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes, I think it does. I think it's a very serious prospect for the United States.

RATHER: What is that prospect?

ADMIRAL TURNER: The prospect is foreign-, Cuban or Soviet, dominated regimes in some of those Central American countries. And the danger that poses to our friends, the Mexicans, to the north, let alone to South America to the south.

RATHER: I'm a bit confused, because the Mexicans, they seem to be very friendly with the Cubans. They have not, for example, supported the current junta in El Salvador that the United States Government is backing.

If it's a threat to the Mexicans why haven't they been more forthcoming in resistance?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I think they were shortsighted on this.

Now clearly this is the problem we talked about a minute ago: How strongly do support regimes of the general right that are not democratizing as fast as is being demanded of them of the left? The Mexicans are trying to encourage a movement toward the center of these governments in Central America. One can argue whether they're overdoing that. I think they are at this time.

RATHER: What you don't like what you think you see, at least the short-run future prospects in Central America.

ADMIRAL TURNER: No, I don't.

RATHER: ...You mentioned the Philippines. What's happening in the Philippines?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, General Marcos as you know has lifted martial law. I think that's an effort on his part to regain some popular support. We think -- I think the Marcos regime is in good control of the situation there and will remain so for some time to come.

RATHER: You don't see a revolution succeeding in the Philippines any time soon?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Not soon. Clearly, there's opposition on the left. Again, it's the same kind of situation we've discussed in Central America: a regime that is not moving to democratization, to greater liberties, greater freedom of the population as rapidly as is being demanded. But I think he has the horsepower to hold the situation under control for the time being.

RATHER: What are the chances that the Philippines represent our next Vietnam?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Oh, I think that's -- that's low for right now.

RATHER: The chances of that happening are low.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes.

RATHER: Now if you and I sit down and talk a year from now, are we going to be saying, "Well, in the Philippines and Central America we were as wrong as we were in Iran. We thought in the Philippines that Marcos could hang on. We thought Somoza could hang on in Nicaragua, and he couldn't"?

ADMIRAL TURNER: You wouldn't quote me a year from now,

would you, Dan?

RATHER: You bet.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, I think -- I don't think a year from now that we will be facing a revolution in the Philippines.

RATHER: Let's talk about Africa, Angola and Ethiopia.

Henry Kissinger has written -- this was after he, in the opinion of some, had ignored what was happening in southern Africa for a long time. But he has written that there was a period in the mid-1970s when Angola represented a watershed. And the fact that we did not resist a socialist regime taking over in Angola led to the Cubans moving in and taking over there and in Ethiopia.

Now do you agree with that analysis?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I think there's a great deal of truth in that. I think in the post-Vietnam period we made the mistake of saying we didn't have vital national interests almost anywhere except maybe Europe; or of defining our vital national interests only in terms of the intrinsic value of a particular country. And who can say that Angola has any great value to the United States?

But the precedent that it set for the Soviets was very damaging to us, and I think encouraged them to feel they could go on to Ethiopia, to Yemen and Afghanistan.

RATHER: And what was that precedent?

ADMIRAL TURNER: The precedent was that we stood back and washed our hands of the people who stood for the kinds of values, in general, that we've stood for, and let the Soviets, with their Cuban surrogates, take over. This is the first real instance in which the Cubans acted as surrogates for the Soviets. It's a dangerous precedent, one that, of course, led to the demise of -- or led to the control of Ethiopia that they now exercise.

RATHER: [Unintelligible] Do you think if we had not allowed the Cubans to move into Angola -- that's assuming [inaudible] -- that they would not be in Ethiopia today?

ADMIRAL TURNER: That's a very hypothetical issue, but I think certainly the probability would be considerably less that they would have been able to do that or had been willing to do that.

RATHER: Now, based on your experiences with the Central Intelligence Agency, where do we go from here in Angola? Is it

your belief, personal opinion that we should engage in covert activities in that country?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I think at the present time the important thing is to get the Namibia situation resolved, to the south of Angola. Because if we can remove the threat of South African incursion into Angola from Namibia, then maybe we can begin to get some kind of a more normal relationship going with the Angolans, and they may be more willing to look at reduction of their Cuban forces and so on. And I think that's the key to the area right now.

RATHER: I want to make sure I understand you here. There is a school of thought that what we should do in our national policy should be to recognize Angola, work for a settlement in Namibia, in hopes that that will influence the Angolans to ask the Cubans to leave. Is that what you're suggesting?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No. I think that the probability of getting 20,000 Cubans out of Angola overnight is very, very slim. But I still think resolving the Namibian issue, so that you can at least approach that problem, is the first step, and that we should wait until we've solved that to decide whether we recognize Angola or whether we go the other route of covert action, and so on. One thing at a time. Let's let the thing settle down a little bit.

RATHER: So you're not prepared to recommend covert action, a resumption of covert action at this time.

ADMIRAL TURNER: I think the political implications of doing that probably outweigh what value you could do. I think the rebel forces in Angola are surviving very well on their own. They don't need a lot of support from us.

[Asides]

RATHER: I'm not sure I heard you correctly. Did you say earlier that you thought the Libyans were active in trying to stir up trouble in the Philippines? Or did you include the Philippines in that list?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I did, yes. The Muslim problem in the Philippines. I think the Libyans have been active in helping fund that.

RATHER: Of course, many Americans tend to forget, or never knew, that there is a large Muslim population in the Philippines.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Right.

RATHER: But it comes as news to me that the Libyans have been involved in any way.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Oh, yes. I think that's very well established.

RATHER: In what ways?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Mainly in providing funding. It's too far away for much else.

RATHER: Providing money for revolutionary activity.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes.

RATHER: And in Central America?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes.

RATHER: I must say I'm surprised at that. One's accustomed to hearing accusations that the Soviets are involved in Central America and the Cubans. But the Libyans, I've never heard that.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, I think the Libyans are more nefarious than you, perhaps, Dan. I really am very concerned about the direction in which Qaddafi is taking in a lot of countries. You know, what they've just done in Chad is very alarming to [unintelligible].

RATHER: And just to clean up, because we are [unintelligible] subject in a moment. I don't want to leave -- you said -- you said you said all you wanted to say about the PLO. But the Palestine Liberation Organization, I think we're going to hear more about it. It's obvious that the new Administration and Secretary Haig have under review, at least, what our policy should be toward the PLO.

Based on intelligence, not your own personal opinion, but based on intelligence, is it a terrorist organization, or is it a moderate organization of desperate people, mostly refugees?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, the PLO is, of course, a very amorphous organization with lots of sub-entities under it. And there are some radical terrorist elements under it that are obviously conducting activities, particularly in Israel.

I think Yasser Arafat, the titular leader of the overall organization, is a much more moderate person who has a much more reasonable approach to the problem, much greater patience.

RATHER: And the PLO does or does not have elements

trained in Moscow, or do we know?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I won't comment on that

RATHER: All right.

Now, let's talk about intelligence in the American intelligence community, what's good about it, what's wrong with it.

First of all, the -- my word, not yours -- the politicizing of the Central Intelligence Agency. Now, this was founded as a civilian agency. Now, when George Bush a man of distinguished, but nevertheless a lifetime in politics, was appointed the Central Intelligence Agency Director in the early 1970s, did that not signal a politicizing of the agency?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I think what is critical is that the Director, be he a former political figure or not, act in a nonpolitical way and establish his credentials. And I think George Bush did, as a nonpartisan person, someone who is not going to provide intelligence to support the White House's preferences, someone who is willing to stand up to and tell the President the facts as he sees them.

RATHER: Whatever the fact turns out to be, isn't there a danger that the perception will be that the agency is political when, for example, William Casey, everybody agrees, a good and decent man with long service, but who helped run the Ronald Reagan political campaign, winds up to be the Central Intelligence Director, a lot of people are going to say it's politics.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Clearly, there is a perception problem here. I feel confident that Bill Casey is going to overcome that in the way he performs over a period of time.

You always have to remember that it's most important that the Director and the President have a personal rapport, that there is a feeling of confidence in the President's mind with the man who's running the intelligence activities of our country.

RATHER: But there was a time, and not too long ago, when what generally happened was an incoming President of one party would make it his business to appoint a CIA Director who, if he had any political affiliation, was clearly of the other party, to make certain that even the perception of politicizing was not there.

ADMIRAL TURNER: My particular suggestion, Dan, would be -- I think it would be advisable for new Presidents to try to live with the old Director for maybe six months. That would give some continuity in the government, in the first place. And then

the new President could determine whether he could develop a rapport and a sense of confidence in the new Director. I think that would be a good way to go.

But I would emphasize again that I think the President is entitled to have somebody in that job in whom he feels a great deal of confidence.

RATHER: Admiral, you came out of a lifetime in the Navy to the Central Intelligence Agency. When you first came into the agency what was your biggest problem?

ADMIRAL TURNER: My biggest problem as that the Central Intelligence Agency was about 30 years old when I arrived. And you know when individuals like yourself and myself mature, when organizations mature, they sometimes tend to become conservative, stop taking risks, stop changing things, doing things in the old way. And I think the Agency had sort of fallen into that. It needed a reinvigoration, it needed some sort of a jolt. And I believe that we've applied that, and today it's a very strong, innovative, healthy organization, and a very happy one.

RATHER: Now, from a personal standpoint, coming from a naval command to the CIA, what surprised you the most?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I think maybe what surprised me the most was the great pleasure in how similar the CIA was in its responsiveness, just like the military. You ask them to do something, and by gosh they just go all out. They really are a most responsive, most dedicated organization.

RATHER: And tell us of your relationships with the President and the White House. Now, you had -- you were in President Carter's same class at Annapolis. Or at least you were at Annapolis at the same time he was.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes. I got my job strictly on merit.

RATHER: [Laughter] I noticed that. But -- and I don't think anybody would argue that. I don't mean to make light of that. [Unintelligible] argue that you got the job on merit.

What problems did you have in -- or did you have any? -- in getting through to President Carter and to the National Security Council and to the White House?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, I had very little problem in getting through to the President. I met with him weekly, at least, and had full opportunity to say anything that I wanted.

But I would say there is a problem that I don't think people appreciate. The intelligence community provides a great

deal more support to the Congress today than it ever did before. And while the President is your master, the Congress demands a great deal out of you.

RATHER: That's one of the changes that occured in the mid-1970s.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes, because of all the investigations of intelligence. The Congress wants to know more. But in addition, I'm very pleased to say it's because other committees than the Intelligence Committees of the Congress want to know what's going on in the world. And we have to much to offer them. And I think in the last few years our provision of substantive intelligence to the Congress has multiplied manyfold. And they like our product and they're using it, and it's very good for the country.

But there is a conflict that arises here. Because the Congress will sometimes say, "Well, you're just telling us that because it supports the President's policy." And sometimes the White House will tell me, "Why did you tell that to the Congress? It undercuts the President's policy."

I can provide you press clippings about myself. One start they'll say, Turner doesn't support the President." On the other one they'll say, "Turner is the stooge of the President." And they, fortunately, I think, balance each other out.

RATHER: Your aim is that's a result of supplying what the Congress wants, on the one hand, and, the other hand, supplying the President what he wants.

ADMIRAL TURNER: That's correct. And it's a somewhat new phenomenon, because of the greater congressional interest in our product.

RATHER: Now, a new system of checks and balances was supposed to be built into the CIA as of the mid-1970s. Does that new system of checks and balances work?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Oh, yes. Very well. I think one of the things I'm most proud of is that we have established in the last four years an entirely new relationship between the American public and their representatives, the Congress and our secret intelligence service, the CIA. We now are quite forthcoming with the American Congress. They know what we do and why we do it.

At the same time, we have been able to work out arrangements with them such that I believe we can preserve our capability to do those secret things that are necessary for the security of our country.

What about the argument that says that because of that system of checks and balances, the CIA has lost a great deal of its effectiveness; and as a consequent, an increasing amount of intelligence work has to be done by the military and is done by the military?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, that's, I think, just totally untrue, because the oversight process that has been established applies to military intelligence just as much as to the CIA.

But don't let me give you my opinion, let me tell you just one little story. Two months ago, after I knew I was leaving the Central Intelligence Agency, I went to the top management and I asked the 8 or 10 top leaders to sit down, privately, without me or my deputy, Mr. Carlucci, and write down what changes they'd like to see made in the law, in the executive orders, in the regulations, changes that would help us do our job better. And, Dan, I can tell you I was pleased, but surprised. The list was rather short and the items on it were not very substantial.

RATHER: What about the continuing concern that many citizens that the CIA remains too much of a watchdog on American citizens, including American citizens in this country?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, that's what this new oversight process with the Congress and with an Intelligence Oversight Board set up in the White House does to insure that that doesn't happen. In short, we now have such oversight to be sure that the CIA is not undermining the very society that we're trying to defend. And I think the public can rest very comfortably on the assurance that this oversight is thorough and gives them assurance in this direction.

RATHER: Isn't the potential still there for a President, if he's determined to do so, to use the CIA for his own political or ideological purposes?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, a great deal, of course, depends on the fortitude of the Director. But beyond that, if the Director does things that are improper, as the result of pressure from the White House, it's not going to be very long before one of those oversight committees finds out about it and catches him up. Or the Intelligence Oversight Board can receive complaints directly from any of our employees without it going through me, or the Director. And that's another very good check. Because, you know, the Director can't carry out the President's orders all by himself. There are going to be other people involved. And somebody is going to recognize that this is improper and call a halt to it.

RATHER: What is -- simply put, what's the greatest strength of our intelligence system?

ADMIRAL TURNER: The greatest strength -- well, there are two great strengths. One is the great technical capabilities that American industry gives to us and put us far ahead, in satellites and such things as this, of the Soviets.

But the second great strength is simply that we are a free society. And therefore when information comes in and is analyzed, you can come up with a conclusion in our intelligence organization that is contrary to the White House or to anybody in the government and you can put that forward. I'll bet you can't do that in Moscow.

RATHER: Being a free society is, generally around the world, considered a weakness when it comes to intelligence gathering.

ADMIRAL TURNER: That's correct. Because the head of the KGB can do an awful lot of things that I couldn't have done as Director of Central Intelligence. But there's nobody in this country who wants us to have that kind of authority, for just the reasons you've mentioned a minute ago.

And it's not necessary to have that kind of autocratic authority Dan, in order to do the job that we have to do.

I believe we've found the right grounds for assuring the American public that we're not abusing the privilege of secrecy, and yet having enough secrecy and being able to do enough secret things to protect our country well.

RATHER: Is it true that the Soviets are better at the spying business than we are?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No, I don't think so. They are stronger. They do more of it, in terms of espionage, than we do. I've never quite understood why, because we've published it all in Aviation Week and places like this for them, anyway.

But I believe we're more clever. I think we're more adept at it. I'm really proud of the espionage activities of the Central Intelligence Agency.

RATHER: Now, you're frequently accused of having downgraded the human element of intelligence gathering, downgrading the spy business, the epionage business, and upgrading the technology. Is that a fair assessment?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No, that's totally incorrect. Today -- I can't tell you all the details, but we have more human agents working in more countries, producing more reports of better quality than we did four years ago. If I've downgraded it, it's a heck of a lot stronger. And you can go out and ask the head

of the human intelligence service, and he'll tell you the same thing.

RATHER: Both in quantity and quality you think...

ADMIRAL TURNER: Absolutely.

RATHER: Then how did you get this reputation of being a man who depended so mightily on technology?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, in part, because when you make technical decisions, they cost billions of dollars. And there's obviously a lot of debate about it. And so people become unduly focused on that and think, "Well, that's all that the Director is paying attention to." You have to pay attention to that kind of financial expenditure.

RATHER: Now, a number of legislators say that American counterintelligence activities have to be upgraded, must be upgraded. Some, who consider themselves to be conservatives, go further and say that communist agents have now infiltrated the highest levels of U.S. government. Some even say the CIA itself has been penetrated and infiltrated, and that there ought to be a revival of Internal Security Committees in Congress.

How do you feel about all that?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I feel that the counterintelligence activities of our country are on a much sounder basis, much stronger today than they were six or seven years ago.

RATHER: Much stronger.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Much stronger. And, in part, that's because there is today a very close relationship between the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the CIA. And that did not exist six or seven years ago. And that's absolutely essential to the security of our country from a counterintelligence point of view. Director Webster is wonderfully cooperative, and we have set up a teamwork that is unrivaled.

RATHER: I want to come back to that in a moment, but let's stay on the point for right now.

Is it true that the Soviet Union has infiltrated upper levels of the United States Government?

ADMIRAL TURNER: It certainly is not true, to my knowledge. One has to always say "I don't know whether there's a mole in our organization," because if you get complacent and say there absolutely isn't, that's the way you're going to have problems. But I have no evidence whatsoever. And the counter-

intelligence cases that we have uncovered in recent years, three of them were people who've been put in jail because we uncovered their activities. While I don't like to lose the information that we lost in these cases, at least I was pleased that they were not high-level, they were not sustained-type penetrations that really can do you damage.

RATHER: What about the revival of the Internal Security Committees in Congress? Personal opinion. Is that necessary?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I don't think it's necessary at this time at all. I think we have a good, strong counterintelligence activity. I've put a lot of attention and effort on it in the last few years, and believe that it is in very good shape.

RATHER: I want to come back to something that you said. You said that in counterintelligence that we're pretty good. Again, the worldwide perception -- and this comes as no surprise to you -- is that we are at worst when it comes to counterintelligence.

ADMIRAL TURNER: No I think the perception is that we're at our worst when it comes to leaking information. And that's the greatest threat to the intelligence activities of our country today, more than counterintelligence, more than lots of other things.

We have two problems. We have some traitorous people, like Philip Agee, who just go out and deliberately disclose all the secret information they can get their hands on. And then we have other people who just go leak things to the media. And both of them are very serious problems because we lose confidence of agents, we lose confidence of people in other intelligence services with whom we work overseas.

RATHER: Now, you mentioned Philip Agee, and I don't want to dwell on this. But [unintelligible] Philip Agee -- as you mentioned, he's responsible for publishing the names of CIA station directors and others involved in our intelligence operations overseas.

ADMIRAL TURNER: No question.

RATHER: You consider that to be a fact, that he's done that.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Oh, yes.

RATHER: Now, where the argument comes in is how serious that is. Mr. Agee, as I understand it, makes the argument, "Look, the Soviets know who they are. Others know who they are. All we did was publish information that was readily available."

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, that s not true, in the first place. He's published a lot of information that was not readily available. And in the second place, if you had been in Jamaica last July, after one of Philip Agee's agents went down there and put on Jamaican television the pictures, the addresses the telephone numbers, and the license plate numbers of 15 people from the United States Embassy, and if you were the one whose house was shot up the next night, you wouldn't think Agee was an innocent fellow.

RATHER: And you said they're traitorous activities.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes. I consider...

RATHER: Did you use that word measuredly?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes.

RATHER: You know that you've been criticized for presiding over the demoralization of the Central Intelligence Agency [inaudible], that you dismissed a few hundred employees. One CIA chief overseas was recently reported in print as saying, quote, Turner has gutted the agency and created a disastrous morale problem." Unquote.

How do you respond?

ADMIRAL TURNER: The morale was very serious when I got there because of all the public criticism. The agency was in a state of shell shock. The reductions I made were on the recommendation of the agency. They weren't my idea. In fact, I cut the recommendation by a third and reduced the number who were to be dismissed. And it in no way gutted the agency. In fact, only 17 people were actually asked to leave.

Morale today is very good at the Central Intelligence Agency. I think we had to take it, as I said earlier, through a period of shock and change, adaptation to the new environment of intelligence. And we've done that. The foundation is there for the future today. It's on a good, solid course. And it's a happy organization.

[Asides]

RATHER: You still have trouble recruiting.

ADMIRAL TURNER: No.

RATHER: This is not what I hear.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Our recruiting is just going along very well. Last year we had 90,000 inquiries for a thousand

placements. And last year we recruited into the human intelligence service eight times as many people as we did four years ago. And part of that is because we had to clean out some of that deadwood at the top to make room for them. But we're now bringing in enough to be sure that we have a good human intelligence service well out into the future.

RATHER: Fifteen-sixteen years ago, I had a conversation with Richard Helms, then at the Central Intelligence Agency, who said, "We," meaning the agency, "can get the cream of the cream at the best colleges and universities."

Now, you talk about numbers. The quality must be down...

ADMIRAL TURNER: No, the quality is good. The quality is high. I still think we get a lot of the cream.

Now, I will say that a lot of the Ivy League colleges, who are so biased against government and military and intelligence, don't provide us the input that they used to. But I think that's been healthy. We've gone out and gone all across the country, and we get a much wider spread of applicants today and a very good quality of people.

RATHER: What's the deepest problem of the Central Intelligence Agency? What worries you the most about it?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I think the agency is on a good, sound footing today. And I only am concerned that they have stability and continue to grow along the lines that we've set in the last few years. Because it's been a turbulent period. It's been traumatic for the agency to make these adjustments to new oversight, to do the reinvigoration of its own attitudes and outlooks, as I mentioned to you earlier. And I think those gains, those changes that have been made are very vital to the organization, and we must preserve them into the future. And that's the biggest problem.

RATHER: Well, one expects you to be, and I know that you are, not just in terms of public posturing, but sincerely within yourself, a supporter of the agency and what it does. But as a citizen, long-range, talking about potential, what are the dangers to this society of the Central Intelligence Agency?

ADMIRAL TURNER: There is always a conflict between secrecy and openness in a democratic society. And you've got to recognize that. But I believe that the checks and balances that we've built in in recent years have been a very good assurance to the American public that there won't be abuses of the intelligence secrecy in the future. And yet I believe we have preserved the capability to do what has to be done, despite this.

RATHER: What's the greatest difference, in your opinion, between the public perception of what life is like in the CIA and what the reality is? And we all read James Bond, we all read spy novels. What's the greatest difference between the reality and the fiction?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, intelligence is a risk-taking business, but not nearly as dramatic as it is in James Bond. You know, some of the risks you take are, is that very expensive satellite going to work when you get it up there? And you have to make that kind of judgment. Other kinds of risks are, is it worth it to the country to do something in a foreign nation that may endanger our relations with that nation if they found out about it?

But it's a much more contemplative, much more studied type of risk-taking than this derring-do kind of thing you see in the movies.

RATHER: Do we depend too much on the machines?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No. You see, twenty years ago most of intelligence was human intelligence. And along would come these new technical systems that give you all kinds of information. Now, what it s done is it's forced a change in the way you go about your human intelligence. Why should you send a spy to get some information when you can get a picture of it from a satellite?

And that's what s bothering some of the oldtimers who are telling you that we're emphasizing technical intelligence. It's a shift in style and technique, not a downgrading.

Can I give you an example?

RATHER: Sure.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Let's say with a photographic satellite you see a new factory in Country X. Well, the next thing you do is you turn the signals-listening people loose, and they find out for you that that factory is talking to the nuclear department in the government in the capital. Well, then you go get an agent and you say, "Well, I want you to tell me, are they talking to the nuclear power department or to nuclear weapons department?"

Now some years ago you'd have to send that agent out to find the factory, to find the connection, and then do this. But now you can focus that agent because of the benefit of those technical systems. And that's what's difference. It's not lesser importance. In fact, it's more important. You now really use the human agent where he's most valuable.

RATHER: Admiral, I know you must know many, and many of them you can't talk about. But do you know any good spy stories?

ADMIRAL TURNER: [Laughter] No. I think it's very incumbent upon intelligence professionals not to talk about that side of their profession any more than they absolutely can avoid. I think what we've tried to do in the last four or five years is to make intelligence much more visible to our country, so that people have confidence and are comfortable about what we are doing and we have their support. And I'm very pleased that we've regained that kind of public support in the last few years.

But the side of the organization we can't talk about is how we collect our information. Because if you give it away you'll never get it again.

RATHER: Admiral, you've been generous with your time, and I appreciate it.

Two last questions. The first: Looking ahead, on the basis of what you know, what worries you the most in terms of trouble spots in the world? Is it the Philippines? Is it Central America? Where are we most likely to have the most trouble in the next two, three, four years?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Iran...

RATHER: Still in Iran.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Oh, yes. I'm very concerned about the potential of Soviet domination or occupation of Iran. It would be a catastrophe, I believe, for its effect on the whole Middle East.

Secondly the Arab-Israeli issue. I hope that we can help them find a solution to that. Because as long as that's unresolved, the Middle East is going to remain unsettled and a potential trouble spot.

And thirdly the internationalization of revolution in the Central American area that we talked about earlier. I'm quite concerned at this precedent and at this problem in our backyard.

RATHER: What question have I not asked you that I should have asked?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I ve enjoyed this opportunity to be with you on television, Dan. And the only thing I have left on my mind is I sincerely hope that the American public has a feeling of comfort and confidence in our intelligence activities today. We've been through a turbulent period, but that s behind us now.

And I do believe that we have laid a solid foundation for the future, and that the American public can be confident that they're going to have good intelligence that will support the national interest of our country.

RATHER: Having said those are the last two questions I see on my notes that I left two out.

Former Senator Mike Mansfield, and our Ambassador to Japan, every time he's back in this country he tells reporters, "You are under-reporting the story of the continuing pressure the Soviet Union puts on Japan."

What, on the basis of intelligence, can you tell me about that? Frankly, it doesn't sound like much of a story to me. What's going on there?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, you know, it's very interesting that there are four little islands off the north end of Japan that the Soviets took after the end of World War II, and which the Japanese have just been incensed about ever since. And the Soviets won't give up these four little rocks that really don't amount to very much. And it would do so much for their relations with Japan if they did.

And I think that's indicative of what Ambassador Mansfield is talking about. The Soviets have a very tough attitude toward Japan and are keeping the pressure on them by things like holding just these four little spits of land.

RATHER: Is it true, based on our intelligence estimates, that the Soviets are less worried about the Chinese than they were some time ago, because the Chinese army, from their viewpoint didn't do well with the invasion of North Vietnam?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No, I wouldn't agree with that at all. In point of fact, if armies don't do well, that's a lesson for them, and you've got to be more worried about them, in some sense, in the future. In fact, I'm worried about the Soviets and the lessons they're learning in Afghanistan. They have not done exceptionally well there. But it's going to make them a little better because they'll translate those lessons throughout their army.

RATHER: Do you think they're still frightened of the Chinese?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Oh yes. Now, they're not frightened that the Chinese are going to attack them tomorrow afternoon or next year. The Chinese don't have that capability. But when you have diverted as many resources to defending yourself on the Chinese border as have the Soviets in the last decade, you're

worried. You're worried over the long run. You're spending money for that, and it means you do have a true concern.

RATHER: Thank you.