

REMARKS OF COLONEL LAWRENCE K. WHITE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Before
The 61st Annual Conference
of the
International Association of Chiefs of Police
New Orleans, Louisiana
September 27, 1954

* * *

I. Introduction

In facing this distinguished audience I am reminded of the Second Lieutenant at Fort Benning, Georgia, a few years ago who found himself explaining a demonstration of tank tactics and performance to a sizeable group of General Officers. The terrain was such that in order to observe the demonstration it was necessary for the General Officer group, sitting on hastily erected bleachers, to face into the sunlight. The Lieutenant, of course, faced the Generals with his back to the sunlight. He opened his presentation by saying, "Sirs, I regret very much that in order for you to see this demonstration it has been necessary to have you face this bright sunlight, but I can assure you that the sun can't possibly blind you as much as all of those stars I'm facing do me!"

- 2 -

As one whose personal problems with the police to date consist of settling two traffic violations for overparking, one of which I assure you I shouldn't have been charged with, my misgivings at addressing such an impressive array of law enforcement officers are comparable to that of the Second Lieutenant at Fort Benning. I will add that I feel an extra misgiving or two because I am here today pinch-hitting for my boss, Mr. Allen W. Dulles, Director of Central Intelligence, who has been prevented from speaking because of important commitments in Washington. Add to what I have said the fact that my being here at all is something of a contradiction in terms, since one of the fundamental tenets of intelligence work is cultivation of the gentle art of listening, and you can appreciate the apprehension in addressing such a large and impressive audience.

In Mr. Dulles' stead, then, I should like to tell you something of the background and function of the National Intelligence Effort and its place in the structure of the United States Government, while making a few observations on possible similarities between the techniques of law enforcement and those of intelligence that may highlight certain basic resemblances between the ways in which each of us conducts our business.

In the first place, law enforcement and intelligence have both been the recipients of considerable publicity of one kind or another, all of which has had the net effect of glamorizing the two occupational fields, sometimes almost to a point of embarrassment. There is nothing

- 3 -

that writers enjoy more than the classic story of the chase, whether it be after a dangerous criminal or a state secret. Psychologists would probably point out that these writers were merely catering to a fundamental human desire to reduce good and evil to basic terms so that their conflict might more easily be understood and the reader can readily identify himself with either side. In this context, a Dillinger and a Mata Hari become synonymous as representations of "bad guys" while uniformed police, detectives or intelligence agents in hot pursuit are manifestations of the "good guys." However, both law enforcement and intelligence function more efficiently by not publicizing their sources or methods, even though all of the elements of a good mystery are inherent in every action of either group. In fact, in our business publicity can almost never enhance the chances of success of an operation; nor is publicity after a successful operation more beneficial. There are always sources and methods that may be disclosed which jeopardize other current or future operations, and I am sure that you in your work must find these principles generally sound also. In addition, the profession of intelligence is beset by the magnetic attraction that the very word "intelligence" has for the general public. It seems to me that the average person immediately attaches a sinister meaning, with a strong cloak and dagger flavor, to the very mention of "intelligence." There is the general impression that anyone in intelligence, regardless of his

- 4 -

position, has access to all state secrets while they are "hot off the griddle." As I am sure you know as well as I, when you've told three people a "secret" it is sometimes anything but a secret. Hence, we try to operate on a "need-to-know" principle which, with perfection, would insure that each officer or employee received only that classified information which he needed in order to do his job. But all you have to do when your friends ask you about the situation in the Far East, Near East, or elsewhere, is to smile and say, "I don't know," and you are credited with really having the inside dope. I've often thought that if I knew only a fraction of what I was given credit for under these circumstances my service would certainly become invaluable. Glamor without publicity is a little difficult to have. When viewed in this context, there is little glamor in our business. Our work like yours, is not done with mirrors, and the reward for a sterling performance is usually anonymity and the self-satisfaction of a job well done and known only to a few.

Each of our fields depends in a large measure upon logical deductions made from available facts, painstakingly researched. Upon these facts and opinions conclusions are drawn, on the basis of which positive action is taken. Nations, as far as their posture toward other nations is concerned, are similar to individuals, in that they should be well-informed, not only about their own capabilities and weaknesses, but about those of their friends. Likewise, once they know from what quarter possible danger can

- 5 -

come, either overtly or through too great reliance upon some or all of their allies, they must be prepared to take steps to circumvent disaster. The steps that nations take to protect themselves or to advance their interests in the world are based, in large or small measure, upon the advice that they receive from their intelligence advisors. Just as when you consult a road map before driving from one place to another where you may not have been before, so governments of the world rely upon the advice and facilities of their intelligence components in the formulation of their policies, foreign and domestic, which may have an international impact.

From the days when men first devised methods of protecting themselves from their enemies by means of standing armies, there has been an intelligence function. The Indian scouts who rode the Western plains of the United States as outriders for the cavalry were, in effect, intelligence agents whose job it was to report on the location, strength, disposition, and probable hostile intent of enemy forces. Their value was negated entirely if they kept what they knew to themselves, were won over to the enemy, or distorted it for personal or political reasons when reporting to their commands. It was equally disastrous on occasion when their advice went unheeded.

- 6 -

National Intelligence then is the means by which governments are advised from the best sources available as to the wisdom of adopting certain broad national policies that are sure to have an effect on other lands and in world councils. In today's complex world, this advice does not confine itself solely to military matters, for under certain conditions, economic sanctions, internal politics or cultural upheavals may accomplish what force of arms cannot do. Thus, it may be just as important to know what the social conditions or industrial productivity of country "A" are as it is to know their military potential. Intelligence is then the handmaiden of foreign policy....that instrument through which nations express their basic attitudes toward the rest of the world. Such policy cannot be static; it must change or adjust as the need dictates and the measure of its flexibility is often a function of the efficiency with which the intelligence community operates and the clarity of the advice given the architects of foreign policy.

Obviously the best advice is that which is the most comprehensive, objective, and truthful. There is an opposite side to this matter, too....leaders of nations must be willing to believe and believe in their own intelligence producers, even when the advice they give or the news they bring is not easy to swallow. Of course, it goes without saying that the intelligence producers must consistently come up with reliable estimates of the situation in order to merit this confidence. No country unwilling to give credence to its own intelligence product

- 7 -

can long advance itself in world councils during peacetime, or preserve itself from disaster during war. For example, there is abundant evidence that Adolf Hitler, when the tide of battle was running set against the Third Reich (rye-ich), refused to believe his own intelligence people because what they told him was incompatible with his own delusions regarding the way the war should have gone. No matter how distasteful it is, policymakers must do all of their erring on the side of confidence in the intelligence presented to them and to be well-merited this confidence must be born of a never-ending pursuit of all the facts that can possibly be marshalled and presented in time to be properly used.

I have dealt thusly in generalities about the matter of national intelligence so that I might set the stage for a description of what our national intelligence effort is and how it functions in the United States. Until the establishment of the Central Intelligence Group in 1946, and until 1947 when the National Security Act of that year gave form and substance to the Central Intelligence Agency as it is now constituted, there was no such thing as a centralized federal intelligence concept in the United States Government. Policymakers relied upon the various separate intelligence activities, most of which were located within the structure of the military, and whose opinions often differed

- 8 -

each from the other in significant respects. (We might well compare such a situation to that which might exist if General Motors continued to manufacture component parts for its automobiles without providing an assembly line to turn out the finished product.) It was the desire of the President, expressed through the Congress, to create a mechanism through which effective collection of intelligence could be supplemented by a forum where conflicts of opinion between intelligence activities could be considered and resolved, where possible, prior to submission of their material to the architects of foreign policy. To meet this need the Central Intelligence Agency was established as a truly independent Agency, reporting through its Director to the National Security Council where the President is the presiding officer. CIA is not responsible to the Department of Defense, the Department of State, or any other component of the Government, nor are the intelligence components of these agencies under the command of the Director of Central Intelligence. However, the Director is responsible for the coordination of the Government's national intelligence effort. We like to refer to the intelligence components of all agencies as the "intelligence community." We work very closely with one another. Ours is a closely coordinated, common effort, the results of which funnel through the Central Intelligence Agency to the National Security Council which is our Nation's top advisory board on matters affecting the national security. Mr. Allen W. Dulles, our Director,

- 9 -

briefs the President and the National Security Council regularly and though upon request he may recommend a course of action to this body, the making of foreign policy is not his function or responsibility. CIA does not make the foreign policy of the President and his policymaking associates any more than the chief of police makes the decision as to the verdict that a judge and jury will determine in a particular case. It is our job to assemble the facts based upon careful investigation, to analyze them and to present our estimates to the proper authorities for whatever action is deemed appropriate. The ingredients which make up such an estimate are military, political, economic, sociological, scientific, etc., all placed in proper perspective so as to present a balanced estimate. There are, of course, infrequent occasions when complete agreement cannot be reached. We would have cause for concern, it seems to me, if this were not the case. In such a case a dissent by any participating intelligence component is given a full presentation along with the estimate. We believe that an estimate, to be useful, must be forthright, clear and concise, and that watered-down, least common denominators of agreement must be avoided.

When you consider the sheer bulk of the material from which intelligence opinions and estimates are drawn, the result is staggering. In any one year literally millions of separate pieces of intelligence in the form of reports, publications, radio broadcasts, documents, and

- 10 -

photographs find their way into each of the member agencies of what we have come to call the "intelligence community." Many of these are at odds with each other and others contain only particles of useful information. The process of reconciliation, revision, checking and rechecking, editing and paring down is tremendous, but absolutely necessary to insure acceptable accuracy.

Take foreign radio broadcasts, for example. It is significant that a foreign radio broadcasts a certain commentary. Of greater significance is how many times it was broadcast in a given period, in what languages, and to what audiences. Was there any semblance of truth in the commentary? Was it slanted?...And if so, how? Was it slanted differently for different audiences, etc? I am sure you can see that a comparable analysis of other categories of information that may go into an estimate makes this a rather delicate process with plenty of margin for error. Of course, one never has all of the information he would like available upon which to base intelligence estimates. I would estimate, however, that perhaps as much as eighty percent of the information available to us is obtainable through perfectly open sources; the press, publications of all sorts, educational institutions, industry, and individuals. An additional ten percent may be obtainable through more difficult, dangerous, and costly methods. The remaining ten percent of an intelligence estimate is final evaluation. This, of course, is

- 11 -

the most difficult and where the greatest possibility of error lies. This is the unknown area which gets into the realm of what people are actually thinking. If we imagined ourselves as Communist estimators for a moment and think back to the situation shortly before the entry of the United States into the Korean war, I think that we might well be justified, from the attitude of the United States as demonstrated in many ways, that the United States would not commit its forces to defend South Korea. Yet, we did exactly that and did it very expeditiously when the Communist forces launched their invasion.

The kind of positive foreign intelligence of which I have been speaking in connection with CIA's responsibilities must not be confused with the internal intelligence, or counterintelligence, developed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, with whom CIA has exceedingly satisfactory relations, I am pleased to say.

I should like to emphasize to you as police officers that the Central Intelligence Agency has no police, subpoena, law enforcement powers, or internal security functions. Those security forces that CIA does have are concerned entirely with matters of physical security, protection of classified information, and investigation of personnel who may be employed by us. In the performance of this latter task, many of you have come in contact with our representatives. I want to add here that we are exceedingly grateful for the splendid assistance which they have been given by the state and municipal authorities in this country, without whose help, spontaneously offered, the work of CIA would have been seriously hampered.

- 12 -

Despite the similarities between law enforcement and intelligence to which I have alluded, there remains one major point of difference between the two fields. When a police force produces an exceptionally brilliant piece of work, either in forestalling a felony or in apprehending a criminal, its successes are usually given ample recognition by the press, as rightly they should. In the field of intelligence, major successes remain such as long as they are not recognized. A favorite tactic of the opposition is to attribute every internal disorder, every failure on their part to "paid agents of aggressive American imperialism," or other less charitable phrases. Through this device the opposition hopes to smoke out an inadvertent admission or denial from some recognized intelligence source in the Free World.

Like the police force that fails to locate a criminal at large, the intelligence community comes in for its share of public criticism when evidence seems to point in the direction of an "intelligence failure" in our country. Even though the actual facts may be at variance with this assumption, you learn to roll with the punch and to accept the fact that you have only your personal sense of satisfaction to show for a particular success in which you may have played a part. In a way, it is analogous to being a baseball umpire; you may call the plays as you see them for eight innings and everyone on both teams is satisfied, but comes a close play at the plate and you are a blind, degenerate robber to at least half of the audience sitting two hundred yards away in the bleachers.

- 13 -

A great deal has been written and said about the difficulty of securing reliable information from countries in the hard core of the Communist orbit. I make no bones about the relative difficulties that do exist in obtaining information from a country where the entire population lives in fear of its life, and where every movement is subject to rigid control and exhaustive examination. Not only is the physical problem of getting accurate information extremely difficult, but it is further complicated by the fact that in the most extreme cases of authoritarian rule, such as in the Soviet Union, we see an entire population that has been carefully trained to spy on itself! Not only are there secret police and paid informers, but through perversions of what we in the Free World understand as the code of ethics, families spy and inform on their relatives, sons on their fathers, and with a zeal and conviction that is astonishing. And it is even more astonishing when you consider that the popular conception that "every Russian is a Communist" is definitely not true. The Soviet leaders have established complete control over their population of approximately 210 million people with an actual Communist Party membership of 7 million, or one person out of every 30 in the country. And these 7 million hard core Communist Party members include all Communists serving in the armed forces of the USSR. At the height of its strength in the United States the actual members of the Communist Party numbered something less than one in 3,000.

- 14 -

However, numbers can be misleading. The Communist technique of infiltration has never depended on mass penetration, but rather upon a few highly trained and dedicated operatives who "control" the movements of sympathetic indigenous personnel, training them over a long period of time, years in fact, making sure that these people find their way to important posts in the military and the government so that when the whistle blows, the inevitable uprising appears to have strong nationalistic overtones, at least initially, and the control of the police, communications, the military, transportation, and food supplies fall first into their hands. As a case in point, I might mention the recent disclosures concerning the sizeable Communist espionage ring uncovered in Iran (EE-RAHN) this month with the arrest and implication of more than 400 officers in the Iranian (EE-RAH-NEAN) Army, many of them holding top government advisory and international liaison posts. The interesting fact is that the groundwork for this network was laid certainly 13 and possibly 20 years ago by the Soviet Union, as a "long-term investment," only in this case using other people's currency! Not only was the ring well-hidden enough to escape detection for so long a time, but it was also able to survive the mass purge of the Tudeh (TWO-DEH) or Communist Party ranks that took place after the overthrow of the Mossadegh (MO-SA-DEK) regime and the reinstatement of the Shah. The potential of such an organization is obvious. The important thing for you, as chiefs of police organizations, domestic and foreign, to remember in this context is the old saying that "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty," and no counterespionage mission is ever completely finished.

- 15 -

This penetrate, divide and conquer mechanism of the Soviets is used with devastating effect within their own borders, as I have said, largely through a practical application of the "carrot and the stick" philosophy, wherein informing for the State is not only an art, it is a profession, rewarded by the necessities of life, and where defections, either physical or philosophical are punished by deprivation of the right to work, the right to travel, and the right to "live in freedom in the glorious workers' paradise." Instead, a long term lease in the Urals (YOU-RAIS) is often the only reward of the defector. No wonder information is difficult to obtain under conditions such as these.

Contrast this, if you will, with conditions existing in our own country. It has often seemed to me, as I have read the often surprisingly accurate information in our country's newspapers and periodicals, that the biggest job of a hostile intelligence force would be to wade through the mass of what they can obtain through the newsstands. Add to that the fact that freedom of the press not only means freedom of opinion but freedom to present whatever facts the publication can locate and you can see how fruitful intelligence gathering must be when the United States is the target. Several months ago there appeared in a large metropolitan Sunday newspaper a lengthy story on the installation of NIKE (NEE-KAY) guided missile stations around a large American city. Not only was there an arresting presentation of the construction methods being used, but statistics

- 16 -

(many of them educated guesses) regarding the effectiveness of the stations against hostile aircraft. There were diagrammatic cross-sections of what the inside of a typical station would look like, the number of men who would man it, and actual photographs of one of the construction sites and partially laid foundations. As a lead for the article, there was a map of the Washington area with definite indications of where each installation was to be situated. This information was available to each one of the more than 8,000 people in Washington who represent foreign governments, and for the staggering sum of \$.20, the price of that Sunday's edition. I hesitate to say what an equal coverage of similar installations in a country ruled by Communism would cost to obtain, were it available, but you can be sure that it would be considerable, in terms of money, effort and grey hairs!

As another example, I cite an interesting periodical with which I am sure you are all familiar. Every year leading American newspapers publish as a reader service an annual reference volume usually at a price of around one dollar a copy. Its hundreds of pages are literally choked with solid statistical information, not only about countries other than our own, but about our natural resources, their magnitude, location and utilization. There are tables breaking down our major centers of population, a history of our political development and present Governmental organization, descriptive articles about industrial processes, distribution of income, number, location and membership of our schools and technical institutes, biographies and what

- 17 -

have you; in short, the raw data from which finished intelligence is made. This volume, were such available on the Soviet Union containing the same high degree of reliability, would be worth countless hours of painstaking research and a considerable expenditure of money. You can wager, with good odds, that such records in Russia do not find their way to the newsstands!

While at times it may seem that we are too open about our capabilities as a nation, I hope that my remarks will not be construed as advocating a policy of withholding information which should properly be disseminated. Freedom of the press and the doctrine of a well-informed citizenry are two of our great heritages which must be safeguarded. From another viewpoint, there is something vastly encouraging about the way in which the Free World can chronicle its accomplishments in the press and in volumes like the one to which I have just referred. In many ways, such evidence is an asset, for if our enemies know exactly what they face in the way of industrial strength, physical resources, moral determination and logistics problems, that in itself may well be a major deterrent to any hostile act.

I have often thought that those in command of our forces would today, or in the foreseeable future (given much less information than they had at Pearl Harbor), take some very positive action. Your opinion

- 16 -

as to whether Pearl Harbor was a command failure or an intelligence failure, or both, is perhaps as good as mine. But it seems clear to me that any "Pearl Harbor" in the future is more likely to be due to an intelligence failure. The very great responsibility for insuring that there is no such failure is staggering. I believe that our Government has very wisely set up the proper machinery and despite the fact that this machinery is only about seven years old in contrast to other countries which have been in the business for centuries, we believe it is working well. Machinery alone is, of course, not the answer. As in your work, unless you have informed, dedicated, alert, imaginative people you are not likely to succeed. And on this score I think that you can also be reassured. In his choice of Allen W. Dulles as his Director of Central Intelligence, the President has selected, without question, one of the most uniquely qualified citizens of our country. Under his great leadership, drive, and devotion to duty, and with the splendid and efficient cooperation of all agencies of the "intelligence community" and with the continued cooperation of police organizations like yours in these United States, I think that our country today has an intelligence service of which you can justly be proud.

I also believe that it is an exceedingly healthy sign that an annual conference such as this can be conducted in a lovely city like New Orleans, where the conference headquarters need not be ringed with troops and where the population does not have to close iron shutters for fear of uprisings or disorders occasioned by your presence here.

- 19 -

Your business is not that of the Gestapo. Because none of you represents blind authoritarian rule in the communities from which you come, because none of you is the "police commissar" in your home town, the good citizens of your towns and cities will continue to enjoy complete police protection in your absence through controls that they, the people, have vested in you as their representatives and not their oppressors.

I wish you success in your deliberations at this conference, and I want you to know what a distinct pleasure it has been to speak to you today on behalf of Mr. Allen W. Dulles and my colleagues in Central Intelligence Agency.

END