

PRESS CONFERENCE

CHICAGO COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

14 NOVEMBER 1977

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MORI/CDF

- Q. Why wasn't CIA able to predict with any certainty the failure of the Russian crops?
- A. CIA missed the crop failure by some 10%--if Mr. Brezhnev either is telling us the truth or in fact has good estimates of his own. We don't like to miss by 10%, but we are pleased that in the last four or five years since the country was sort of taken by the great train robbery of 1932 we have developed a reasonably good prediction. We were off more this year than before. But it is a difficult technique when you are dealing against a closed society which is not sharing its information with you. It is fortunate that we have a capability to keep abreast of things like this which do affect our own economy. But I'd like to say we don't think the country was taken this time by the Soviets because we were predicting on the first of July onward much larger Soviet grain purchases than they were acknowledging. And we think the market understood that.
- Q. I would like to ask about the stories of the microwave radiation at the American Embassy in Moscow and I suppose what I should ask you to tell us what causes it? What can be done to stop it? Just how serious is it vis-a-vis our own intelligence in Moscow?
- A. What causes it is a different set of morals and standards by the Soviet Union in the way they behave and standards that they'll go to to collect intelligence information. There has been radiation against our Embassy there for a number of years. I'm happy to say that the power levels of it are low enough that we don't believe its an endangerment to human life. It happens that the Soviet standards of what radiation people can accept is about a 1,000 times smaller than ours. They have not exceeded their standards so we don't think it's injurious but it is infideous. It is obviously designed to try to interfere with our activities or to obtain information from our activities.

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- Q. Can you, with whatever mechanical means you have at your disposal, stop this radiation?
- A. That is very, very difficult to do from a purely mechanical point of view. They have the territory around us--they could beam from all kinds of directions at us. Technically we have great difficulty in actually stopping that kind of thing. It has to be done by persuasion rather than by brute force.
- Q. A report states that some of that microwave radiation is caused by one of our own antennas on top of the Embassy and that we waited a year and a half or so before we took that antenna off because we didn't want the Russians to state that we were causing all the interference.
- A. You have better intelligence than I do. I've been away for a couple of days and I don't know anything about that particular report.
- Q. Is there any indication that the Soviet intelligence operation in this country is using anything like that?
- A. We know that the Soviets in this country are intercepting our commercial microwave transmissions. We don't have any evidence of radiation against us like they have in Moscow.
- Q. What is that, sir?
- A. It's done from their embassy in Washington, D.C. and it's a danger to us. It's something that we've taken precautions on and on which national policy is being formulated and I think will be enunciated before too long. I'm not free to go much further until that is available to us.

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- Q. How much could they pick up by interception of commercial microwave here, in this country?
- A. Did you all read the interesting report in the press--that during the Lufthansa hijacking a man in Israel sat in his apartment with an antenna and he listened to the German commandos chase plane go into Mogadiscio. He turned that information over and it was broadcasted on Israeli radio before the raid took place, before the commandos operated. Fortunately they managed to get it stopped before it went on Israeli television. The information did not apparently get to the hijackers. And then that man sat there and listened to commando operations and how they were progressing. In short, this problem is much more widespread in the world than in our country, than just the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D.C. Whatever goes onto unclassified telephone links that go on the microwave and a lot of it does go on the microwave today. In Washington, D.C. you can make telephone calls from one side of the city to the other and that call will go 22,000 miles up to a satellite and back down again to go 10 miles across the city. But if it is on a microwave link, hijackers, gangsters, foreign intelligence operators, industrial spies and all work to get that information. And it is a problem that the whole country has and much more than in the intelligence sphere.
- Q. Is that the same category that is interfered with in Moscow? Just how serious is their interference, with normal and/or intelligence operations in Moscow? Is it just what goes out over telephone lines by microwave? Are we able to circumvent this?
- A. In Moscow we don't have any microwaves. We are not positively clear what they are interfering with. They help themselves in ways that are very technical and I can't answer that for you--I really can't.

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- Q. (Was unintelligible, but had to do with DDO cutbacks.)
- A. I came to this job in February and found that my two predecessors and the incumbent professionals in the Central Intelligence Agency had been planning a major reduction in force in order to get back down from the large buildup in Vietnam. In August I made my decision to go ahead with that reduction. I cut it back slightly and I compressed the time frame to two years to avoid having a prolonged period of uncertainty within the Agency. When I announced that decision nobody objected to it. There is almost unanimity of feeling within the organization that we are over-staffed. I promised at that time that the first half of the cut would be announced by the first of November and the second half by the first of June. We announced those on the first of November and now you get a lot of complaints. I'm sorry--it's never easy to tell people that their services are no longer required. I would like not to have done that. But as a taxpayer I cannot condone keeping people on the payroll whom the government doesn't need and as a man I'm very concerned with both the effectiveness and morale of the Agency. (next few sentences unintelligible) We made these announcements, we made these cuts, I think, in the long-term interest of the Agency. We did not make them because I think technical intelligence is going to replace human intelligence. That's not the case. It's a false conclusion of the press to jump to because I am not reducing anybody in the overseas components of the Directorate of Operations which does our overseas human intelligence collection efforts. I'm cutting overhead in the Headquarters and it's been well announced--everybody has known this--that we've tried to do it in as fair and humane a way as we can. I would only say in conclusion that I'm so delighted that the media of this country, after three or four years of intense criticism of the Central Intelligence Agency, is now coming to its defense and worried that it's going to be too small.

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- Q. With regard to the pirated microwave messages you said that hijackers and other people have access to. How serious is this? What can be done about it?
- A. A number of things can be done about it. The most simple one is to encrypt it all. Another is to be careful that you don't discuss material that you don't want shared with the general public on unsecure telephone lines. Another is to take as much of your important transmissions as possible and take it off the microwave and onto a cable. We are working in all kinds of those directions.
- Q. (Unintelligible but relates to WASHINGTON POST article on drug testing.)
- A. I stated publicly before the Congress to the extent that the CIA at any time in its history did testing of drugs unwittingly on human beings is abhorrent to me. We do not do it now. Any research in that category that we sponsor is worked through the Department of Health, Education and Welfare for its approval. Let me also put into perspective two things: The program really ended in the 1960s--there were little tail-offs that did not involve human beings at a later period; and secondly, there's a historical matter. The attitudes and standards of our country were different then and we're judging now against today's outlook and I think we've got to put it into some perspective like that. Secondly, let me say, overall ARTICHOKE, MKULTRA, that whole series of problems are almost entirely something that you and I would still stand for today--very good research--very well motivated and properly done. There were a few excesses that I say I abhorred but the bulk of it was not.

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- Q. Is the CIA working with SAVAK here or in Amman, and if so what is the purpose?
- A. We lived on arrangements with many intelligence organizations around the world where we share information; we're helping each other in collecting foreign intelligence against third parties within the Communist Bloc. We do not have any arrangements with SAVAK, KCIA or anyone else that permits them to do things in this country in exchange for our doing anything else anywhere. That is not part of our arrangement and we would not tolerate anything of that nature.
- Q. There have been reports of links between the CIA and the Shah of Iran. What relationships exist now between the Shah of Iran's country and ours?
- A. I think I just answered that question as best and as fully as I can. We do have liaison relationships with numerous foreign intelligence organizations and they are of mutual benefit to us and in no way compromise the American standards and values and privacy.
- Q. The Japanese news agency a couple of days ago confirmed that the Soviet Union has been working on a satellite destroyer. What information do you have with regard to the Soviet program in that area?
- A. No question the Soviets have been testing an anti-satellite device and the question of how operational it is at this time is difficult to define or to disclose. But they have been conducting tests over a number of years. The tests have intensified somewhat in the last year and a half. So they are clearly moving to achieve that capability.

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- Q. Are the COSMOS satellites that they seem to launch every month at least--are they being used to target these programs?
- A. I'm not sure which satellites are being used for the targets by name. Yes, they put up a target satellite and they put up a killer satellite and they simulate destruction.
- Q. Can you confirm that Japanese news agency report? Have they killed another satellite?
- A. I can only confirm what I told you. The Secretary of Defense made a similar statement about two or three weeks ago on that. It also said that they had been conducting this test. Some of the tests are successful; some of them are not--as in any test program. I don't think you can wave from that.
- Q. Will we develop a similar program?
- A. Will we? That's the Defense Department's problem and they have made a statement on that which I think does indicate they are developing an anti-satellite. But I really don't want to get into that because I'm only here to talk about foreign intelligence, not U.S. programs.
- Q. Admiral, why did you decide to hold a news conference here in Chicago?
- A. Because I believe that the Intelligence Community must be more open, more forthright with the American public today and therefore I'm here to make a speech, several speeches. I'm trying to do that as my time permits around the country, and when you come to a major center of media operations like this, I think it is only desirable from your point of view and mine that I try to share with you what I can within the limits of our secrecy. But I think today there is more that we can do to share with the American public. We have produced a lot of unclassified studies

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in the last six months on Soviet economy, world energy situation, world steel market situation and we're doing this with deliberate intent to try to help the American public be better informed and to benefit by the taxes that they put into our operations. At the same time I hope it will keep us in closer touch with the American public and its value and standards because if we do not operate intelligence in this country in ways that conform with those ethical values and standards we're not doing our job.

Q. Is this new openness a directive from the President?

A. Yes. Part of the overall policy that Carter announced before he became President even.

Q. What is the main thrust of your speech?

A. You just heard it--just part of it. It's to talk about the new model of American intelligence which is different, in my opinion, than the old traditional model of intelligence. The old model said that intelligence agencies should preserve maximum secrecy--we should operate with minimum supervision. The new model, which I think conforms to the standards, outlook and culture of America, has more openness as our society is open. And it has more supervision as we have checks and balances built into our governmental process. Now don't let me overstate this--we must have secrecy. You cannot conduct intelligence without secrecy. But we're trying in these studies we've produced publicly to review what we do and say, can it be made public without doing harm to the country's interests and when it can we'll publish and when we can we'll tell you about the process of intelligence. But there are some things we can't tell you--the names of agents, exact techniques of various collection devices, but we can tell you, for instance, that a very large part of intelligence is not a clandestine spying-type operation.

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It is what you would term at any normal university or any major corporation as research. We have lots of analysts who research and take the pieces of intelligence and pull them together into a picture puzzle and try to evaluate it and give our decisionmakers in this country a better basis for making their decisions.

Q. (Unintelligible.)

A. I don't think we can change the American standards and jeopardize the values for which we stand to accommodate lesser standards of other people. I don't believe that it is necessary in this new openness and morality to get to a level of ineffectiveness that will endanger the country. It is always a very difficult judgmental decision to be made here and part of what the President has sought and directed in a recent reorganization of the Intelligence Community is a proper balance between more oversight and yet preservation of secrecy. It is a difficult balance that has to be worked out carefully. We are doing that and I'm confident that it is going to come out well but I'll tell you very sincerely I think it will take several years to do it. It will take several years to work out these procedures. For instance, with the new intelligence oversight committees in the Congress. Senator Stevenson of our state is a member of the Senate Committee and Representative McClory of Lake Forest is a member of the House Committee. We work very closely with those people today in establishing the rules that will govern our judgments on what the country's willing to do--what risks we're willing to take to get information that is not available to open sources.

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- Q. In relation to that, the amount of work that is going to be done with the members of the intelligence staff. Obviously when they make an approach to Capitol Hill many people become involved in an information process; the staff assistants, the secretaries, etc. That information could go through different facilities; how are you going to keep it limited?
- A. We've not had major problems thus far. We make a judgment on each piece of information we pass. Sometimes we have to narrow it down and have one or two staff members only to the council to the committee. Sometimes we have no staff members. We have to treat it in accordance with the delicacy of the information. We have to feel our way into this relationship so that they are comfortable with what we're giving them and we're comfortable that it isn't going to leak out. There are two risks in this whole operation of being more open and being under more supervisory control. The first is the risk of timidity. That we make at least common denominator intelligence that we may be unwilling to take risks. The second is the risk you pointed out of leaks from the number of people involved. I believe that we have and are developing an adequate balance between the risk-taking of timidity or leaks and that level of oversight that will give us assurance against abuse, assurances in performing in the way the country wants. I'm pleased and confident at the direction we're moving and I think they will let us keep the secrecy we need and at the same time perform only in ways that will strengthen our society rather than weaken it.