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FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM The Fred Fiske Show STATION WAMU-FM
DATE February 8, 1985 8:00 P.M. CITY Washington, D.C.
SUBJECT Interview with John Whitman

FRED FISKE: This evening we're going to be talking to John Whitman, a 30-year veteran of the CIA, who has written his very first novel, titled Geneva Accord, and a very timely book it is.

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FISKE: With the arms control negotiations about to reconvene in Geneva, with the President's support for the MX missile and Star Wars funding, John Whitman's novel Geneva Accord, published by Crown Publications, is published at a perfect time.

John Whitman served as the CIA's chief analyst of Soviet policy for much of his 30-year career in that agency. He also was the CIA representative in the SALT II talks in Geneva from 1977 to 1979.

Very nice to have you with us, John.

JOHN WHITMAN: A pleasure to be here.

FISKE: This is your first novel, and it's a corking good effort. Let me tell you that.

WHITMAN: Well, thank you.

FISKE: Very, very readable.

WHITMAN: Thanks.

FISKE: Must be very satisfying to be able to, after

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spending a career, as you did, working for the CIA, to have the time to sit down to do the sort of thing I suspect you've wanted to do a long time.

WHITMAN: Actually, I had not thought about doing it. It came to me after my retirement, and I was lucky enough to have the time to carry it through.

FISKE: You have to wonder, as you read this book, how much of the novel is autobiographical. There's a remarkable congruence, a great similarity in the career of your hero in the book -- you call him George Inago (?) -- and the career of John Whitman.

WHITMAN: Yes, there is that. In fact, one of the things I wanted to convey in this book -- basically, it's a spy thriller, and I hope it's an exciting enough story to interest people on that level. But I wanted to communicate some other things as well, and one was a little bit of the story of CIA from the side of the analysts.

Of course, you always read about the spies and the operators. You never read, because it's not very dramatic, about the fellows who are trying to make sense out of all the collected information and give the proper interpretations to the President and the policymakers. So there's a bit of that in there.

FISKE: Your protagonist is a CIA veteran who is an analyst all of his career and who goes to Geneva to represent the United States in the SALT talks, as you did.

WHITMAN: That's right.

FISKE: And some of the people who have commented on your book have commented that, in fact, you presented the situation pretty much as it is there.

WHITMAN: Well, I also wanted to give a realistic view of how arms control negotiations proceed. And those parts of the book are really quite authentic. The painstaking detail that you must go through to write the treaty so as to leave no loopholes that are unintended, the arguments that go on within the American delegation, between that delegation and their bosses in Washington, and the actual process of negotiations with the Soviets.

FISKE: Tremendous tedium, apparently.

WHITMAN: Yes, it can be quite tedious. Yes. There's a reason for that. SALT I, the predecessor treaty, was criticized for being very short, too general, and leaving unsuspected

loopholes which the Soviet Union subsequently exploited, to our surprise and dismay. So, in writing SALT II, there was an effort to anticipate all possibilities and to gear it as closely as possible to what we knew about actual Soviet weapons, and to close all those loopholes. The result was a lot of tedium for the negotiators, and a treaty which is practically unreadable, you know, for the general public.

FISKE: Long discussions about every word and every dot and comma and dash.

WHITMAN: Uh-huh.

FISKE: And consultations with Washington. So progress is painstakingly slow.

WHITMAN: That's right. Because each side is trying to put whatever limits it can on the other side, and yet write the language in a way that leaves them free to go ahead with their own programs.

FISKE: What was your role as the CIA representative?

WHITMAN: Well, of course, I had a headquarters working back here, and they were carrying the main load. I was the Geneva outpost. But one of my jobs was to inform the delegation about as much as we knew about Soviet weapons systems, so that the language we wrote would not just be limiting ICBMs in general, but would be limiting the very specific systems that the Russians had.

FISKE: Were you involved in the actual negotiating?

WHITMAN: Yes. Yeah. I sat at the table.

FISKE: As an adviser.

WHITMAN: Uh-huh.

FISKE: And the Soviets, of course, had a counterpart to you.

WHITMAN: Yes. They had Vladimir Pavlechenko (?) of the KGB.

FISKE: A career like yours, as an analyst, involves a great deal of tension, competitiveness, even distrust, apparently, between those on the operations end and those on the analysis end, if in fact your book reflects the situation honestly. There is almost two different worlds, really, as between the operations branch and the analysis branch.

WHITMAN: Yeah. Now, in the book a lot of that is for dramatic effect and it is exaggerated, frankly. That is not part of the realistic, authentic part of the book. I have, you know, one part of the agency tracking down and shooting, and in fact killing, a member of the other part of the agency. That is fictional, truly fictional.

In fact, the two sides are rather separate. They've come closer together in the last 15 years. But the fellows who are responsible for covert operations are responsible for protecting their sources, as well. And I don't want to know where they get -- exactly who they're getting their information from. Because if that fellow is every caught and executed, I don't want to think that maybe I was careless one night at a cocktail party and said something that compromised him.

For example, Arkady Shevchenko, whose book is out this week. I knew we were getting information from a good source, but I certainly didn't know who it was.

FISKE: You didn't know it was Shevchenko.

WHITMAN: No. And I think that's proper.

FISKE: I thought about Shevchenko as I read your book, since you involved a defector. Ultimately, the Soviet intelligence representative of the talk becomes a defector. And...

WHITMAN: You just blew the suspense.

FISKE: Huh?

WHITMAN: You just blew the suspense.

FISKE: Well, I think there's much more to it than that.

WHITMAN: Thank you.

FISKE: But as you describe the process, I related it to what Arkady Shevchenko must have gone through. And I suspect it probably was rather similar.

WHITMAN: I just read his book and I was astonished at how mine seems to anticipate it, although mine was fictional, in the great apprehensions and agonies of serving as a defector in place, still working for your home government, supplying information to the Americans, and terrified at every turn that maybe you were under suspicion by the KGB.

FISKE: Before we leave this business of the relationship between the operations branch of the CIA and the analysis

branch, I suspect that probably the same relationship may exist there as I found existing in the Air Force. I was flying personnel, and those people who wore wings looked at themselves as something of an elite. Now, the others were called ground-pounders. You know, they were necessary, but they really weren't Air Force. And I have a notion that maybe there's something of the same kind of dynamic as between the operations branch and the analysis branch in the CIA.

WHITMAN: I've seen a fair amount of that, sure, in terms of mood and self-image, and the fellows who are out in the field recruiting spies, and so forth.

FISKE: The guys in the trench coats.

WHITMAN: In the trench coats. Naturally, they have their own elan.

There are also people on the analytic side who thought all that stuff was, you know, much overdone, and they were the important part of the agency.

FISKE: In your story, which is fictional, of course, parts of which you take some dramatic license with, you also touch on some problems which I think are rather serious in the CIA and in our government generally. You have a 30-year veteran of the agency who has been there through changes in the White House, through changes in the directorate of the CIA. Seven directors he's worked under, and so on. And he's frustrated, and others who work with him are frustrated with these changes, when they get new people who have to be taught the business, whose goals and understandings vary substantially.

Do we operate at a substantial difficulty with that?

WHITMAN: Well, relative to whom? I suppose you mean relative to the Soviets.

FISKE: To the Soviets. Andrei Gromyko, for example, has been in his post...

WHITMAN: 1957.

FISKE: All these years.

WHITMAN: 1957.

FISKE: All these years. How many people have guided American foreign policy during those years? I can't imagine that that doesn't put us at a disadvantage.

WHITMAN: Well, I would say there are disadvantages on

both sides. The lack of continuity on the U.S. side does mean that you spend a lot of time in each new Administration learning the ropes, learning the simple facts. When the Reagan Administration came to power in 1980, they were convinced that the SALT II treaty was a bad treaty because it limited American weapons systems. Now, in fact, they had to be shown it put no limits whatsoever on our existing programs. The limits were all on the Soviet programs. But it took a long time to get that through their heads.

And I suspect this happens in many fields other than intelligence and national security policy. So the Soviets have that advantage.

On the other hand, they have the great disadvantage of cumbersomeness, tradition. It's a very kind of hardening of the arteries, I would say is a fair description of the system over the last 20 years, because they don't renew their personnel and outlook. They just serve on and on and on.

Now, Gromyko...

FISKE: That certainly can't be said of the top position recently.

WHITMAN: Yeah. Well, I would even say so. People have changed but outlook hasn't. That's a very small clique, and we've just been running through the last few members of that clique as they age off and die.

Now, Gromyko is, you know, a remarkable and a very able man, and I wouldn't accuse him of being fossilized or having lost his touch. But I think that those who, as some of the military officers and some of those responsible for running the economy, in particular, they would benefit from the kind of change in administration that we go through, and the rejuvenation and the fresh viewpoint that that brings in.

FISKE: We were discussing Star Wars yesterday.

WHITMAN: Yes, I heard some of that.

FISKE: And I referred to some thinking that I have seen, which was that if in fact we should decide to go ahead with Star Wars, it might influence the Soviets to chuck out the stratified, aging leadership that they've suffering under and to go to a more dynamic, youthful kind of leadership, which might ultimately wind up to our disadvantage.

Is that a reasonable approach, to you?

WHITMAN: Well, who's going to chuck them out? It's

really almost impossible to dislodge a Soviet leader, except by the agreement of the four or five key men who are his colleagues. And for the last -- every since Khrushchev fell in 1964, these fellows have been pretty much of a mind. I'm sure they've had their disagreements, but there's no evidence that any one of them has harbored radically different policies and sought to -- well, we've seen Brezhnev and then Andropov and now Chernenko, and we've seen that as they successively take power, there's not any substantial difference in the policies that they pursue.

FISKE: Even though Andropov was an intelligence man, his years as head of the KGB didn't affect his administration?

WHITMAN: Well, he was also a diplomat. He was also a party secretary. But he was the head of the KGB. I think it made him a little tougher on internal dissent, on cracking down on the dissidents. I don't know that there were other important divergences. And that one is only marginal.

I see them all as cut out of the same cloth.

FISKE: One of the characters in your book was the departing Director, early in your book speaks about the pressure that had been brought to bear on him to overstate or underestimate information in order to serve the purposes, policy purposes of various departments or officials. Is it reasonable to think that that sort of thing does go on?

WHITMAN: I think it's sort of endemic. Sometimes it's weak and not too serious, and sometimes it's more severe.

FISKE: Right now, for example, we've been following the trial of CBS, the case brought by General Westmoreland, which is similar to that. Westmoreland, they charged, had doctored figures. This sort of pressure is brought on our intelligence analysts?

WHITMAN: Well, that was a time, during the Vietnamese War, when I think the pressure was higher than usual. Yes. And we used to be asked regularly by the Director, "Don't you have any good news I can take to Lyndon Johnson's weekly meetings? Because it's getting to be embarrassing always to be the bearer of gloomy tidings."

FISKE: Wow!

WHITMAN: We regularly said, "No, sir. We don't." And he regularly carried that bitter message down there, and took the flak, took, you know, the upset and dislike of the President.

FISKE: But it's conceivable that another Director might

insist upon such good news?

WHITMAN: It's conceivable.

FISKE: And in your book, the new Director, who really doesn't know the ropes, does exactly that. He's asked, when this high Soviet official becomes a defector, not to tell the President because the information -- they want to hold the information very, very closely. But he wants to make points with the President in his new job, and insists, for political reasons, in doing so. And I suspect that is not at all unusual.

WHITMAN: Well, no, it isn't. And there's a tension, you know, between wanting to be independent and objective in the supply of intelligence and wanting to be part of the team, a member of the President's inner circle.

My own prejudices are that one should resist that temptation to be a member of the team who's a cheerleader and a helper, and say -- the Director, I think, should say to himself, "My job is intelligence, pure and simple. Policy is beyond my purview, and I'm going to stay out of it."

That's why I think it is not a good idea to have, you know, politicians, partisan figures of high political level appointed to the Directorship.

FISKE: Well, that's the kind of person we do have.

WHITMAN: Yes, we do. And I regret it. I don't work there, I haven't worked under Bill Casey. I retired before he came, and, you know, I don't have a lot of stories about how he's twisted intelligence.

FISKE: Well, how many Directors did you work under?

WHITMAN: Oh, my goodness. About seven or eight, I think.

FISKE: Was any of them not a political appointee?

WHITMAN: Well, by political I mean a professional vote-getter. Of course, everybody who -- almost everybody who gets to be prominent enough to be Director of Central Intelligence has some political background, except those who come from inside, like Richard Helms and Bill Colby, or a kind of a quintessential civil servant, like Jim Schlesinger, or some of the military men who have served in that post. Now, they're not all politicians.

I think that the tradition was fractured most seriously

when George Bush was appointed to be the Director. Now, I think Bush made an excellent Director, but he was the Chairman of the Republican National Committee before he took that job. And since then it has sort of been a new tradition that you put a leading political ally or crony into the job, as opposed to a more professional man.

FISKE: Postmaster General used to be reserved for that.

WHITMAN: That's right. Yeah.

FISKE: And I'd feel a lot safer if, you know, that were still the situation.

WHITMAN: I would too. But maybe I'm old-fashioned. Those are my feelings about it.

FISKE: By the way, did you have to have this book approved by the CIA?

WHITMAN: Yes. Yes.

FISKE: Did they make any changes?

WHITMAN: And that, by the way, is a system that I approve of. I don't object at all to having to submit my manuscript because I was writing about material, a large part of which is classified, and I didn't want to stray across the line inadvertently. Yes, they took it and they sent it around for review in all the different parts of the agency.

There was one sentence that I was worried about and I particularly wanted their view on. And they came back saying, "You must take out one sentence," and it was the very one I was concerned about. I called them up and I said, "Nice eye, fellas. Good eye."

FISKE: You'd been there long enough to know.

How many Americans at these negotiations speak Russian? I ask you that because in describing the negotiations, you talk about the Russian negotiator who speaks English, across the table presents his views in Russian, and then the translator translates them into English. It makes the process slow and cumbersome, but gives him the opportunity to consider twice what his answers will be, and also, of course, maintains the pride, I suspect, he takes in his own language.

WHITMAN: Oh, yes.

FISKE: One of the criticisms we hear of American

education and American foreign policy, and maybe American intelligence, is that altogether too few of us speak the foreign languages.

WHITMAN: Uh-huh. Well, certainly the Russians outdo us enormously in that, and that was evident in the SALT negotiations, where their English competence was several times higher than our Russian competence.

Now, that's partly because the people that we have there, you know, didn't train in the Russian field. They were on the delegation because of their special military knowledge or their special legal knowledge, and so Russian wasn't their career work. But in the Soviet Foreign Ministry, they just train a lot of people in Russian -- in English.

FISKE: Does that give them a considerable advantage over us?

WHITMAN: Well, I think it probably does in facilitating their -- in their facilitating their understanding. They can read our press in a way that we can't read theirs, you know, so easily, so flexibly. On the other hand, there's not very much in their press. But they can keep up with currents of American opinion because they can talk freely and read and do analysis of sources.

FISKE: Do you speak Russian?

WHITMAN: Yes, but I don't speak it as well as my KGB counterpart spoke English.

FISKE: How'd you come to be in charge -- the chief analyst in the Soviet Division?

WHITMAN: I worked my way up. I came in 1951 to the agency and started out as an economic researcher, and then went through, you know, various levels.

FISKE: Had you started in Soviet investigations?

WHITMAN: Uh-huh.

FISKE: Had you prepared for it, or...

WHITMAN: No. At that time -- this was 1951. And the best way to learn about the Soviet Union was to join the CIA, which had all the research resources and the jobs in which one could train.

I began, really, in an odd way. I got very interested

in the music of Shostakovich in the late '40s. And then I read one day the denunciation, the self-denunciation of his own works, as dictated to him by Stalin and Stanov (?). And it bemused and intrigued me a great deal. I thought, "What kind of a system is it that would force a great composer like this to condemn his own works?" And that was my first interest in the subject, the first thing that drew me into being a Sovietologist.

FISKE: In your story, John, it seems very clear that the Soviet negotiators are sincerely interested in reach agreement, in wanting a treaty, as individuals, and they all argue to your protagonist in the story that their government wants it and wants it very, very badly. There's a widely held perception in this country that, in fact, the Soviets have been insincere.

How do we resolve those things?

WHITMAN: Well, part of this is the requirements of drama in my book. I could not assert that the real Soviet delegations all, to a man, sincerely favored a treaty.

FISKE: Well, that can be said of the American delegation too. Obviously. How many people on that delegation?

WHITMAN: Well, officially, sitting at the table, about eight or nine, and then twice that many advisers.

FISKE: Sure. And, you know, they don't all come with the same view. Some of them would, if they could, throw the whole thing out. And there are people in Moscow on the General Staff and people in the Pentagon on the General Staff who feel that it's foolishness and a waste of time, and we ought to throw it out and we can't trust them, and so on. So that sort of balance exists on each side.

But what was your impression, as a participant in the negotiations, about the general sincerity of the Soviets?

WHITMAN: Okay. My impression -- and you know, I don't want to put too much weight on it because we weren't intimate with these men, and you couldn't...

FISKE: No socializing at all?

WHITMAN: Yeah, sure there was socializing, but we weren't socially intimate. They didn't become close friends. And they had, of course, to maintain their official government position, which was one of sincerity.

My guess, my hunch is that, to varying degrees, all of

them had invested enough of their career into the arms control negotiations that they wanted to see them succeed. And I think this was generally true on the American side. But, you know, what is success? Success can be a treaty that's sort of even-handed, or you can think success is a very one-sided treaty in favor of your side, and it's only in that sense that you're sincerely interested in arms control.

And this is to a considerable extent kind of academic because the controls exercised by the capitals, Washington and Moscow, were pretty stringent. And if a fellow was a zealot for SALT and he was on the delegation, he couldn't get very far off the reservation. He couldn't take excursions and get the treaty changed to his liking. There were just too many controls from the respective capitals.

FISKE: There's a lot of talk these days about Soviet treaty violation. You know, recently it was revealed to us that they built this big radar installation which was not in keeping with the treaty. And from this, a great many people have concluded that we just can't trust the Russians and that the new round of negotiations are likely not to be fruitful, and any agreement we reach, they won't live up to, and so on.

As somebody who's spent his entire career analyzing the Soviets, the Soviet military and other aspects of their lives and politics, what's your advice?

WHITMAN: Well, I agree that you can't trust the Russians. And I think that the violations that are now being reported in the American press are quite serious.

If there were no treaty, of course, there would be even more things going on that we dislike, because the treaty is imposing some restraint on them.

But I think that you've got to take those violations very seriously. You've got to challenge the Soviets on them. And if they really give you no satisfactory explanation and refuse to alter their behavior, bring it into conformity with the treaty, then I think you've got to be willint to take counter-measures of your own that will either defend you against their violation or give you some corresponding advantage. And I think -- I have some hope, still, that if we pursue it in that kind of hardball way, we can improve the compliance record.

But, no, it's not something to wish away at all.

FISKE: What's your reaction to the dispute that's going on now about the MX and the Star Wars defense system?

WHITMAN: Well, those are two big subjects. We take the

Star Wars first. I'm certainly no scientist or engineer. I just have the feeling that -- well, I'm impressed by all the scientists who are testifying as to the great difficulty in making this effective.

Your guest last night was talking about a three-layer defense. I just wouldn't be at all surprised to find that it had to be a four-layer or five-layer or six-layer defense by the time we were through, and it still wasn't going to do the job.

I think there is one historical record here, that, invariably, the Soviets, with a lag, do match us. We can't expect to create such a system and keep a monopoly of it. And if the Russians reach a position where they have become invulnerable to our missiles, we're going to be quite worried. We're going to be worried about the recklessness that this might unleash in their policy.

FISKE: If you heard the program last night -- and I was talking to Harrison Schmitt, the former astronaut and Senator -- I put forth the theory that the Soviets would be very reluctant to get into a foot race with us in this area, not only because their technology is not as advanced as ours, but because I argued that their economy didn't allow them to expend the tremendous amount of money. Ours doesn't allow us to do it, and theirs, of course, is only half the size of ours. And I suspect that this is one of the reasons that they're so concerned about our talking about going ahead with it.

Would your experience confirm that or deny it?

WHITMAN: I think it's a factor. I think it's never been a decisive factor. I take them seriously when they tell us that, "We are prepared, if necessary, to match and overmatch you. It will be difficult. It will require sacrifices, but we will do it. We will not be outspent."

Now, the point that it's more difficult or it requires more sacrifices on their side than on ours has been true for the whole missile era, and they have sustained that drive. And, in fact, even when we slacked off at various cycles, they did not.

FISKE: That's one of the luxuries that a totalitarian society has.

WHITMAN: That's right.

And, you know, in international competition, this great military power is the only asset the Soviets have. They don't have the political or the economic or the cultural influence that the United States does. They are paid attention to only because of their military strength. So they're prepared to give up a lot

for it.

FISKE: I spoke to somebody not too long ago who said that the United States wants to be loved in the world, the Soviets want to be feared. Is that fairly accurate?

WHITMAN: The second part is. The second part is. You can speak to the first part. You're the American expert.

[Laughter]

FISKE: How about the state of the Soviet alliance? There have been people who have argued that, in fact, it's coming apart. They're no longer able to control their client states, their satellite states the way they have in recent decades. They're showing relatively more independence, and that this poses great problems for the Soviet Union, and to a certain extent weakens them.

WHITMAN: Well, this would be a question about Eastern Europe. It's going to be periodically problematical. We had 1956 with the Hungarian Revolution. We had 1968 with the Czech Spring. We have the Solidarity movement in Poland another 10 or 12 years after that. I expect that sort of thing to continue.

But insofar as there is a large premium on force, the Soviets have the force. And I don't expect to see them dislodged.

They're showing some flexibility. For example, letting Hungary go its own way economically. They have decided that there's no way to make Romania fall into line in foreign policy.

FISKE: They long ago decided that with Yugoslavia.

WHITMAN: Long ago with Yugoslavia. And, of course, China has escaped them altogether.

FISKE: Doesn't that reach serious precautions?

WHITMAN: Yeah, but it's apparently not the end of the world, because we've seen the Chinese split really began in 1956. That was when at the agency we first began to notice evidence of that. And it's a bad setback. It's a bad setback. But it has not brought down the Soviet Union.

FISKE: Every now and then, shudders go through our spines when we read of approaches between the Soviet Union and the Chinese. It's held out that they may cozy up to one another again. And, of course, our defense strategy, our world geopolitics is very largely premised upon this enmity between the Soviet

Union and Communist China.

How likely do you think it is that, in fact, they may patch up their differences?

WHITMAN: Well, I think if one looks a decade or two ahead, they'll probably both find it to their advantage to improve the relation somewhat, so that they're not, you know, so vulnerable to each other and can't be whipsawed by other parties.

I expect never to see the restoration of the relationship of 1950, the really close coordination of policy. For one thing, the ethnic enmities are enormous. For another, the pride on both sides is enormous.

What they really brought over was issues of authority, of who was the boss, who got to run the international communist movement. And China fractured the Soviet authority, and they're certainly not going to serve it back up to them.

So, I don't think it is plausible to expect that they should really be confederates or allies in another 10 or 20 years.

FISKE: Our telephone number is 885-8850. We're very pleased to have at our microphones John Whitman, who served as CIA's chief analyst of Soviet policy during a 30-year career in that agency. He was the CIA representative in the SALT II talks in Geneva. He's the author of a new novel titled Geneva Accord, which is very, very enjoyable reading, and it's published by Crown Publications....

You're on the air.

MAN: I'd like to talk to the Star Wars thing. I was reading this weekend in Time magazine a section of Arkady Shevchenko's book that's coming out. And one thing which caught my eye was that he mentioned that in 1971 he was sent to sound out Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania on a treaty to liquidate chemical and biological weapons. But then he goes on to say that the Soviet Union, although it depicted itself as a leader in the effort to destroy, get rid of biological weapons, has always expanded its biological and chemical weapons programs. And he seemed to -- he made a great emphasis of this, that the U.S.S.R. is much better prepared in this area than the United States.

And my question, when it comes to the Star Wars thing, is -- your guest was saying just a minute ago that the Soviet people can take the kind of burden that defense expenditures puts on people. They always have and they probably will for some time to come. Let's say we decide to forego the Star Wars thing and

let's say they continue and accelerate their program to research and develop, and even deploy these weapons; and then we find ourselves in a position of some inferiority in this situation. What do we do then?

WHITMAN: Well, I think then we will wish that we had negotiated some controls that had kept the Soviet Union from making these advances. Because I agree with you that they will do the research. And if they find a workable system, they will deploy it, whether we do or not. It's not that we're driving them to it. It's that they are driving themselves to it.

And with respect to your point about biological and chemical weapons, any treaty of this kind that we sign does have to be verifiable unilaterally by our own means. That, unfortunately, limits what you can negotiate, because you can't verify what they're doing in their weapons laboratories; as Senator Schmitt was saying last night. And you can only verify parts of a weapons program. So you can really only afford to limit by treaty parts of a weapons program.

MAN: So I guess the point I'm making is that if we decide to forego this, it's not as simple as, "Well, then we have no more problems with space." In other words, it's not just us that's going to militarize space. It could be the Soviets who go ahead and decide to militarize space too. So there's something of a gamble in this, I would say.

WHITMAN: Yeah. That's correct.

FISKE: Good evening.

MAN: There's something that I've always been interested in, which was the level of -- I guess how the CIA and the KGB view each other. Is there a level of professionalism? Is there any kind of a, I guess, respect for the other agencies, and how they compare to each other. And I'd like to hang up and listen.

WHITMAN: I'm not your best source on this. As Fred was saying, I come from the analytical side of the agency, although I've written a book about -- Geneva Accord is about the spy side of the agency.

I imagine, nevertheless, that there is a fair amount of respect, and also a fair amount of enmity. But I don't think I could really carry it any further on the basis of personal knowledge.

FISKE: Aside from respect or enmity, having worked for as many years as you did as a Soviet analyst, what's your evaluation of their intelligence?

WHITMAN: I think it's pretty good. I think it's pretty good, although there are some blind spots, and sometimes there's, apparently, inhibitions about reporting to the leadership.

FISKE: You mean things that they don't want to hear?

WHITMAN: Information that they don't want to hear and that don't fit their stereotypes.

FISKE: Does that not exist in our intelligence at all?

WHITMAN: No. I think we're pretty free of that, at the field level, certainly.

FISKE: Okay. That's important.

WHITMAN: Oh, yes.

FISKE: Good evening.

WOMAN: I'd like to ask your guest a question. I lived in Europe for many years, and I've also been to Russia, and I noticed a lot of things. I was also married to the delegate of, you know, the treaty about the seas at one time, and was in Geneva and lived there, and so forth. And I love Europe. And as a matter of fact, I went to Russia. I was only there a month, but I liked the Russians to. And I've always felt that there is something about the outcome of the last world war that is behind all the failures we've had in negotiating with the Russians, and that has to do with -- the treaty that you're talking about, you know, we set off the atom bomb and a lot of our generals were saying, "Let's bomb Moscow," and everything. I was right here in Washington when that was going on. And then they got the bomb and everything. I remember a lot of people here thought that it was possible to keep it a secret. And then there was John Foster Dulles, whom you may remember. And I was living in Europe when he was...

FISKE: What's the point that you'd like to make?

WOMAN: Well, what I often think is that all of these treaties, as long as they regard Russia as the enemy, you know, that you never look forward to settling the European problems on which this whole thing was based, somehow or other. And now we have the atomic bomb.

The seems to me the conditions of enmity in this world are completely changed, especially when you talk about 20 years from now. A lot of the people I know in Europe who are working on these problems...

FISKE: I'm finding it difficult to get to the nub of

what you're saying. Are you saying that we ought to approach this thing as though, in fact, the Soviets were not our antagonists?

WOMAN: Yes, because...

FISKE: What do you think about that, John?

WOMAN: It's a political...

WHITMAN: I would say to that that you're right to connect it with World War II and that World War II left everybody else pretty prostrate -- prostrate, and just two big powers in the world. So there's a natural rivalry between them.

I would go further, though, and say that I do believe that the Soviets are a very expansionist power.

WOMAN: More than we are?

WHITMAN: Yes, I do.

WOMAN: Well, aren't we sort of the heirs of the British Empire, what with our spreading democracy all over the world and everything?

WHITMAN: I think we like to maximize our influence. I think that the Soviets like to spread their control, and you see this in the countries around their periphery where they've been able to do it.

WOMAN: Well, weren't we in Persia? I mean compare Persia, for example, with Nicaragua and Mexico.

WHITMAN: Well, compare Persia with Afghanistan. We played games in Persia and we sent money there and we supported the Shah. We never sent in the American Army, as it's been sent into Afghanistan.

WOMAN: Our CIA overthrew their Mossadegh while I was living in Europe. I remember everybody knew about that. And I remember everybody thought that the Americans had a lot to do with trying to encourage the Hungarian Revolution. I remember when that happened in the fall of 1956, when we had all those revolutions in the Middle East and the Hungarian Revolution and everything.

I mean I felt that both sides were interfering in the politics of the countries on the borders of Russia. And I mean we criticized them for going into Cuba and all that kind of thing. It seems to me that it's a political problem, that you never can solve this arms control thing.

FISKE: Well, you want to give a reaction to that, John? And then we have to move along.

WHITMAN: Yeah. Well, I guess we just have a difference of opinion. I don't want to support every international action of the United States, but I do think that the Soviets are animated by a much more thoroughgoing ambition and a much more irreversible ambition than we are.

FISKE: We're talking to John Whitman. His book is titled Geneva Accord.

Good evening.

MAN: I would like to ask two questions. One, is it possible that -- is it possible that the international board, which is in the United States intelligence forces, can make a formula to stop the sales of nuclear or nuclear devices selling in the United States? That is one.

And two...

FISKE: Hang on. Let's take them one at a time.

WHITMAN: Did you get that, Fred? I'm not sure I understood the question.

MAN: The question is, is it possible that the CIA intelligence force can get a formula to stop the selling of nuclear forces, nuclear force...

FISKE: You mean nuclear weapons?

MAN: Nuclear weapons, such as high-tech technical things.

WHITMAN: Okay. No, it is possible that the CIA can do that. That's a domestic matter and that's the responsibility of domestic agencies. The CIA can and should, and I presume still does, try to provide these agencies with its own information about the leakage of technology to the Soviet Bloc. But the actual policing of that is not a CIA function, nor should it be.

FISKE: What's your second question, sir?

MAN: My second question is, when will Ronald Reagan will be able to meet the Russians face-to-face, rather than allowing Mrs. Thatcher and -- Mrs. Thatcher and the German Prime Minister to meet the Russians first and then allowing them to come over and explain certain things to him, and then he keeps dodging? Is it possible that he will be able to meet and be rid

of all these dodging games that he's playing?

WHITMAN: I surely don't know, sir. But I don't expect it soon.

FISKE: Thank you very much.

In your book, your CIA Director and others in the organization, even down to the person who had to do the job that you did at Geneva, are pressured from time to time to enter into the field of policymaking decisions. They have to resist that. The role, as you see it, is to provide information as objective as possible.

WHITMAN: Yes. And, you know, it's the only way that the agency can retain its unique usefulness. Lots of people can make policy, but you need some place that can make estimates that is not influenced by policy.

FISKE: Would it be fair to assume that during all those years that you were chief Soviet policy analyst, that you frequently sent up estimates and information, and then saw policy decisions made which were completely out of keeping with the conclusions that that information would lead you to?

WHITMAN: Oh, surely.

FISKE: It must be a very frustrating thing.

WHITMAN: Uh-huh. I remember an extensive briefing of President Carter before he was elected. We went down to Plains and briefed him about the Soviet Union eight hours straight. He took it all in like a wonderful student, and it presented a rather hard-line view of the Soviet Union. And then, four years later, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, and Carter said, "I was astonished and had to change my entire view of the Soviet Union." And it made me feel like a failure, as though I had failed to educate him, that he should be so surprised by this.

FISKE: I could never ask you this question if you were still working for the CIA. But based on the information that you have accumulated all these years, do you think that there is a justification for labeling the Soviet Union as the focus of evil in the world?

WHITMAN: I wouldn't like to put it that way, because that really distracts attention from all the other problems that could be characterized as presenting evil problems, evil consequences. I think they're perhaps the most important problem we face. Maybe I'm, you know, overfocused on them in that sense. But the focus of evil in the world? No, no, no. That goes much too far.

FISKE: And you think that the difficulties, the differences that we have with the Soviet Union are more based on differing perceptions, differing premises that we start at in each society, misunderstandings? What's the source of our great difficulty?

WHITMAN: Well, the misunderstandings don't help. And I think the "focus of evil in the world" is one of these misunderstandings that does make it difficult to compose our relations, somehow. But I think the Soviet Union, for its part, has a pretty good understanding of the United States, and it's not -- it's in the field. It's taken the field globally against ourselves and our allies, and it wouldn't change if its understanding of us was somehow improved. I think it's a rather impervious country.

I'm not as worried about it as some people because I think it has inherent weaknesses and it's going to fail in its ambitions. But it's not going to be talked out of them, and we are going to have to contend with them.

FISKE: Does the expectation that you have that they will fail make you fearful? It makes me fearful because I suspect that if in fact they depend ultimately on the exercise of force, of power to achieve their goals, that if the Soviet leaders see failure on the horizon, that they may attempt to thwart that failure, to deal with that failure with the most important weapon they have.

WHITMAN: Well, I couldn't rule it out. But I must say that that is a tough political system and it's hard for a madman to get to the top in that system. I think it's hard for a Hitler to prevail in that system. And they have shown much sobriety about nuclear weapons during the whole nuclear era.

Also, I don't know what form this failure would take, but I imagine it is taking, you know, just some kind of gradual and persistent running down of the system, rather than a great upheaval and a revolution.

FISKE: When you speak about their system, what you're saying leads me to the conclusion that you think that they're not quite as totalitarian as we have thought, that in fact the President of the Soviet Union, or the chairman of the party, doesn't hold full sway, that he's accountable in some way?

WHITMAN: I think he's accountable to his colleagues, a small collective. And, you know, we're talking about a dozen men. There's some safety in that, if you're thinking about the possibility of a Hitler and an Armageddon and a Walpurgisnacht. But I don't think -- on vital issues, of course, they have to take into account the interests of their country, and they do it.

But they do it by themselves.

FISKE: But there's a kind of collective judgment there.

WHITMAN: Yes.

FISKE: You're on the air.

MAN: I was a little bit confused by a couple things Mr. Whitman said. Early on he said something to the effect, in the context of Star Wars, that if we develop a weapon, the Soviets tend to follow us. And then a little later he said that they develop things whether we develop them or not, and their weapons development really doesn't have anything to do with what we do. I'm wondering which he really thinks is the case.

WHITMAN: I guess I would emphasize the second of those. I think that what we do may shape their responses. Naturally, they're trying to respond to our offense by improving their defense in an appropriate way. But if you're looking for the fundamental driving force on their side, I wouldn't say it is just to match us. I would say that they are out to accumulate as much of an advantage as they can.

MAN: Well, I agree with that. And that's what makes me wonder why you seem the question the Star Wars concept, from the point of view that it doesn't seem to me to make sense to let them have it and us not, if they're going to develop it anyway.

WHITMAN: My preference would be, since I regard it as an extension of the arms race that will ultimately be matched by the other side and will be kind of proven fruitless, my preference would be that it could be controlled, and neither side would do it.

MAN: Well, but you've already discussed the difficulty of verification. How are we going to verify what they're doing in their satellites?

WHITMAN: Well, I'm not sure what the exact verification problems are these days. I've been retired for about five years. And that would be an important consideration. But I think people are too quick to dismiss the possibilities of verification in this area. But it is a true stumbling block.

MAN: Well, I'm glad to hear you say that. But I would hope that we wouldn't dismiss too quickly the idea of a defense initiative, just as you say that people ought not dismiss too quickly the idea of verification. I think it's very difficult, but nevertheless I guess I don't dismiss it. But I'm a little concerned by your dismissing, apparently, Star Wars without --

and at the same time sort of stating the case for it.

WHITMAN: Well, I don't think there's any danger of our dismissing Star Wars. It seems to have a lot of momentum behind it. I would prefer that an equal momentum was placed behind verification capabilities that could enable us to monitor a treaty that would spare us this system, both on our side and theirs.

MAN: Since most human endeavors, if not all, are not perfect, and since it seems obvious that perfect verification would be necessary if we're not going to find ourselves at their mercy, I'm wondering what the justification is for depending upon verification.

WHITMAN: Well, it's true that verification is not a hundred percent, just as probably Star Wars would not be a hundred percent effective either. So you can't operate in a total risk-free way. You cannot ask intelligence to provide you with day-by-day comprehensive reports of what the Soviets are doing. It's a question of how much chance you are prepared to take. And in that instance or in that procedure, what is normally done is you figure, you know, what could the Russians do prior to our finding out what they were up to, because eventually they have to deploy in the field, and then we know. And how serious would it be, or what measures are available to us to counterbalance that? Could we respond in time to match them? A very specific weapon-by-weapon calculation. And the intelligence people come out with judgments about our capabilities, weapon-by-weapon. You know, it comes to some two or three hundred judgments on a treaty like SALT II.

FISKE: Was there something else?

MAN: Could I just make the point here? Mr. Whitman talks about us responding to something when we find out that they're developing a new sort of weapon. The difficulty that I see there is twofold. First of all, if there's a strong enough peace movement to achieve passage of a treaty in this country, you can be very sure that any attempt to respond will be labeled suicidal or nuclear madness, or what have you. And secondly, and as a consequence of that, we tend to debate things for years and years and years. So they could have their system in place and we'd still be debating it, as we do with the MX or the B-1 or the Trident or all the other controversial weapons systems.

WHITMAN: That is a feature of our politics that we'd have to overcome, I grant you.

MAN: Well, don't you think that we ought to, you know, be realistic and take into account that that's what's likely to

happen, and therefore not put ourselves into that position?

WHITMAN: Well, I don't necessarily accept that, that the American people are always going to somehow be sluggish and lazy and refuse to respond to the facts. No, I don't accept that.

FISKE: Thank you very much, sir.

What do you make of the Russian civil defense system? Some people argue that the fact that they have spent more in developing a civil defense system is evidence that they're intending to go to war.

WHITMAN: I take it as evidence that they are not satisfied with deterrence, simple deterrence, limited deterrence, and that they take seriously the possibility of war. Not necessarily that they mean to start it, but they take it seriously enough as a possibility to think it through and spend the enormous amounts of money that would be required not just to deter, but to go beyond deterrence and to try to actually fight and survive such a war.

Now, they're probably pretty unrealistic about this, and it shows the depths of their military priorities that they will pursue such a goal.

FISKE: John, would you stand by? We have news on the network, and then let's talk some more.

John Whitman. His book, published by Crown, is titled Geneva Accord.

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FISKE: We're talking to John Whithman, who served in the CIA as analyst of Soviet -- chief analyst of Soviet policy for much of a 30-year career. He was also the CIA representative in the SALT II talks in Geneva. He is now the author of the book Geneva Accord, in which the principal character has a career very similar to John Whitman's. Interesting story of intrigue. Gives you a great idea of the way those negotiations work, and it's just a doggone good dramatic story, as well.

If you have any questions or comments, we invite them....

Before we go back to the phones, John, I have read that the Central Intelligence Agency, while our umbrella intelligence organization, actually has less personnel than the other intelligence agencies in our government, combined. We have the Defense

Intelligence Agency and several other intelligence agencies, and that frequently they are working in the same field, may they come up with different conclusions or information.

How does that serve us, actually? Is there a competition between these intelligence-gathering organizations?

WHITMAN: I don't really know about the intelligence-gathering side. You know, one way to put that question is, do you have two or three agencies trying to recruit the same foreigner? I think that's pretty well arbitrated out, pretty well negotiated out.

On the analytic side, which was my business, yes, there's competition. And I think it's healthy competition. The CIA's positions get challenged by the Defense Intelligence Agency or the intelligence organs of the Army or the Navy or the Air Force. And they have to be defended, and maybe they're changed. And vice versa. And there's no monopoly on truth in this.

FISKE: How does that mechanism work? Do these intelligence agencies get together and battle it out and reach a common conclusion that they send to the White House or to the Congress? Or, in fact, do they present their differing views, with a judgment being made by the President?

WHITMAN: It is fought out in documents that are called national intelligence estimates. And what that label means is that all of the intelligence agencies have participated in preparing the estimate. Consensus is reached where possible. A great deal of attention is given, however, to making sure that true dissents and important dissents do get reflected in there.

And so, consumers will read that this main text is the view of the Central Intelligence Agency; the Defense Intelligence Agency, however, believes that. And then they are given space to present their views and their argument.

And I understand from the newspapers that these days they're given prominent space, frequently on the first page. So that the reader is immediately alerted to the fact that after prolonged discussion, there continue to exist different viewpoints.

FISKE: Of course, it serves to point out that even judgments made after the most thorough and extensive study can be divergent.

WHITMAN: Indeed.

FISKE: Can be wrong. And there's some element of danger there.

Another thing that might be disturbing is that in the attempt to reach agreement, we frequently have the same kind of difficulty that we have when we do things by committee elsewhere, a dilution of...

WHITMAN: A wishy-washy...

[Confusion of voices]

WHITMAN: And I did a lot of work on those things, and that's one of your main efforts, is to make sure that you separate out the important differences that should be conveyed and don't cloud them up with unimportant differences, and that you don't sweep the big differences under the rug. It takes a lot of seriousness and good faith to do that.

FISKE: Good evening.

MAN: I have a comment and then a question. A famous news commentator, a very famous news commentator of one of the other stations once told about how William Randolph Hearst started the Spanish-American War by stirring up a lie about the Spanish Government. Now, in fact, this reflects the power of the media.

Now, my question is to Mr. Whitmore [sic]. Do you think it's possible that during continued negotiations between the U.S. and the Soviets, that they will find a common ground of -- I mean a common enemy other than themselves, in terms of such things as maybe the international media or neo-Naziism or Zionism or population explosion, or something other than themselves? Do you think that's possible?

WHITMAN: Well, I would like to think, you know, that we would find common cause against real problems of the globe.

MAN: Well, do you see such a problem?

WHITMAN: I must say that hasn't happened yet in any substantial degree.

FISKE: Good evening.

MAN: I'd like to ask John a two-part question about the nature of the Soviet Union. And that is, number one, how do the Russians perceive their relationship to the non-Russians in the Soviet Union? And number two is, what will be the likely consequences of the demographic change which is currently taking place in the Soviet Union vis-a-vis Russians and the non-Russians?

WHITMAN: Well, there's considerable evidence that the

Great Russians take a fairly superior attitude toward the non-Slavic populations. And this is clearest of all, I think, when you go to Central Asia and the Central Asian peoples. But there's also a Great Russian feeling of superiority over those in the Baltic states, and to some extent -- or even over the Ukrainians. So it's kind of a festering social problem.

The consequences in the long run? The trends you're talking about, of course, are that the birthrate is much higher in Central Asia than it is in the Slavic regions, and that, in fact, most of the increase in the labor force in future years is going to come from the increase in the Central Asian populations.

Those people don't migrate. And as industry expands, it's going to be a problem where to locate it, because the increment of the labor force is going to be and want to stay in Central Asia.

MAN: However, will the power or the political power change any with the change in demographics, let's say, from the Great Russians to the non-Russians?

WHITMAN: That's a question of how flexible and understanding and clever the Russians turn out to be. And I don't think they're especially adept at this.

FISKE: John, we have been witnessing the emergence of nationalism all over the world, various groups who in fact have not been heard from, who have not stirred much in centuries are now demanding nationalistic rights and identities and so on. We see it throughout the world.

In the Soviet Union they have over a hundred different ethnic groups, I understand. In Moscow, in the Kremlin, the White Russians hold sway. These ethnic groups have really not had a great deal of power or influence, or even representation, in the Soviet Union.

It seems to me that they're hardly likely to be immune from this phenomenon that's sweeping the world. And if it does strike them, what change is it likely to produce in the Soviet Union?

WHITMAN: Well, this is a question of how flexible they are. And now I think we're talking about one of our advantages, is that we can adjust our political situation to accommodate things like demographic change, bring minorities in, spread power.

The leadership so far, I think, has not been adept at that. It's possible that a younger leadership over the decades of the future will get better at it. But certainly the record so

far indicates that this is not one of their political gifts. And as a result, for example, they just cannot afford to in any sense lose the war in Afghanistan, with all these Central Asian nations of their own right across the border.

MAN: Well, this raises a third question, then. From what I understand you to be saying, that if they are not flexible, would that then follow that not being flexible to this type of change, that they would be more repressive, that the regime would be more repressive than it is now to control these other populations?

WHITMAN: If necessary, yeah. I think it will.

FISKE: Sir, thank you very much.

We're talking to John Whitman. His book, Geneva Accord.

You're on 88.5 FM.

WOMAN: I just wanted to call to your attention and to the attention of people in the audience who may be interested to a book called Weapons and Hope by Freeman Dyson. Either one of you know it?

WHITMAN: Yes, I've read parts of it.

WOMAN: You have read it. Well, I don't have to go any farther. Do you have any comments to make on this book?

WHITMAN: I think you probably have something to say about it.

WOMAN: Well, no. I haven't read the book. I've only read a review of it in the New Republic, and it is very highly recommended by the New Republic's reviewer, who is named Michael Mandelbaum, who, it says here, is an author of three books himself on nuclear weapons.

It sounds very enticing. I'm trying to get a copy of it. If I can get a copy of it in paperback, I will.

WHITMAN: It's a book by a serious scientist who has a lot of knowledge of these matters, and who wants them -- who feels it important that we find some more humanistic resolution to these problems than just continuing to pile up the weapons.

FISKE: Thank you.

You're on 88.5 FM.

MAN: I wanted to ask your guest, Russia is still the country of the Gulag, it has thousands of people enslaved in labor camps. And, you know, when the West encourages them by, for instance, this pipeline that's being built through the Soviet Union for gas to Western Europe, and it's well known that they're using slave labor to build this pipeline, and the West goes along with it because it's to their economic advantage, this is morally corrupt. And I think by these kinds of actions we encourage them in their repression of human rights of people.

I wanted to ask the guest, what does he think that we can do, as a government, as individual people, to help the people in the Soviet Union who are fighting for their human rights --the Refuseniks, for example, people who want to emigrate? What can we do to assist them?

WHITMAN: Very difficult matter. And the answer, I think, is not much. As I was saying earlier, this is a pretty impervious system, and they're not likely to succumb to our values or oblige us in our priorities. They don't get pushed around very easily.

MAN: Well, what about withholding technology, not cooperating in having the pipeline built to the West, this kind of thing?

WHITMAN: Well, we had an experience that approximated this situation with the Jackson-Vanik and Stevenson Amendments relating to Jewish emigration. And on that occasion, the Soviets were interested and, if not pushed too far, were willing to allow Jewish emigration to increase because they did have some hopes of acquiring American capital and technology. But once that got to a point where they felt they were being subjected to open and blatant pressure, they sacrificed those hopes and cracked down. The internal priority, the internal political priority took precedence.

MAN: Do you agree that no empire, no country has ever survived on a slave labor basis? Do you agree that the Soviet Union will eventually fall because of the pressures from within?

WHITMAN: I don't really know about fall or somehow be transformed. It's very hard to imagine. I think that system cannot sustain itself in its present form for another hundred years, and I think they do have these difficulties within flexibility. But just how that all works out, I think is pretty unpredictable.

FISKE: Their inflexibility, of course, has long been apparent. They operate on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, as though it were the Bible. And it is their Bible, some people

say, and they don't vary from it. And our ability to vary, to move, to change is a great strength.

But having studied the Soviet Union for as long as you did, have you in fact noted any substantial movement, any change that is impressive?

WHITMAN: Certainly the absence of mass terror after the death of Stalin is an enormously positive step. And we tend to forget how paralyzed the country was, how initiative was practically nonexistent because the price of independent thought, or even the appearance of independent thought was so high. Frequently it was death. So there's that one big step.

Then we had an unusual period from 1957 to '64 when Khrushchev was in power, and he was a sport in the Soviet political system. We haven't seen anyone like him since. But he had a very keen sense of these rigidities, particularly in running the domestic economy, and he was willing to try a lot of experiments. Now, that was one of the big reasons he was ousted, because it was upsetting the power structure. He was challenging the power of the party, which is one of the big dead hands on the Soviet economy. So he had paid the price.

And since then, the movements toward reform have been very modest, very tentative, and often undone. They are not impressive at all.

You have to keep in mind that Khrushchev experience. It was not expected. Nobody had identified Khrushchev as this kind of person. I'm sure his colleagues hadn't identified him as this kind of person. But he does remind us that it's not impossible, it's just very much against the odds.

FISKE: Was he party chairman as well?

WHITMAN: Uh-huh. That was his main source of power, First Secretary of the Party.

FISKE: But it was the party that ousted him.

WHITMAN: Oh, yes.

FISKE: You're on the air for John Whitman.

MAN: I just want to say it's a real privilege to have a chance to talk with a man of Mr. Whitman's background. My own area of interest has been focused largely on the Third World, the military and political problems of developing countries. And I made a comment last night related to Star Wars. I wonder if Mr. Whitman might offer his view.

I certainly understand the need for strategic defense. I don't think I suffer from many illusions about the nature of totalitarianism or the Russian system. But on the other hand, I made the comment that we really must find some way, either unilaterally, or perhaps even bilaterally with cooperation of the Soviets, to shift the focus of our competition into constructive channels. And I made the comment about finding ways to combat hunger, poverty, disease, illiteracy and injustice, and to see if, again, whether buy ourselves, on a unilateral basis, or perhaps to draw them into it, while maintaining the strategic defense or maintaining the balance of terror, and so forth, or deterrence, but somehow finding a way to avoid this immense new towering arms race which Star Wars is going to set off.

And I wonder if Mr. Whitman might want to comment on that.

WHITMAN: Well, I think it would be very desirable to draw the Soviet Union into cooperative work with us on these truly important and objectively difficult world problems. I don't -- I cannot be encouraged about the prospects for that, and there is fresh evidence on this matter.

When you read the book that's just been published by Arkady Shevchenko, who was at the United Nations as a deputy to the Secretary General for a number of years before he defected, and he documents over and over again how the Soviets have used the United Nations, and I would say all other international organizations, for the pursuit of their nationalistic aims, which they mostly conceive in an anti-Western framework.

I just can't be encouraging about that prospect. But of course it would be a grand thing if it came about.

MAN: Well, I appreciate your comment. And, of course, we all have to be careful about our own idealism or our own naivete. But I truly do feel that it's an area that we need to give some thought to, because I sometimes think we can't break their systems, but we might find ways to melt it.

I'll hand you on that note.

FISKE: Good evening.

MAN: You know, Mr. Whitman, there's some talk going about in Europe that the world chess championships in Moscow between world champion Anatoly Karpov and the challenger Kasparov is rigged in Karpov's favor. As a matter of fact, in the October the 13th edition of the London Times, a writer named Harry Gallumback (?) alleges that the Soviet authorities have threatened Kasparov and his family if he should play, you know, too

well against Karpov, if he should even win too many games.

What's your opinion of this?

WHITMAN: I'll plead total ignorance.

MAN: Okay. Thank you very much.

FISKE: We're talking to John Whitman. His book, Geneva Accord. It's a novel.

You're on the air.

MAN: I'd like to point out to the gentleman on your program that only an American who was raised in a culture of white man, black man; Nordic European, non-Nordic European; Protestant and non-Protestant; and now English-speaking and Spanish-speaking can possibly see Russian and non-Russian divisions in the Soviet Union as you see them.

True, the modern worker relate to the man who is still Moslem or is a Christian, as someone who is a bit less than his brother. But he relates to both of them in the same way. And the modern worker comes from a family which was of some religion, so he relates to the people of his own religion -- that is to say, of his former religion -- maybe a little bit closer than those of some other former religion.

But what you saw, which was reminiscent of the American culture and the pre-Bolshevik culture, was only a relationship between the people who are still Christian and the people who are still Moslem. You didn't see it as it really is. You saw it as you wanted to see it.

WHITMAN: I'm not sure I understand your question.

MAN: It's not a question, sir. It's a statement.

FISKE: On what do you base that, sir?

MAN: It is a fact.

FISKE: Well, you say it is an immutable fact, but on what do you base this? This is your perception? You're saying your perception is different from John's? That doesn't make it fact, does it?

MAN: Your perception is based on the fact that you are an Anglo-Saxon.

FISKE: Well, okay. Hey, thank you.

In the course of your career, did you have an opportunity to spend much time in the Soviet Union?

WHITMAN: I spent a month there, yes. I only made the one trip. And I spent...

FISKE: Attached to the embassy, or touring?

WHITMAN: Yes, attached to the embassy, carrying a diplomatic passport for protection. And it was what we call area familiarization. I traveled all over the place, covered as much ground as I could, just to get the taste of it, the feel of it, the sight of it, the smell of it.

FISKE: Now, your hero in the book is an analyst who becomes involved in spy activities. Does this sometimes happen in the CIA, actually?

WHITMAN: No. I would have to say that that's fictive. That was the kind of story I wanted to tell. But...

FISKE: Not likely.

WHITMAN: The analysts aren't trained that way. They're not inclined. If they get into a situation where they get accidentally involved, they're generally pulled out and replaced. The two activities are kept separate.

FISKE: You're on the air.

MAN: I'd like to ask Mr. Whitman if he has heard from or heard about Alexander Solzhenitsyn lately. I haven't heard much about him for a couple of years. I know he lives or he was living in Vermont. And I was wondering if he knows what he's up to.

Also, I know that Solzhenitsyn was a great admirer --well, is somewhat of an admirer of Nikita Khrushchev. At least he seemed to be, from reading Gulag. And I'm wondering what he thinks about that relationship, what Solzhenitsyn really thought of Khrushchev.

WHITMAN: I don't have any fresh information on Solzhenitsyn. I feel confident that he's writing because he's a man of great energy and passion and dedication. But I don't have any direct information on what he's up to.

Khrushchev made it possible for some of Solzhenitsyn's work to get published in the Soviet Union, but the Khrushchev himself felt that this cultural thaw and this liberalization had gone too far, and he began to rein it in. And I think

Solzhenitsyn lost his affection for Khrushchev at that point, because Solzhenitzyn is a very uncompromising man, as you know.

FISKE: Hello.

MAN: Is it possible that we've neglected to think that we might possibly be the big threat to the world? We are, I think, still only four to six percent of the world's population, and we use like 40 percent of the world's resources. And I just wonder about that. I just wonder who is the threat. And if Russia is not -- I'm not a pro-Russian, for sure. I'm certainly pro-American and pro-capitalist. But I think that capitalism is something that's horribly abused, and I don't hear anybody mentioning these things.

WHITMAN: I take your argument to be that the high levels of production and consumption in this country are going to deplete the world's resources, and that makes us a force for ill in the world. Is that right?

MAN: Yeah. I think that we -- when we see how much waste there is, when I see an awful lot of hungry people right here in America and I see people dumping things that could help other people because it's economically feasible to do that, I tend to question that.

WHITMAN: I agree. I think those are dismaying phenomena.

MAN: I also question the fact that there are people who are working out in Fairfax County who don't have places to live. They have jobs but no places to live. There are people in California living in automobiles who have jobs. And I just wonder about that.

We always hear what is wrong with Russia, but we never hear too much of what's wrong with us.

WHITMAN: Well, let me respond to that by telling you that after I retired from CIA, I pursued another interest, which is to become a social worker. And I am, myself, engaged in the kind of problems that you're talking about.

FISKE: But to say that we don't hear about those problems, of course, is erroneous. We do hear about them. You know about them because you hear about them in the media. And there are divisions in this country about what should be done. We're right now in the midst of extensive debate about allocation of resources, whether or not we should cut social programs or whether we should cut military programs. So we certainly hear about it.

MAN: We hear about it, but I don't think we have a proper dimension. I wish we were as moral as we say we are. I really wish that.

I'm only about 20 miles out of Washington. And honestly, I see people with attitudes, they should be wearing sheets, you know. They should be -- well, the things they say and all that, it's just appalling to me that some people, especially at the lower level, have to work so hard that they still maintain the attitudes of their parents and the parents before them and the parents before them. They still have the hatreds and the ugliness, and they cover it up with some sort of fundamental patriotism.

WHITMAN: Well, I hear your concerns, sir, and I think they do you credit.

MAN: Okay.

FISKE: Good evening.

WOMAN: I'm delighted to hear Mr. Whitman tonight.

Mr. Whitman, I'm pleased about your view about the Star Wars program. I think -- well, I suppose it's because it agrees with mine, that it makes sense.

I have a couple of questions I'd like to ask you. Since you were involved in the working out of SALT II, I'm wondering if you'd care to express an opinion as to how come it was never passed here. Approved by the Senate; you know.

WHITMAN: Yes. It was initialed in 1979 and debated in the Senate, in committee, through the fall, and it aroused a great deal of opposition among people who subsequently because -- you know, staffed out the Reagan Administration. I think their concern was one of the concerns we've heard expressed tonight, that the Americans, if they sign an arms control treaty, would just go limp and not support the necessary defense program. I think there was also some partisan politics in it.

And the President, President Carter, simply by that time had lost enough strength so that he couldn't get the votes. So I would say that it was the first casualty of the succeeding presidential election.

WOMAN: May I ask, in your opinion, was it -- would it have been wise to have passed it?

WHITMAN: Well, that's my feeling. And as a matter of fact, most people, even those who argued vigorously against it

and eventually forced it to be withdrawn, think that it's a good idea that we agreed with the Russians to observe its provisions, even though we hadn't ratified it. It's a kind of an anomalous position to be in...

WOMAN: It certainly is.

WHITMAN: ...to argue that this is a rotten treaty, but we're going to obey it. Nevertheless, that's the way it came out.

FISKE: How did you feel, having sat there at those tables for two years attempting to hammer out this agreement, to see it meet that fate? What was your own personal reaction to that?

WHITMAN: I thought it was a loss. I thought it was a loss.

FISKE: Was this generally shared by other people who participated?

WHITMAN: It was mixed. But I think a number of people who participated, yes, felt that good work had gone down the drain. It was a modest treaty. It didn't provide for deep reductions in arms. It did call for the Soviets to destroy ten percent of their forces. Naturally, the oldest, the least capable of their forces. But it was a beginning, in that sense.

And it also made some inroads in Soviet secrecy, which pleased me particularly because I think Soviet secrecy is pernicious and keeps the world uncertain and agitated and alarmed. And we're all going to be better off if they can be persuaded to give it up. And they were in several of the provisions of the treaty.

The treaty, in its present state, non-ratified but supposedly observed, is weak. And I think the violations that we see are in part a function of the fact that it never really did come into force.

WOMAN: I'm disappointed too. I think it was a loss.

May I ask another question that sort of goes farther back into Russian history? I've been making a small study of Russia in the past year or so. And from what I have picked up, is this continuum of this inflexibility, going back through the czars and that. I mean the current regime there seems of a piece in that way.

WHITMAN: Oh, I agree. There's much that's Russian in

the Soviet Union. And that kind of inflexibility is -- yeah, it goes way back. There's an old Russian saying, "Every initiative must be punished," just because it's initiative.

FISKE: Ma'am, thank you very much.

You're on 88.5 FM.

MAN: I was a little bit concerned because during the first hour it seemed to me that there was some reluctance to identify the Soviet Union as the evil empire. But at about 9:35 this evening, we had this caller who was almost ready to identify the United States as the evil republic.

For the benefit of that particular caller, I would like to say this: The United States has had a pernicious influence only in those respects where population control methods have been fostered through the United States aid program. These population control methods have included the subsidy of forced abortion; forced sterilization, etcetera, which in effect have told our so-called Third World friends that there are literally too many of you.

It is, in particular, for some of these reasons that we have had the tragedy in Iran, where the first thing that the Ayatollah Khomeini has done is to shut down the American-sponsored abortion mills, and then the American-sponsored population control clinics and birth control clinics and that sort of thing.

So this needs to be kept in mind.

FISKE: All right. Thank you very much, sir.

He mentions the United Nations. What conclusions do you come to regarding the United Nations as a medium, as a way of solving some of these very, very difficult problems that exist between us?

WHITMAN: Not critical. I think it's worth keeping in being. It can occasionally defuse a situation or provide some channels of communication. But it's not a strong reed. I don't think one should expect it to solve our fundamental problems. And if you do, you're going to be disappointed, and you might destroy it by putting on it more than it can handle.

FISKE: The new Ambassador to the United Nations is almost certainly going to be the man you worked under, Vernon Walters, who was Assistant Director of the CIA. What do you expect from him in that capacity?

WHITMAN: He's an interesting fellow. He's very

articulate. His views are conservative. He's fair-minded, and he connects well with a lot of people. He's an enjoyable fellow. I remember once he quoted to me a piece in the New York Times on himself. He's a instinctive and brilliant linguist, by the way, and he quoted to me the judgment of the New York Times that Dick Walters is a man who can converse in 13 languages and think in none. And I enjoyed him telling that story on himself.

It'll be interesting. He's the first, I think the first man who ever served in CIA who has gone on to head our delegation to the United Nations. He may take some flak about that from colleagues up there. But I think he should be effective there.

FISKE: We're talking to John Whitman, former chief analyst of Soviet policy for the CIA, author of the book Geneva Accord, a novel.

You're on the air.

MAN: I guess I have to side somewhat with the gentleman on the evil republic, although I think it's getting to be more like the incompetent republic. It seems that more of our problems, especially those on the economic side, we're not addressing. We're coming up with rhetoric, and in many areas these problems are getting worse and worse, and instead we hear talk about things like Star Wars and the military budget, while at the same time we seem to be letting the deficit slide, letting the balance of trade slide.

Aren't these truly, certainly in the short run, as serious a problem as are these military issues?

WHITMAN: You know, your question, like some of the others that have come in tonight, makes me feel as though I'm being put in the position of deciding on who's the worse country, whom shall we condemn the most. It's not really too relevant. I have a view on that. I think that it is, frankly, absurd to compare this society unfavorably with that society. That society is an oppressed society, it's a police-ridden society, a society where freedoms that we take for granted just don't exist. It's a society where the oppression of the defense budget -- that is, the subject that we're concerned about in our country now -- it's hard to imagine how much the defense budget oppresses the Soviet people. It's just another several orders of magnitude more than here. And I guess I'm responding to not only you, but some others who have somehow wanted to equate the two countries in a moral sense. And you have my view.

MAN: Well, I don't -- I think I couldn't agree with you more. But the issue is that, really, the world, I think, depends upon the United States to supply a measure of stability. And not

just on the military side, but essentially in the business of the world, the ability to provide the oil for international trade --I mean the lubricant, the money system, a place where there is a stable medium of international trade. And my concern is that our leadership is not bringing -- is not addressing these problems as they really do exist and trying to grapple with the solutions.

All I hear coming out of the Congress and the Administration are responses that always seem to be addressing special interests in these areas.

Take, for example, Mr. Stockman's remarks last week and how they were treated. I think the only person that I heard that gave a good response was Mr. Dole, in regards to that there are some very hard decisions to be made. And unless we start getting on with making them, we're going to be in very bad shape very soon.

FISKE: Thank you, sir.

Have you formed any personal view of the wisdom of a nuclear freeze?

WHITMAN: I think the nuclear freeze was, as a movement, quite important in pressuring a reluctant Administration to getting moving on arms control. I think without the freeze movement and the bishops' letter on nuclear war and initiatives of that sort, arms control, and particularly the strategic talks, would have just suffered from benign neglect under this Administration. But those movements activated enough Congressmen and brought the MX under challenge, so that the Administration had to take it seriously. Nothing has come of it yet, but I hope they're going to get their act together and, when they go over to Geneva next March, address it in a more serious way than they have to date.

FISKE: If you were John Whitman, member of the Congress, how would you vote on the MX?

WHITMAN: Let me talk about it as John Whitman, former intelligence officer. It has sometimes occurred to me that if we got word that the Russians had decided to skip the deployment of a large and vulnerable missile and go straight from the fifth generation of missiles, or whatever it is, to the sixth, which in our case is represented by the Midgetman, I think if we reported that, it would be very alarming in Washington. They would think that the Russians had made a brilliant stroke, they were going to save one whole cycle of deployment and come at us with something better a few years later.

FISKE: So you think that would be the wise way to go.

WHITMAN: Yes, I think I do.

FISKE: It'd save a lot of money and a lot of time.

WHITMAN: Uh-huh.

FISKE: You're on the air.

MAN: Mr. Whitman, I'm intrigued by your analysis of why SALT II failed of ratification. Let me be sure I've got the background straight here. Jimmy Carter was President at the time, a Democrat, and there was a Democratic Senate, wasn't there? And wouldn't the Senate have to vote on the ratification of the treaty?

WHITMAN: Uh-huh. Yes.

MAN: Okay. So we had a Democratic President and a Democratic Senate.

Now, as you explained it earlier -- let me make sure I have this straight -- you see that the problems raised for the Democratic Senate and the Democratic President on ratification of SALT II were the people who are now Reagan advisers raised political objections to SALT II, and that's why it wasn't ratified?

WHITMAN: Yeah, by and large.

MAN: Okay. Now, there was an event that the rest of the world noticed that occurred on Christmas Eve of that December. Do you recall what that was?

WHITMAN: Which December are you thinking of?

MAN: Of '79.

WHITMAN: The treaty was dead by then.

MAN: Yeah, that's interesting. I hear now that it was dead, but at the time, as I recall it -- well, you remember what it was. It was the...

WHITMAN: The invasion of Afghanistan. Yeah.

MAN: ...a hundred thousand troops into Afghanistan to overthrow a puppet government that they themselves had installed earlier.

The rationale, the excuse given by the leadership in the Democratic Senate at the time was that it would be useless to

submit SALT II for ratification, to continue the debate, because the Democratic President had suspended grain sales to the Soviet Union in response to their invasion of their own puppet state.

Now, what I wonder, Mr. Whitman, is, in the analysis, why do you think that the effectiveness of the argument, if there was one, raised by the Republicans would supersede the real-live real-world actions of the Soviets in Afghanistan? Why would that be more important than the Soviet invasion of their own puppet?

WHITMAN: Well, let me straighten out the history a bit here. As one who was a witness in the Senate hearings, I remember quite clearly that it was evident that the votes to approve SALT II were not available before the invasion of Afghanistan occurred. And that was just kind of -- that put the seal on it and made it sort of manifest to everyone in the country.

My own view on that is that arms control treaties should not be thought of as rewards for Soviet good behavior. They should be things that are in our interest. If they are not in our interest, they shouldn't be negotiated or ratified. But if they are in our interest, then I think we ought to stick to them even when the Soviet Union does something outrageous.

Now, in the next four years, when the Reagan people are trying to negotiate treaties with the Soviet Union, the Russians are bound to do something outrageous, like shooting down a civilian airliner or invading a neighboring country. And I don't consider that to be grounds for, you know, suddenly discovering what pariahs they are and backing away from a treaty. If the treaty is in our interest, then I think we ought to proceed with it.

MAN: Since all treaties, of course, have a measure of mutual respect and mutual concern and mutual trust, if you will, none of them are technologically verifiable completely to the satisfaction of most folks who look at it, I think it would behoove us not to ignore what the Soviet Union does when it shoots down a civilian airliner or builds radar systems that are expressly prohibited or stockpiles third stages for weapons or puts more warheads on SS-18s than are required or agreed to or invades puppet states. I don't understand why, in the interests of a process, that we should ignore their behavior. Why can't we look at their activities as part of their state psyche, how their state operates, and consider what validity would our treaties and agreements have with them, since they're not ironclad -- and we're talking about the survival of mankind -- when they can't even seem to get along with their own puppets?

I fail to follow the logic that says, "Well, if a treaty is in our best interest, then we can ignore everything about the

person with whom we're making an agreement."

WHITMAN: Well, I fail to follow your logic. Because when I talk about the treaty being in our interest, I include the provision that it be satisfactorily verifiable. And if it's that good a treaty, then I think we want it for our own sake and should be prepared to negotiate it with a government which does abhorrent things in other areas.

FISKE: Sir, thank you very much.

Good evening.

MAN: I was wondering, Mr. Whitman, what you think about Soviet technocrats. I read a book a number of years ago by Seweryn Bialer and it's called Stalin and His Successors, and he said in that book that -- I think it was around the late 1960s that the Soviet Union was graduating a third more engineers than our society. And I was wondering what you know about the dynamic of that system that might allow for technological progress in that society, and also what you think about the conventional wisdom about them being technologically inferior and they have to steal or buy technology from the West.

WHITMAN: Well, I think there's something to that conventional wisdom, but not a great deal. I don't think that that -- you know, if we could cut that off, we would find that we had somehow preserved a decisive technological lead.

You know, in effect, there are three different economies in the Soviet Union. One is the military-industrial economy, and that's where those engineers are going. That economy has a lot of privileges that the civilian economy doesn't have. Quality control, for one. The Ministry of Defense can refuse to accept products that don't mean quality standards, whereas a fellow who's buying a generator or a tractor just has to take what he can get. So there's that privileged and relatively efficient economy.

Then there's the civilian economy, where innovation and standards and quality are much less enforced.

And then there's a private economy having to do with the production of food and services, which is ideologically wrong, but nevertheless has developed just because that's the only way to get along in a minimum creature way.

Is that responsive to your question?

MAN: Yes, it is.

One other thing. This group of technocrats -- or I

don't know if you could say there is an age group where there are a lot of technocrats. I was wondering if these people resent the old fogeys they have in charge there and may be trying to make moves into the leadership areas right now, and what that portends for the future.

WHITMAN: That's very hard to tell. I would imagine that there's a great deal of frustration over this rather dead hand.

MAN: I would think so.

WHITMAN: At the same time, the leadership replaces itself. It selects its successors. And it's got a strong tendency to select the same kind of people as itself.

FISKE: Thank you very much, sir.

Good evening.

MAN: I had a question for your guest there. I guess you've reviewed past historical relations between the United States and Russia, as far back as the '30s. Am I correct?

WHITMAN: You mean have I just reviewed them?

MAN: No, not just, but I mean in your position that you had with the intelligence group. Have you gone over anything historically?

WHITMAN: As necessary, yes.

MAN: I had a question concerning that. I think it was back during the early days of Stalin. He invited, I believe back when we were having a depression, he invited some people from the United States to help, I think, improve the technology in his country, railroads, communications, what have you. Are you familiar with this?

WHITMAN: Uh-huh. Yes. Not only the United States, but other Western countries too.

MAN: Right. Now, it was my understanding that a lot of people that went over there to work, because they were jobless here, found it very difficult to leave once they got there.

WHITMAN: Uh-huh.

MAN: I think they were put together in one community, or something like that, and some literally had to either buy their way out or escape, or what have you.

Can you shed a little bit of light on that or elaborate on that?

WHITMAN: I think you have that just about right. Is there some relevance to the present that you're concerned about?

MAN: The only reason I question that is because I almost landed up there myself.

WHITMAN: Did you really?

MAN: Yeah.

WHITMAN: Well, good for you.

FISKE: You mean as a scientist?

MAN: No, as a child of one of the workers. And I'm sort of thankful because a friend of mine had to escape across a lake into another country to get out.

WHITMAN: These people tended to get caught up in Stalin's spy mania, and it was very difficult. You're lucky you didn't go.

MAN: Yes.

FISKE: How did this government or the other governments react to that sort of thing?

WHITMAN: Well, I'm not sure. That's a bit of history that the American reaction -- it's a bit of history that I'm not sure of. I'd rather not try to guess at that.

FISKE: Well, sir, thank you very much. Our time has run out.

John, we appreciate your coming, and I found what you had to say very interesting, and found your book very enjoyable reading.

WHITMAN: Well, thank you. Thank you. And I've enjoyed this. You get some very good questions here.

FISKE: Don't we?

We've been talking to John Whitman, who is a former chief analyst of Soviet policy for the CIA. His book, which we've been discussing Geneva Accord. It's published by Crown.