

PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

An Address By CIA Director Stansfield Turner

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ADMIRAL STANSFIELD TURNER: Thank you very much. And thank you for being here with us tonight.

As all of you I'm sure appreciate, the Central Intelligence Agency and Yale have a great affinity. If this were 30 years ago, I suspect we could have filled the whole auditorium with just employees who were graduates of Yale. We still have a lot here. And I only regret that there isn't as good recruiting of the young men and women on the Yale campus today as there was years ago. I hope that the new model we're trying to create of intelligence and of the Central Intelligence Agency will help us, in time, be more attractive to the graduates of your fine university.

What I would like to talk with you about tonight is what the roles of intelligence are in a free democratic society like ours, what we, the intelligence professionals, need in order to fulfill those roles successfully, and what you and the entire society also require in order to be certain that we are doing our job well for you and that we're doing nothing else.

Good intelligence, in my view, is more important to our country today than any time since 1947, when we first organized a central intelligence operation in our country. Back then, clearly, we were the pre-eminent military power, we were independent economically, and we were the nation from whom most other free countries took their cues in the political sphere.

Look how different the world is today. We are closer to military parity, we are very interdependent economically, and even the smallest and most pipsqueak and newest of nations is independent politically and very active politically.

And what does this mean to us? It means that it is much more likely that actions and events which are not under our control will have a major influence on our fate and our future.

Military power is proliferating around the world, and more and more small countries are able to exercise economic leverage. And as I say, more and more countries are demanding to be active and independent politically.

As a result, we frequently find that these forces are encouraging countries to take actions deliberately inimical to ours, or at least so selfishly in their own interests that they don't care what happens on the international scene as a result of what they do.

Under these circumstances, if we as a country are to protect our interests, we simply have to know what is going on in these other countries of the world. And therefore we need an intelligence service, an intelligence capability that will provide our policymakers with good information. And in many areas today, information can provide better leverage to our policy- and decision-makers than even military power and economic prowess.

The successful conclusion of agreements, such as SALT, are very dependent, for instance, on good intelligence, good information. How can you enter into such negotiations if you don't have a good feel for what the military strength, military plans and programs of another country are? How can you sign such an agreement and tie this nation's future fate to it unless the intelligence authorities of your country can give some reasonable assurance of verification of such an agreement, assurance against violation of it?

Now, if this were the best of all possible worlds and other nations were forthright about their plans and policies, we wouldn't need spying in order to gain this necessary information for the security of our country. We all know it isn't the best of all possible worlds. Many, if not most, of the world's societies are closed societies, in our terms. They simply do not share with us information often vital to our own interests.

Take the great Russian wheat steal of 1972. Simple, basic economic statistical data not available to us, much to our detriment.

So, what I'm saying to you is that the collection of foreign intelligence, the collection of information about what's going on in other countries is the first role of your intelligence community today.

The second role is the obverse of that coin. It is counterintelligence, or the prevention of other countries' obtaining the secrets, the information which we must hold private. We are the most open society in history. There is little that we think or do that doesn't become apparent to other people. And yet, if we are to be prepared to counter deliberate or unintentional actions of other nations that are inimical to us, we must be able to make some preparations in private, in secret.

We cannot afford, for instance, to develop expensive military weapon systems or devices for collecting intelligence, and then disclose their particulars to countries against whom we may find it necessary to utilize them. In almost all cases, you can find some counter if you know enough about the basic system. We cannot afford to enter into these negotiations for SALT and other treaties if the terms on which we are going to negotiate are likely to be disclosed in advance.

Consequently, we must have some good capability to uncover threats to our secrets and to be able to frustrate or counter them. And this is our second role, counterintelligence.

The third role is what we call covert political action. Now, this really isn't intelligence, because intelligence is this collection and evaluation of foreign information. But covert political action is the attempt to influence the course of events in foreign countries without the source of the influencing being apparent.

Since 1947, although this is not, as I say, intelligence, the Presidents of this country, whenever they have authorized covert action, have directed the Central Intelligence Agency carry it out. And it is, unfortunately, here where the agency has gained the majority of its brickbats.

Why, then, do we have covert political action? Why do we persist in this contentious capability?

One of the cardinal principles of the foreign policy of our country since the founding of the Republic has been to eschew military conflict whenever our national objectives could be achieved or preserved by other means. This means we'd prefer diplomacy, we'd prefer negotiation, we'd prefer economic leverage before resorting to military power. But in addition, there are times when such influences as these -- negotiation, leverage, political influence -- simply will not work if the source of the influencing is apparent to the beholder. There are times when it can be very counterproductive, if you are trying to influence another nation, that it be known that you are the influencing source.

Let me give you a couple of examples. Take an election

in a democratic country where there is a severe challenge by the Communist Party, and we know, from intelligence, that that party is being financed and helped through the Soviet embassy in that nation. What should we do? Should we step in and help with financing and advice to the democratic politicians who are standing up to this pressure?

Well, clearly, each individual case is a separate decision which must be made on a very difficult set of judgments. But there have been times in the past when valuable allies have only been able to sustain these pressures against them because of this kind of support. But you can appreciate that if that were overt support, it might redound against those politicians, those democratic politicians' purposes.

So, what I'm saying to you is that I'm not talking about rigging an election, in a case like this; I'm talking about trying to bolster the democratic elements in making their case to their own public.

Another instance goes to a terrible problem in the world today, and that's international terrorism. Here, we make a real effort to understand what's going on, and even to penetrate into terrorist organizations. But if we can do that and in that process influence the course of that terrorist group, that's not intelligence, that's covert action. Clearly, we can only be effective if we can do that without it being known that we're the motivating element.

So, there is, in my view, a reduced role for covert political action in our country today. It isn't as useful as it was many years ago, when there were some very outstanding successes for our country in this area. But I still very sincerely believe that we must keep in our quiver an arrow that says "covert action," a capability that we cannot afford to be without. So that if and when the decision-makers of our country need and authorize it, we have that capability. And it is here in the Central Intelligence Agency that that potential, that residual capability resides.

So, the roles of intelligence, then, are three: collecting foreign intelligence about activities in other countries, conducting counterintelligence operations to deny access to our secrets to other nations, and, when authorized, conducting covert political action.

Now, what do we in the intelligence community require in order to carry out these roles?

Well, first, we need the understanding and the support of the American people. I think we've had that over many, many years almost entirely on faith, a faith that the country did need

to collect intelligence and that it did need to do it in a secret way. Unfortunately, the allegations and the revelations of intelligence abuses over the past three or four years has shaken that faith. And I believe we're in a position today where although the American public still strongly supports a good intelligence capability, they want and need a stronger foundation for that support. Accordingly, we are trying to be more open, to share more, within the limits of necessary secrecy, with the American public. The pleasure at having you here with us tonight is an earnest of that intent to share with the American public as much as we possibly can.

Having said that, the second fundamental requirement of a good intelligence activity is an ability to keep secrets. Now, if that seems like a contradiction with being more open, let me try to explain.

One of the problems we have today in keeping secrets -- in fact, in my view, probably the greatest problem -- is that there are too many of them. There is too much secrecy in our government, and we must recognize that, as Winston Churchill once said, when everything is classified secret, nothing is secret. In short, we have lost the respect for that label. Sometimes it says "confidential," "secret," "top secret," "destroy before reading," whatever it may be.

[Laughter]

By sharing more with the public, we not only, I believe, help strengthen this country, by making it better informed and encouraging good debate on important topics, but by reducing the corpus of classified information that must be preserved, I hope that we are engendering respect for that which remains. It is important that we do this and that we have an understanding of the need for secrecy.

I happen to have had the pleasure of speaking to the National Press Club today, and I pointed out to them an interesting juxtaposition in our morning Washington Post. If you look back at it, on the front page, middle of the bottom, there was a story about the pending prosecution of the International Telephone and Telegraph Company, two of its officials charged with perjury before Congress concerning events in Chile some years ago. And the thrust of the story was that the Central Intelligence Agency is delaying or frustrating the prosecution of this case because we're reluctant -- we are reluctant, it said, to release documents necessary, either for the prosecution or the defense. Very interestingly, in the very next column and just below it was another story about a murder trial in New Jersey in which the principal element that attracted national attention was the fact that a New York Times reporter refused to disclose some notes that he had taken about this case and which the defendant claimed were necessary for him

to prove himself innocent. That case was settled, the reporter went to jail for some time, and never has disclosed his notes.

And what I said to the newsmen and -women today was that these are very analogous problems, very analogous problems of how do you protect your sources, your sources for your newspapers, your sources for collecting intelligence. If you do not honor the pacts that you have made to keep that kind of relationship private, you're not going to have those relationships in the future.

Newspaper men feel very strongly about one side of it, they're very easy to criticize us on the other.

Let me only assure you that we all recognize that secrecy is a very delicate matter. It's a delicate matter because too much secrecy will stanch the flow of free information within our society and too much secrecy can impede justice. But, on the other hand, too little secrecy can let out vital secrets which country needs to keep.

So, there is more than openness required to preserve our secrets. What I'm suggesting and what I'm asking of you is an understanding that there is a legitimacy to secrecy. It's all too easy in this day to assume that any public official, elected or appointed, uses secrecy only for the purposes of covering wrongdoing. And, also, people are very quick to assume that any so-called whistle-blower is a hero.

I would suggest to you that when our country puts more emphasis on criticizing and tearing down its society, and less on building it up and constructive criticism of it, that we're in for problems. And we must recognize very clearly that there is a need in every government, in every business, in every newspaper, in every one of our private lives, a need for some privacy. Drawing the line when it is a public organization like ours which needs to keep secrets is very important.

We, here, recognize that intelligence secrets are particularly sensitive because we are in a risky business. The reputation of the country, the security of the country is at stake. And therefore we cannot ask you or the Congress of this country simply to accept us on face value as to being able to keep those secrets which we want to keep.

So, what we have done, out of these several years of intense public criticism, is to forge a series of checks and balances that will give assurance to the public that we are not abusing the sensitive trust that we have, not improperly abusing the right of secrecy.

How have we gone about this? Well, the policy of open-

ness that I have described to you is part of it. But that, of course, is not all. What we have done is we have created a series of mechanisms to check on the day-to-day activities of our intelligence organizations.

First, we have what we call guidelines. The first guideline is that intelligent collection by espionage is an extraordinary remedy. We must not resort to collecting things clandestinely that can possibly be available openly.

Our second guideline is that we must be able to defend in public the actions which we take in secret. But that means that we can only defend them in principle, in their general character. We cannot describe each ongoing espionage activity and expect it to be successful. But I do believe that we can justify the types of activities which we undertake and show that they are in conformance with American standards and American foreign policy.

Now, beyond these guidelines, we also have prohibitions. There are some activities that are simply so repugnant to our American values -- assassination, for instance -- that we will totally prohibit them. There are other activities for which a total prohibition is a bit too rigid, and here we have what we call injunctions. An injunction simply says that as a general rule this activity is proscribed, but under certain given circumstances it can be authorized. This is a very common thing to all of us. You're all familiar with it in the world of law enforcement. None of you here expects your house to be invaded by a police officer, except if he has a judicial warrant to do so. So, similarly, we are establishing a series of controls whereby, sometimes with warrants, sometimes with other measures, other levels of clearance, and so on, we can make exceptions to these various injunctions.

Now, the most exciting, the most revolutionary thing that we have done in recent years in American intelligence is to establish an effective oversight process external to the intelligence community itself, and, in fact, resident in both the Executive and the Legislative Branches. And the reason we have done this, also, is that we need this oversight to check on whether the guidelines, the prohibitions, and the injunctions are in fact being carried out as they should.

The first oversight activity is the Intelligence Oversight Board. It has been in existence for over three years. It presently consists of former Senator Gore, former Governor Scranton, and Mr. Thomas Farmer of this city. They work only for the President of the United States. You, any of my employees, anyone who feels there is something improper in the way we are conducting our intelligence activities may communicate with them; they will investigate it and report only to the President.



Beyond this, for over two years now in the Senate, and for over a year in the House of Representatives, we have had Select Committees on Intelligence dedicated exclusively to overseeing this intelligence process. The relationship between these committees and the intelligence community is cooperative and helpful, but it is definitely one of oversight and supervision. It is clear that we must account to these committees, and we do so regularly.

Even in this short span of several years, many in the intelligence community have come to recognize the positive values of this congressional oversight. Ultimate accountability is essential to responsible action, in my view. And with as delicate an operation as intelligence, where the stakes are high, where risks must be taken, and where there's a driving sense of enthusiasm and patriotism, it's very salutary to know that you have a process of accountability.

As a result of this oversight today, I believe we are being more judicious. We are thinking not only of the benefits, but of the risks of the intelligence process as we go about it. If we overdo this and end up with intelligence-by-timidity, we will have lost everything. But I do not believe that is happening. And I believe if we are alert, we can tread that fine line, gaining the benefit of accountability and not losing out to timidity.

These congressional oversight committees today are engaged in developing new legislation for the intelligence community, legislation which will codify the guidelines, prohibitions, the injunctions, and the oversight procedures. I strongly support this activity. I strongly support this move to legislate what will be known as charters for the intelligence community.

In the first place, this will give to us a legal foundation for our actions. Beyond that, it will provide to the intelligence officer on the street in a foreign country, or to those of us here in headquarters, a set of standards, a set of guidelines as to what is expected of us and what is not, and what kinds of activities we can anticipate being required to have to justify to our overseers. I think it will be very helpful to our intelligence officers throughout the world. And I hope that the next session of the Congress will see the passage of this charter legislation.

Where does all this leave us? What does it all add up to? Well, I think it means that we are in the midst of an exciting and important, I would even venture on, a historic time in American intelligence. What we are doing is creating a new, a uniquely American model of intelligence, a model that is tailored to the standards and the values of our country, but a model which at the same time is designed to insure that we can have effective intelligence capabilities, and at the same time insure that there

is adequate regulation of them.

We're not there yet. In my view, it will take several more years for these procedures to settle out and these charters to be enacted and carried out. But I believe that we are on the right course and that we are generally finding this right balance between the risks of too much oversight, which can lead to leaks and problems of timidity, and so on, and not enough oversight to give assurance to the American public against potential abuses.

Throughout the process of the next several years, as this settles down, the support of the American public and the understanding of the American public in what we are trying to do and in the importance of the intelligence function for this country will be very important.

The fact that you have come out here tonight is indicative of your interest and support. And for this I am very grateful.

Thank you.

[Applause]

I'd be happy to try to field any questions or hear any comments.

Yes, ma'am.

WOMAN: You spoke about your guidelines and prohibitions and the external oversight process. I'm interested in knowing what kinds of structural and procedural approaches that the CIA internally has formally instituted to assure that you personally can satisfy yourself about the effectiveness of your own operations.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Can you hear that in the back? What has the CIA done internally to...

WOMAN: ...doing what you think you should be doing.

ADMIRAL TURNER: To make sure we're doing what we think we should be doing.

WOMAN: Effectively.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Effectively. Wow.

That's a very big order, but it's a very genuine and very important question.

As part of this whole process I've been attempting to

to describe, there are levels of controls. What the Congress will legislate in charters, hopefully, in most areas, will be reasonably broad, establish general guidelines. The President has an executive order on intelligence which has elaborated on those guidelines. And then I have more and more detailed controls here: "If you're going to do this, it must be cleared by me."

For instance, we have a rule against using American media representatives, newspapermen or TV broadcasters, as intelligence agents. The country has decided they don't want to do that any longer. It was authorized until three years ago. But it would be foolish, in my opinion, to make that a flat prohibition. Because, you know, what if an American stringer in Lebanon happened to be just the fellow to work into that terrorist organization I described to you a minute ago and stop an imminent threat? So, we have a control here that if we're going to use such a person, I personally must approve it.

So, we have established a number of those and are still working on more of them.

But let me be honest with you. The way anyone controls any sizable organization, in my opinion, is partly by example; by establishing standards, sticking to them and insuring that people working for you know that that's what you want; being explicit, not letting people have ambiguities as to what your policies and programs are. And you have to get that into the organization and make it permeate through. And you do that by lots of ways: by talking, by actions, by firing people who don't adhere to it, by promoting people whom you have confidence in, and, finally, by what we call eternal vigilance.

You do all these things, and you go to bed at night and you get up the next morning, and you start all over again, and you never let your guard down. You have to constantly be checking, asking questions, asking yourself, "Where could something go wrong?" and probing into it.

It's not easy, but I will give you my sense of very strong confidence that there is no intent in the Central Intelligence Agency today to try to evade the controls, the policies, and so on, of the Director. I have no concern when I do go to bed at night that things are intentionally going wrong in any area.

But it's still a risky business. And day by day, hour by hour, people have to make decisions in my name. They do their best. I have to keep checking that they're doing it the way I really want it.

Tom?

11

MAN: I wonder if you'd comment on the relationship between the CIA research role and that of some of the law schools, for example, George Washington, where I am now, in terms of a common interest in providing effective controls and limitations on the subject of terrorism. How can the universities and the CIA work together and protect the values of each?

ADMIRAL TURNER: How can universities and law schools and the CIA work together on effective controls on terrorism?

Well, we are very dependent on a good interplay with academia in our country. Because, as Tom suggested at the beginning of his comments, a large portion of our activity is simply research. After this information's been collected, you have to do something with it and you have to evaluate it. And in analyzing and evaluating, there's no simple, obvious conclusion. You have to put different minds and different perspectives to work on it.

And, Tom, as far as terrorism and universities is concerned, we do a great deal on the psychological side, of trying to understand terrorists. And we try to help immediate situations, to understand what may be an effective ploy or maneuver with a terrorist. And I'm sure there's a lot of help that can be had here from academic faculties.

On the legal side, I think the interplay between your schools and this problem is more on the policy than the intelligence side of the house. I mean what -- was the Bonn Summit agreement on this a good or a bad, or a workable or an unworkable program? I don't really get into that side of it because that's a policy matter rather than an intelligence one.

But we certainly are open to and looking for ideas on how to help thwart this very pernicious global problem.

MAN: [Largely inaudible] I'd like to say, though, something seems a little bit inconsistent. And I'm referring to some remarks that you made on TV the other day. Speaking not as a taxpaying citizen, but as an alumnus of Yale, I was a little bit bothered by what I would regard as rather intemperate remarks about covert recruiting of students at Harvard. I'll speak just to Yale. It seems to me a little bit intemperate to say there are no restrictions -- if I'm paraphrasing, please correct me -- that there's no restriction that Harvard could place on the Central Intelligence Agency.

I was wondering if you -- am I paraphrasing you right, or did you envision -- let's say Yale -- are there any restrictions in recruiting that you can envision Yale putting on you think you would abide by?

[Laughter]

ADMIRAL TURNER: I'm glad to see that Yale is so interested in Harvard

[Laughter]

MAN: [Inaudible]

ADMIRAL TURNER: My policy is that any university that establishes regulations with regard to contact with the intelligence community has the privilege of doing that. Any university's regulations apply to its people, not to IBM or U.S. Steel or CIA or DOD or anybody else.

But my instructions are that if we deal with people on a college or university campus that has a rule against what we're doing, or whatever, we encourage the member of that university to follow the rules of the university.

At Harvard it's a question if we're doing covert recruiting on their campus, the professor assisting us is supposed to tell the administration he's doing that. We encourage them to do that. But if the professor refuses not to do so, I prefer to stand on the professor's right to free association and his privilege of either obeying or not obeying the rules of his university. It is not my job to enforce President Bach's regulations. And if I tried to enforce every of 2000 universities' presidents in this country, I'm going to be in, first, an impossible task, and, secondly, a ridiculous one, because I can be almost regulated out of business by these.

We're not here to undercut academia. I have tightened our interplay with the academic world since I have been here to be sure that we don't, in any way, undercut them. But I do think it's a bit presumptuous to say that only when a professor gives advice to the Central Intelligence Agency about Student X must he report it to the administration of Harvard University. Because when he gives advice to IBM or U.S. Steel or the Department of State as to whether this student will be a good employee, he does not either tell the student or tell the administration of Harvard University that he is doing it. And I think it's unwise for a university as close to Salem, Massachusetts as is Harvard...

[Laughter]

ADMIRAL TURNER: ...to single out one element of society which they happen to feel is unpopular today.

[Applause]

MAN: Does the Soviet counterpart of the CIA operate

with the same or similar guidelines, prohibitions...

[Laughter]

MAN: And if not, how can we hope to compete with them, or even hope to survive?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No, he certainly does not. My counterpart, Mr. Andrapov (?), it appears to us, has very few controls over him, and certainly nothing like we do.

But isn't that true of all of our competition with the Soviet Union, a country that isn't dependent upon the votes in the Congress to decide whether we sell airplanes to Saudi Arabia or recognize Communist China or conduct a SALT treaty, and so on? Aren't we inherently at a, quote, disadvantage, unquote, when dealing from a free democratic base, where you must gain consensus of the public in what you are doing? And yet there's not one of us in this room who would trade those disadvantages for the power, the strength, the advantages that having the support, the understanding of our country as a whole brings to us.

And I'm saying we have moved some direction towards bringing an understanding of intelligence into our body politic. I don't think we are moving to the point where it is going to encumber us, and I would strongly resist that.

MAN: A question about the usefulness of covert activities. And that is, I can see how in a particular situation a particular activity might be useful. But don't you feel that, perhaps, that particular utility in one situation is counterbalanced by the fact that it brings a general discredit to the government and a general lack of -- a decrease in the amount of trust the government has, both with the people in this country and with people overseas? Where you gain in one small area at one time, you don't -- and the overall effect is that you have, perhaps, a net loss.

ADMIRAL TURNER: The question is, is it not possible that the net gains of individual covert actions are offset by the cumulative deleterious impact on our national image, and so on, of conducting this type of activity?

I don't think so. That's a close and difficult judgment. It's in large measure, though, I think, because we have retroactively applied today's morality to yesterday's actions that we're so down on some of the covert actions of yesterday. And I can only assure you that if I could unveil for you on a screen up here the covert actions which are in place and underway in our country today, I don't think you would be concerned, ashamed, or in any way disturbed. They wouldn't make a good 007 novel if we gave them to you to write up.

MAN: Another question about covert action. You pointed out earlier that a lot of the public problem of the intelligence community has to do with the carrying out of covert actions. Is there any realistic alternative outside the intelligence community for carrying out these activities?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No, Ivan, there isn't.

The question is, is there an alternative to intelligence activities for carrying out covert action?

I've looked at that very carefully because, very frankly, after all the brickbats, I'd just as soon shuck it off and give it to the State Department or the Defense Department, or somebody. But the fact is that the kind of people you need overseas, both Americans and foreigners, to carry out these covert actions are precisely the same kind of people that do our clandestine collection of information. So if you shucked it off and created a separate entity reporting to the National Security Council, or something, first of all, you would duplicate your so-called infrastructure overseas. You would have a whole new organization set up of U.S. people to do it and that have contacts in the foreign country, and you'd be stumbling over each other with the contacts.

But more importantly than that, perhaps, if you create an entity that has this as their purpose, for which people's jobs are dependent on their being covert action, instead of their just being another part of this large organization, where if covert actions should die tomorrow the people would just move over into other positions, I think you sort of create a head of steam to conduct covert action; you get people whose only virtue in life is thinking up and carrying out covert action. And I think that would be bad.

There should be a demand for covert action from outside of us. We try not to cook it up. We try to offer it when policy-makers ask us, "Can you help us in this case?"

MAN: In Science magazine this week there was an interview granted by the head of the National Security Agency, Admiral Inman, about several recent attempts to classify academic research. Can you comment on the policies that the intelligence community has for doing this?

ADMIRAL TURNER: The policies for interfering with academic research, as commented on by the head of the National Security Agency in Science magazine. I really can add very little to the, I thought, rather good statement that Vice Admiral Inman made on this.

I'm trying to think if I can draw an analogy in some field other than intelligence. But there is a danger of the

inventiveness of this country putting capabilities into other people's hands that can be very injurious to us.

I don't know, I suppose if 30-40 years ago somebody was inventing -- 40 years ago somebody was inventing a nuclear weapon and giving the formula to Hitler, we all would wanted to have taken some action to prevent that.

Clearly, that's an exaggerated statement over what's at stake here, but there are problems with technology proliferating around the world that could be brought to play against us.

I think the National Security Agency has sometimes been over-accused of trying to stifle this research. And I know that they and we try to take as understanding and lenient a view of it as the national interest dictates.

MAN: About 12 years ago, when I was last able to read classified documents, there were some initials referring to CAS, which I hope has been abandoned. Because it seems to me that the implications of the phrase "a controlled American source" is that any such person, foreigner is sure to be controlled, truly; and anything he does is an instrument of American policy. And as I'm sure you know, some disastrous things have happened by people who actually did get subsidies once, but work against us.

Is that -- could this be explained, as part of your openness campaign?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I'm the head of intelligence, and when you said CAS, I thought you meant close air support.

[Laughter]

ADMIRAL TURNER: I haven't heard this "controlled American source" in the year and a half I've been here. I hope it's died.

MAN: When I was recruited voluntarily, when I was on a summer between years at Yale, to work for an agency, I was asked to take an oath never to admit that I worked for that agency. It's been mentioned recently, and I still don't admit that I worked for that agency. But I wonder whether your counterpart, the Vice Admiral, at that agency shares...

[Laughter]

MAN: ...concerning openness, albeit with tactical intentions in mind, an openness of a very limited nature. Does he share your views, and do you see more openness concerning the activities of that agency?



ADMIRAL TURNER: Absolutely no.

Let me make clear how we do this openness. I said there are two aspects to intelligence; one is collecting the information and the other is evaluating it and analyzing it.

If you disclose much about how you collect the information, whether it be your sources, that we talked about some -- that is, human sources -- or whether it be what we call methods, the technical systems used by the National Security Agency in the satellite programs and so on, if you disclose that kind of information, you're out of business. There's a counter to almost everything of that sort.

So, there's no intent to be more open with the public in those areas, except in a very limited way.

I just mentioned photographic satellites. It's only been in this last 25 days that I have been able to say that. That is a step of greater openness. We did not acknowledge we had such satellites before that. I thought it was a bit obtuse...

[Laughter]

ADMIRAL TURNER: ...and lobbied to say that much. But if you ask me one more question about what they're like, I won't say a word to you.

Where we can be open is on the other side of the house, on the analytic side, on the product side of the house. Because if you take an analysis of these events and you say, "If I remove from that document anything that discloses how we got it, or anything that gives our decision-makers a real advantage because they've got a monopoly on that information" -- you know, "We know that you know," and that kind of thing -- "if there's still enough left to be meaningful to the American public, not mislead them, and be useful and interesting and contribute to the quality of debate in this country, then we can declassify and publish."

And that's where the openness comes, not in the agency you were never employed in.

WOMAN: ...a very simple question. [Largely inaudible remarks about architecture of room]

[Laughter]

ADMIRAL TURNER: Those are all great big, wide microphones listening to everything you're thinking about.

[Laughter]

MAN: Admiral, presumably your counterparts in friendly nations don't intend to emulate this policy of openness, particularly with respect to providing information to Congress. How do you feel that this new policy will affect your relations with friendly intelligence agencies?

ADMIRAL TURNER: How does this policy of openness affect our relations with other intelligence agencies?

Interestingly, we've had one foreign intelligence agency already come over and sit down with us and ask, "How do you get around with the Congress, because we're about to have to do it?" And there are several more right behind. None of them are enthusiastic about it, I must say, but they're all being pushed in this direction in the democratic countries of Western Europe. It'll be different times in different countries, but we're setting a model that I suggest to you will be contagious.

In the meantime, there are some problems. But they're careful to watch what we're disclosing and understand. They don't care if I put out a study on Soviet oil production when they realize the study is unclassified. But if I do start talking about how I collected that information that got us there, they'd be very upset.

So, yes, it's a problem, but I don't think it's a lasting or serious one, because they understand this.

In addition, there's a very unique problem here. I have no counterpart in any of the free countries of the world. There's no single person who is responsible for both the analytic and the collection side, both the human collection and the technical collection. It's all sort of scattered around elsewhere. And therefore it's difficult for them to sort of understand how I play this.

But I think it's working out very well, and we work very hard to keep good relations with them.

MAN: I understand from the introduction that you're responsible for coordination of the various intelligence agencies.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes.

MAN: Including the Department of Defense and the several service agencies.

Is there anything that -- since all of us are tax-conscious these days, is there anything that would indicate that a more efficient overall intelligence service can come out of this coordination that you are responsible for?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Oh, I certainly hope so. That's one of our intentions.

And I have two jobs, by law: Director of Central Intelligence, which is the coordinating function of all national intelligence. I don't get down into troops in the field with binoculars and reconnaissance airplanes off aircraft carriers and very tactically oriented military things. And I'm head of the CIA. And they're quite separate.

Last January the President strengthened my authorities as the Director of Central Intelligence in several ways. The most important one, from the point of view of your question, was I am now responsible for tasking the collection elements of all intelligence agencies: the agency the gentleman near you never worked for, the reconnaissance satellites, the human intelligence activities of the Central Intelligence Agency, and anything else in the Department of Defense and here, except these tactical elements. In short, tasking means telling them what to do: what do you collect?

And you can see the object. We don't want to pay to have two different groups collecting the same information; nor do we want to have both of them thinking somebody else is doing it, and nobody does it.

So, it is intended to be both more efficient and more cost-effective. And I hope that as this really takes hold we'll get there and save you and me, as taxpayers, some money.

MAN: I think that, certainly, with the spirit of the times today, there has been a lot of sharing of technological information with the Russians. And it seems to me -- my own personal opinion. I might be mistaken -- that they're getting the better of the deal. I think there are a lot of things that might take them years to develop that we're handing over to them.

And I wonder, am I correct in my worries? Is this something the CIA advises the government about?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes, we do advise on it, in the sense that we try to keep abreast of what the state of technology is in the Soviet Union and where they are looking for technology most.

There's a tremendous human intelligence activity in this country on the part of the Soviet Union, particularly as detente has brought more and more Soviet citizens to this country. But interestingly, a large portion of what they're doing is going out and getting unclassified literature and documents on technology.

I don't get into: is the plus or minus on our side or not? Because there are so many policy issues involved here. But let me just give you a piece of personal philosophy, perhaps: that there's very little we can exchange with the Soviets where we don't have more to offer than they, in my opinion.

There are those who feel that when a free and a controlled society interact, the impact is going to be greater on the controlled society than on the free one. You may lose some secrets, but you may begin to break down those terrible barriers that are so onerous on the world.

MAN: Do you have a guideline, an injunction, or a prohibition with respect to covert domestic activities?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I certainly do. And worse than that, I've got laws.

[Laughter]

ADMIRAL TURNER: We are not in the domestic field. If there is tapping of telephones or that kind of thing inside the United States, that has to be handled by the FBI. Congress, in its closing week, passed a law which for the first time requires a judicial warrant for any telephone tapping inside our country. That's not exactly an accurate statement but it's pretty close. But certainly any that involves American citizens.

And we are -- I can't tell you how many regulations there are around here about the accidental intrusion into American privacy. It's very thorough, down to all kinds of detail. And I think the public is well served and well protected.

Time for one more, I'm afraid....

MAN: Admiral, in recent years there have been a number of books published that have divulged names of CIA agents and their informants. Could you comment on what effect this might have -- this might have on your ability to recruit and your ability to have informants overseas?

ADMIRAL TURNER: What effect do the books, like those of Mr. Agee, publishing the names of CIA agents have on our ability to recruit and to perform?

Well, it's a very serious impact. The first is that sometimes we have to actually get out and move people, because of the risk to their life. As you may know, in December 1975 one of our senior people in Greece was murdered, we think because Mr. Agee had published his name in some kind of a pamphlet that had been put out.

Secondly, it certainly inhibits the effectiveness of our people overseas when the other intelligence services know easily who they are.

And let me make a point here. The young men and women who come in and undertake this clandestine side of our activities as a career make tremendous sacrifices, and you have to be very proud of them, and they're marvelous people when you meet them. But what they do sometimes is they dedicate themselves to a career of anonymity, not even being able to tell their children why daddy doesn't keep getting promoted in whatever he's supposedly working in. You know, he never becomes the top fellow -- right? -- because he's working for us, really. Tremendous sacrifice. And maybe you've invested 10, 15, 20 years at this. And suddenly, along comes a traitor like Agee, and what have you got? Much less usefulness to the organization for the rest of your career. Your investment is largely down the drain. And it's a terrible thing to do.

And, certainly, it doesn't help our recruiting. Though his publishing names of Americans doesn't help, but it's not as serious as when we do have some exposures in the press of who somebody from a foreign country may have been who was assisting our country, even though not a citizen of it, but just dedicated to helping us.

The problem of maintaining secrecy is clearly the number one problem that we have today in maintaining for you an effective intelligence capability. We're doing a lot of things to tighten down so that we, internally, are doing all we can to keep our secrets. We need the understanding and the cooperation of the media, of the public of the fact that there are legitimate secrets and that we have established, I believe, adequate control mechanisms to insure that we're not taking advantage of that secrecy.

Thank you for being with us. Beat Harvard.

[Applause]