

Remarks at Tucson Committee on Foreign Relations

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Thank you very much, General Warner. I am delighted to be here with all of you and with the alumni of the Central Intelligence Agency.

It didn't take very much of an arm twist for me to accept this invitation. I first came to Tucson as a young naval officer in 1946 on my way to my last ship assignment, and I've been coming at literally every opportunity that I can think of. My first speech as Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation was here in Arizona, and I had the privilege of coming back and talking in Phoenix last year. So I'm glad that you had me here, and I look forward not only to sharing some ideas with you, but also to the questions that will follow my formal presentation.

We've been experiencing a lot of things as we have closed out the year and started the new year, all of which point to the importance of intelligence—anticipatory intelligence and intelligence to understand what has happened and what is likely to happen. I mention only a couple of bad incidents—the Pan Am bombing, which is now under active review by our Counterterrorist Center, and the most recent shooting yesterday, which will be followed up by considerable debate and evidence. And we will be working to identify and put into place the pieces that reflect what Libyan intentions were in challenging our two fighter planes. This weekend, Secretary Shultz will be addressing and meeting with officials in Paris to discuss something that I will be talking about tonight—the spread of chemical warfare, particularly in the Middle East. The role of intelligence in identifying these activities and understanding the "why" of them becomes exceedingly crucial.

These are all ominous-sounding things. There are some interesting and good things that have been happening that have lowered, at least, the level of tension between the United States and its major rival in the world, the Soviet Union—little things that are mysterious but somehow pleasant to think about: Yesterday it was announced that our Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Jack Matlock, had requested and been granted a meeting with Kryuchkov, the director of the KGB—an unprecedented request and an unprecedented acceptance. I am now told that I should expect to receive an invitation from Ambassador Dubinin to come calling at Langley. And I shall await that with interest. While I know the Ambassador, I am speculating on what we will have to talk about.

But the fact is, we are talking in appropriate ways—bilaterals, at the military level, at the diplomatic level—and there is some expectation that we are going to find ways to lower the threat of war. We're telling stories about each other and enjoying the stories.

President Reagan likes to collect perestroika stories, especially if they're authentic. And the one that he's telling these days—a story that came out of Russia—is the story of the representative whom Gorbachev sent out into the Urals to check on the progress of perestroika. The man went to a village and asked to see the mayor. He talked around the subject for a while, and then he said, "How is perestroika getting along?" And the mayor said, "We like perestroika; we like it very much." And the representative said, "Tell me, do you have any television sets here in the village?" And the mayor said, "Oh yes, we have television sets here. We have television sets, I believe, in every hut in the hamlet. In fact, in some huts there are two or three television sets." "Tell me about refrigerators." "Oh yes, we have plenty of refrigerators here in this village." The representative said, "By the way, do you know who I am?" And the mayor said, "Oh yes, I know who you are. Who else but a CIA agent would come into a village with no electricity and ask me questions like that?"

We have a few of our own stories, but I'll save them for another time.

When I became Director of Central Intelligence in May 1987, I approached the job with a definite view of the role of intelligence in our society—to provide timely and objective intelligence to policymakers—and we are not policymakers—and to do so with fidelity to our Constitution and to our laws. Nineteen months later, I remain convinced that these two objectives are not mutually exclusive. We are collecting information in every corner of the world, and we are providing finished intelligence to policymakers on hundreds of issues, ranging from arms control to the spread of AIDS in Africa.

Yet, just as important, we are observing the rules of oversight and accountability that build trust between those who have the intelligence responsibility and those who are the elected representatives of the American people. It is that trust, I believe, that makes it possible for us to operate with the confidence, the aggressiveness, the perseverance, and the resourcefulness that we need to do our job.

My good friend, General Vernon Walters, former Deputy Director of Central Intelligence and our Ambassador to the United Nations, describes a view held by many in this country about intelligence. "Americans," he said, "have always had an ambivalent attitude toward intelligence. When they feel threatened, they want a lot of it, and when they don't, they tend to regard the whole thing as somewhat immoral."

With so much going on around the world that affects our national security, I think the American people want a lot of intelligence. And tonight I'd like to focus on two concerns that have and will continue to command the Intelligence Community's attention. These concerns are the changes under way in the Soviet

Union and the proliferation of advanced weapons. I'd also like to discuss the changes that have made it possible for us to take on these challenges with the confidence of the Congress and the American people.

As you might expect, those of us in the intelligence business have been keeping a close watch on leadership changes and reform efforts in the Soviet Union. I was in New York City last month, watching Gorbachev and his 45-car caravan travel through the streets of Manhattan, drawing attention everywhere, making short stops and receiving occasional cheers. And then, of course, there was the memorable sight of the President, the President-elect and Gorbachev standing with the Statue of Liberty in the background.

But there is a contrast to that picture of Gorbachev and the Statue of Liberty—a contrast that shows how far the Soviets must still go before perestroika can mean much to the average Soviet citizen. A report that I received recently from Moscow says this: "The smug self-righteousness once so characteristic of Soviets is far less evident today than a decade ago. They seem strangely deflated. Aside from those lively souls who pen letters to the editor, the truth seems to have made Soviet man more introspective than inspired. Thousands of Soviets gathered recently in Gorky Park to witness an emotional, well-reasoned . . . debate between a self-styled 'moderate' who supported perestroika . . . and a 'radical' who . . . was sharply critical of Gorbachev for dragging his feet. The debate itself was fascinating but more riveting still was the total absence of reaction from the passive, silent, uncommitted crowd. Gorbachev has clearly experienced the frustration of the debaters in Gorky Park." I found that contrast in the report extremely interesting.

And that contrast is also extremely important because the Soviet Union is—and will continue to be—the primary focus of our intelligence collection and analysis. Its military capability, its efforts to increase global influence, and its aggressive intelligence activities are still serious threats to United States interests.

Gorbachev's efforts to reform his country have not fundamentally altered these truths. Arguably, they make the Soviet Union of even greater concern to U.S. intelligence.

Like many of you, I have been fascinated by what is occurring in the Soviet Union. Gorbachev has stirred up the stew—bringing new life and dynamism to Soviet politics and pushing a series of reforms that none of us could have foreseen five years ago.

The forces of democracy are making some political and economic inroads—especially in the Baltic republics. Although the USSR certainly is not headed toward democracy as we know it, today's Soviet leaders appear to understand

that their system is faltering largely because it has not given the people enough breathing room—room to innovate, room to inquire, room to unlock creativity.

Change is occurring in the area of foreign policy as well. This Soviet leader has signaled by word and deed that he wants the USSR to be a more active and more effective player on the world scene. He is more willing than past Soviet leaders to reevaluate the costs and benefits of Soviet foreign policies and make decisions on that basis. For example, the Soviets are leaving Afghanistan—although with some difficulty and with a bittersweet taste in their mouths. And they are eliminating a whole class of nuclear weapons under the INF treaty—a process that includes unprecedented on-site inspections of Soviet military facilities.

Gorbachev's announcement of unilateral troop reductions at the UN last month illustrates his willingness to pursue radically different approaches, even as it highlights the challenges that these new approaches represent for the Western alliance. The announced reductions, if fully implemented, will remove some—but not all—of the Warsaw Pact advantages over NATO. In particular, they will substantially reduce the ability of Warsaw Pact forces to launch a short-warning attack. This is particularly true as they remove their attack and bridge-crossing equipment back far enough so that we can watch and tell if there's any indication of that type of offensive activity.

At the same time, this step was clearly calculated to put pressure on Western governments for reciprocal steps and to undermine support in the Alliance for modernizing defense programs. This and other initiatives that may well follow will complicate the task of maintaining unity within our Alliance as we approach the upcoming talks with the Warsaw Pact on conventional arms reductions.

The dramatic nature of these policy changes clearly has provoked controversy within the Soviet Union. A major power struggle continues between reformers, who believe radical changes are necessary to make the Communist system work, and conservatives, who fear such changes could destabilize the very system they are trying to save. The outcome of this struggle will affect how far and how fast reform progresses, the extent to which central authority is relaxed, the general welfare of the individual, and how competitive the Soviet system will be over the next few decades.

In late September of last year, Gorbachev significantly strengthened his position in the Soviet leadership—undertaking the most sweeping overhaul of the top party leadership since Khrushchev ousted his chief opponents in 1957. The changes made should allow Gorbachev to push his policy agenda at home and abroad with renewed momentum.

While an important victory, this struggle to reform the Soviet system will go on for decades, requiring Gorbachev and his successors to overcome enormous political, economic, and cultural obstacles.

I think it is fair to observe that while he has achieved the additional power that he sought, with that comes additional responsibility for all that occurs. He cannot escape the responsibility for what happens because he now has the power.

There are strong reasons to question whether a system designed to centralize authority, maximize government control over its people, and concentrate resources on building up the nation's military strength can become more decentralized and democratic in its decisionmaking and more solicitous of its people.

Nationalist unrest is currently testing the Soviet system's ability to make reforms work. Communal unrest in Armenia and Azerbaijan have forced Moscow to put the region in a virtual state of martial law on a semipermanent basis. This is testing the principle of glasnost, or openness. The tragic earthquake that struck Armenia last month temporarily diverted attention from the nationalist struggles in the Caucasus. But it still identified the intense feelings between these ethnic groups. And with some 250,000 refugees passing between Azerbaijan and Armenia, trying to find a safe haven from ethnic unrest, and some 400,000 people homeless in Armenia as a result of the earthquake, Gorbachev and the Soviet Union have a very severe problem.

The underlying problems remain—the nationalist issues are not yet resolved. This past November, the Communist leadership of Estonia declared the republic "sovereign," an unthinkable development even a year ago. While rejecting this declaration, Gorbachev has signaled a willingness to compromise. It is by no means certain—and many doubt it—that minority aspirations for independence can be squared with Moscow's need for control.

But if the last three years have taught us anything at all, it is that Gorbachev is a highly skilled politician, and we cannot rule out the possibility that he can, ultimately, pull off a revolution from above that actually increases authority below, as he wishes to do.

The Soviet reform effort presents U.S. intelligence—our whole community—with some formidable challenges. We must pay closer attention than ever to the political struggles and issues being raised as Gorbachev challenges the established interests of individuals and institutions within his country.

We must also help the policymaker sort out how reform will affect Soviet military and economic capabilities and—even more difficult—how it may change Moscow's foreign policy.

We must manage the information explosion—and we have one—that glasnost has produced which, although we welcome it, challenges us to sort out what is important and what is not, what is real versus what Moscow wants us to hear.

We must provide intelligence analysis for U.S.-Soviet arms control talks. As these negotiations progress, the Intelligence Community will be increasingly asked to assess Soviet motivations and monitor Soviet compliance with the provisions of agreements. And the amount of support required is tremendous. We're talking about overhead observation; we're talking about people in the Soviet Union; we're talking about a whole range of challenges. The INF treaty has required the United States to monitor about 120 facilities declared by the Soviets. Monitoring the START treaty, which is being negotiated in Geneva, could involve as many as 2,500 weapon locations spread throughout the Soviet Union.

Yet whatever arms control agreements the United States makes with the Soviets, our relationship with them is likely to remain essentially adversarial. Policymakers will depend on the Intelligence Community to make quick and accurate assessments—and even to anticipate Gorbachev's sometimes unorthodox and unexpected initiatives, examples of which we saw in the United Nations last month. Some of these initiatives we were, in fact, able to predict.

But the Soviet Union is certainly not our only focus.

Another major concern is the proliferation of advanced weapons, particularly ballistic missiles. By the year 2000, at least 15 developing countries will either have produced or be able to build their own ballistic missiles. Although these missiles may be somewhat crude and inaccurate, many of them will have capabilities well beyond battlefield range. And the high speed of ballistic missiles enables an attacker to strike with little warning and makes it difficult for the defender to destroy incoming missiles.

Ballistic missiles also convey important new political and military status to those who are able to acquire them. Many of the countries where these missiles are being developed are in the Middle East—where regional tensions are highest.

All of the Third World missile development programs rely on foreign technology to some degree. But much of this critical technology is already diffused throughout the world, is available for other purposes, or can be easily diverted. There is also extensive sharing of technology among Third World countries—they are increasingly pooling their resources and technical know-how.

Another disturbing development we have seen is the outright transfer of complete missile systems from one country to another. This could become a way for developing countries to leapfrog ahead of the competition, although most countries will still seek to develop missile capabilities that they alone control. We can also look for Third World countries themselves to become major exporters of missiles and missile technology.

As threatening as the increase in ballistic missiles and the transfer of entire missile systems may be, we must also be alert to attempts by developing nations to arm ballistic missiles with chemical warheads. A major question we are now addressing is what lessons Iran and Iraq—and the rest of the world—have learned from a war that involved the first sustained use of chemical weapons since World War I.

After the First World War, the use of chemical weapons was outlawed by signers of the 1925 Geneva Protocol. During World War II—even during the most desperate battles—both sides refrained from using chemical weapons—weapons that Winston Churchill referred to as “that hellish poison.”

The Iran-Iraq war ended that restraint and set a dangerous precedent for future wars. The Intelligence Community has considerable evidence that Iraq used chemical weapons against Iran and also against Iraqi Kurds. Iran, too, employed chemical weapons against Iraqi troops.

Chemical weapons are thought to offer a cheap and readily obtainable means of redressing the military balance against more powerful foes. Some see them as the poor man's answer to nuclear weapons, and as many as 20 countries may be developing chemical weapons. Our President, our Vice President, and our Secretary of State have all spoken out strongly about this problem, and I must say that many of our friends in the Middle East see it not as a problem but more as a practical opportunity. And therein lies a major diplomatic problem for us.

It also appears that the moral barrier to biological warfare has been breached. At least 10 countries are working to produce biological weapons. And this presents us with another intelligence challenge.

Along with assessing capabilities to develop and produce ballistic missiles and chemical and biological weapons, we must make judgments about what could prompt foreign countries to use them. This is one of our most important tasks for the future, and we will continue to provide U.S. policymakers with as much accurate and timely information on this issue as we are able to produce.



I've talked thus far about two of the major concerns that will continue to be at the top of the Intelligence Community's agenda—Soviet affairs and the proliferation of advanced weapons. Now for a moment I'd like to talk a bit about the changes that have occurred over the last 19 months—changes that have strengthened the Central Intelligence Agency and, in my view, have helped to build a higher level of confidence in us and in our work.

You may recall that at this time two years ago, the CIA was at the center of a storm which threatened to destroy confidence in our role in American life and to shatter the trust that is so indispensable to our mission. Throughout 1987, we were subjected to the most searching inquiry into our part in the Iran-Contra affair.

At the end of 1987, I sent a note to all CIA employees that said, among other things: "If ever a time in the 40 years of the Central Intelligence Agency required the talent and energy of those who serve, this has been that time." And a year later, I can report that our people have responded, and we have together taken the Agency through one of the most challenging periods in our history.

We have, I believe, restored public confidence in the CIA and greatly improved our relations with Congress. And we have done this by establishing clear guidelines—guidelines that are workable and well understood and have been scrupulously followed.

We have established policies to ensure that our intelligence assessments remain objective and that analysts are protected against the pressures of political influence. And I am proud to say that in the time I have been at CIA I haven't heard anyone accuse us of "cooking the books."

I'm also proud of what we have done to strengthen the review of covert actions. These activities are the focus of the greatest congressional and public attention, but I think it is worth pointing out here tonight that only about three percent of the Intelligence Community's resources are spent on covert action.

Under the guidelines I have established, the Agency's senior managers must review all proposed covert action findings and related documents that are to be forwarded to the National Security Council. They must apply tests designed to ensure that each program can be done; that it is consistent with our declared foreign policy, which was the problem in the Iran-Contra issue; and that, if it is exposed, it will make sense to the American people. As I have consistently stated in all my public statements, we must have this covert action capability. It is a vital extension of our national foreign policy and one that we are asked to use by the State Department and by the President, and we need to protect its availability. We do this through the professional measures I've just mentioned.

And we follow through on those same concepts as we take our covert action proposals to the National Security Council—the senior policymakers—the Secretaries of State, Treasury and Defense; the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; the Attorney General; and the President and the Vice President—who sit there and hear the arguments. The President makes the final decision and, if he authorizes the covert action in a written finding, that finding is communicated to the Congress through the oversight committees, and promptly so. Thus, all of the components in the decisionmaking process have an opportunity to participate. And while it is the most sensitive kind of activity, it is proposed, explored, vetted, considered, and decided in a manner wholly consistent with our Constitution and our laws—a manner which provides the best opportunity for successful resolution of the action.

Because I know of the need to be absolutely candid with the Congress and of the responsibility that intelligence professionals have to protect sources and methods, I have established guidelines governing our dealings with the Congress. And I have made it clear that in dealing with the Congress there is no excuse for deception. There have been some questions that Agency officials who brief on the Hill have had to refer back to me, and that's in accordance with the guidelines. They have been authorized to demur rather than skirt issues that they were not authorized to discuss, and we have worked out arrangements with the Congress.

Sometimes the questions work back up through the Agency and they are solved at the middle level. Sometimes they have come all the way up to me, and I work them out with the chairmen and the vice chairmen of the committees. But we have not left the Congress feeling that in some way anyone in CIA has been disingenuous with them. As a result, I believe that our relationship with Congress has improved, and I believe it will continue to improve. And in the process, we are not giving away the store. We continue to protect our sources and our methods.

It's a difficult challenge. Fifteen years ago we gave 175 briefings to the Congress. Last year, we gave over 1,000. And those guidelines have become fairly important.

During the last year, we have sought guidance from policymakers on how we can be more responsive to their information requirements. We have been aggressive in seeking new sources of information. And we have seen some tangible results from our covert operations.

There is another point I want to make about our work, and it is that the intelligence we provide to policymakers on the Soviet Union, on weapons proliferation, and on many other issues is not easy to come by. In fact, it sometimes comes at great cost to the men and women of American intelligence.

Last Friday, the President-elect came to see us. He spent three and a half hours with us—he had lunch in the cafeteria and he had two hours of briefings. But the thing that I remember was that, as he came in the door, he stopped and showed Governor Sununu and General Scowcroft the stars carved in the wall for the Agency men and women who have given their lives in the line of duty. I think of that every time I enter those doors. And I am reminded that it is the creativity, the determination, the brilliance, and the courage of our people that spell the difference between success and failure in gathering intelligence, which it is our mission to collect.

A German poet was once asked how the medieval Germans ever built their lofty cathedrals. He replied, "Men in those days had more than just an opinion, they felt a commitment."

I think our people show a similar commitment, and I hope that we continue to attract those best suited to carry out our mission. We are looking for people who are risk takers, but not risk seekers. People who are dedicated and responsive to our law. People to whom fame and fortune are not a necessary part of their lives, but who can find in our important work an avenue to pursue their highest aspirations for a safer and a better world.

With such people, we can continue to provide the intelligence that policy-makers need, observing the rules of oversight and accountability that both the Congress and the members of the Intelligence Community have a right to expect. This is what you would want of us, what all American people would want of us. And we are doing our very best to supply it for you.

Thank you.