Chapter VII

Concluding Observations

The National Security Act of 1947 charged the Central Intelligence Agency with coordinating intelligence activity for the United States and with correlating, evaluating, and disseminating intelligence concerning America's national security. The mission of CIA implied in that legislation is to inform the President and other senior-level officials responsible for formulating effective foreign and security policies. That mission was especially important during the Cold War when the global contest between the United States and the Soviet Union dominated the international relations of both countries.

The goal of the conference at Princeton University was to determine how well the CIA, in concert with the rest of the Intelligence Community, helped US national security policymakers understand events in the Soviet Union during the Cold War and thereby equipped them to formulate policies to cope with the threat from what was perceived as a belligerent nation bent on destroying the United States. [1] In evaluating the Agency's work, the conference participants in essence considered two related questions:

(1) How good was the analysis on the Soviet Union that CIA and the Intelligence Community provided to policymakers?

(2) How much impact or influence did it have on the making of US government policy?

The consensus of the conference on the first question was that, overall, the analysis CIA's DI provided on Soviet issues across the board was good to excellent—although the author of each conference paper pointed out that there were significant shortcomings along the way. Zbigniew Brzezinski, former National Security Advisor to President Jimmy Carter, said in a luncheon address to the conference that he found CIA analysts over the years to be "intensely able, dedicated," and deserving of "truly high praise for their inventiveness, for their daring." He singled out the President's Daily Brief—CIA's most sensitive and closely held current intelligence product—as perhaps the most important communication between the Agency and the President. He found the quality of the reporting to be excellent and "very helpful to the President on some major issues,

[1] The conference examined the record with regard only to the finished analytic documents produced by the Directorate of Intelligence as well as selected National Intelligence Estimates on the Soviet Union. The current intelligence documents produced on a daily basis by the Intelligence Community, as well as an assortment of raw intelligence provided to policymakers, were not examined. As a result, the conference considered only a partial picture of the analysis provided to US policymakers during the Cold War, albeit a very large and important segment of the intelligence that was made available.

most notably arms control and the strategic dimension." As noted earlier in this volume, Douglas Garthoff gave CIA's political analysts high marks for analysis that represented the views of well-grounded and politically impartial experts. In the economics field, James Noren's paper described an impressive array of high-quality CIA analysis including ground-breaking national income accounting work and production-function analysis. Ernest May gave the Agency's analysis of the US policymaking process a grade of "A-." Richard Kerr said that, although the process of producing analysis at the Agency was "messy," the resulting product was good.

Critics of the Agency continue, of course, to maintain that CIA's analysis often should have been much better, as it missed such important developments as the timing of the Soviet atomic bomb, the Cuban missile crisis, and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslavia. They point out that the Agency also overestimated the size of Soviet strategic forces and underestimated the Soviet's regional force deployment and buildup. Also, as mentioned earlier, they assert that CIA failed to foresee the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Measuring the degree to which US policymakers read, understood, and acted on the intelligence assessments they received is a much more difficult and complicated task. Conflicting views on this were expressed at the conference. Ernest May borrowed Sir Jeffrey Vickers' concept of "reality judgments"—that is, analysis that answers the question, "What's going on?" versus "What difference does it make?" or "What should be done about it?" In May's view, the Intelligence Community is responsible only for answering the question "What's going on?" He concluded that the "reality judgments" provided by the DI did "shape the appreciation of the US government as a whole" and "did so decisively."

On the other hand, a number of speakers and audience participants thought the DI's analysis often was less effective than it could have been. Richard Kerr, for example, pointed out that the Intelligence Community often fell short in its responsibility to find out what was important and how to deal with policymakers. "We sometimes didn't have the slightest idea about the nature of the immediate consumers we were providing the information to," he said. "We didn't understand what drove them. We didn't understand their biases." Some participants complained that CIA's analysis was too late, too long, too complex, or did not answer the questions policymakers wanted answered. Others said policymakers often were too busy to read the intelligence that was provided to them and noted as well that high-level officials often were reluctant or unwilling to communicate their pressing policy concerns to the Intelligence Community. Brzezinski, while stating that he was a voracious consumer of the DI's analytic products, indicated that "we, at the level at which I was working, did not assist the Agency all that much in determining what would best help us. This I regret because I know that the Agency would have been more helpful if it had been more

deliberately tasked, very specifically tasked, with clearer emphasis on what was needed, and perhaps with clearer identification earlier of what really is not all that helpful to the top policymakers." [2]

CIA's Directorate of Intelligence has wrestled with how to best serve the policymakers' need for analytic intelligence since it was first established. In the mid-1990s, the DI underwent a number of fundamental changes in approach and emphasis in an effort to make the policymaker the driving factor in intelligence production and to redefine its analytic tradecraft to emphasize "facts" and the "findings" derived from them. [3] Deputy Director of Central Intelligence John McLaughlin, in luncheon remarks to the conference, spoke of the continued attention being given to how the Agency does its analysis and how it focuses its analytical resources:

> I am conscious every day of how important it is for our analysts to challenge the conventional wisdom, to separate what we really know from what we merely think—to consider alternatives; in short, not to fall victim to mindset, overconfidence, or maybe someone's pet paradigm. Our country and its interests are at their most vulnerable if its intelligence professionals are not always ready for something completely different.

McLaughlin said that the Intelligence Community currently was:

- Repositioning itself institutionally to meet the changing nature of the new world, including paying more attention to nontraditional areas, such as demographics, disease, and water scarcity while continuing to chart trends in energy, economic development, and weaponry.

- Giving a high priority to providing analysts with the technical tools they need to deal with the growing problems of the volume and speed of information.

- Strengthening the community's analytic ranks through recruiting drives, intensive training programs, more opportunities to travel, and by various programs to engage outside experts in the Intelligence Community's work.

---

[2] A critical assessment of the DI's tradecraft done in the early to mid-1990s found that the DI's analysis failed to recognize that high-level officials were almost always up-to-date on events in the Soviet Union that affected their most pressing policy concerns. They had staffs dedicated to keeping them informed, and they had ready access to reporting through diplomatic and defense channels, open sources, and even raw intelligence. They also routinely talked to the "DI's competitors," such as their foreign counterparts, journalists, academicians, contractors, and lobbyists. See Douglas J. MacEachin, *The Tradecraft of Analysis: Challenge and Change in the CIA* (Washington, DC: Consortium for the Study of Intelligence, 1994), p. 9.

[3] Douglas J. MacEachin, *The Tradecraft of Analysis: Challenge and Change in the CIA* (Washington, DC: Consortium for the Study of Intelligence, 1994).

All things considered, the results of the conference at Princeton University indicated that although CIA's analysis during the Cold War was not always correct, it played an important role in US decisionmaking process. The Agency sought to establish a larger strategic context for assessing Soviet intentions, threats, and capabilities. Understanding that Moscow's military power required a strong economy, it produced regular assessments throughout the Cold War of Soviet economic problems. It grasped early the virulence of revolutionary nationalism in the Soviet Union and warned about the Kremlin's ability to harness it for its own ends. In the final analysis, the fact that the Cold War did not become a "hot" war is a powerful indicator that US policymakers, with Intelligence Community assistance, generally had a good understanding of military, political, and economic issues in the Soviet Union and their implications for the West.

Chapter VIII

Speeches Delivered at the Conference

I. Opening Remarks of the Director of Central Intelligence
George J. Tenet

II. Remarks of the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
John E. McLaughlin

III. Address by former DCI
James R. Schlesinger

IV. Former National Security Advisor's Recollections and Recommendations for CIA
Zbigniew Brzezinski

Opening Remarks of the Director of Central Intelligence Conference on *CIA's Analysis of the Soviet Union, 1947-1991* Princeton University March 2001

George J. Tenet

Princeton University's Center of International Studies and CIA's Center for the Study of Intelligence have done a great job in organizing this Conference on the Agency's Cold War Analysis of the Soviet Union. It is just the newest example of Princeton's famous motto: "Princeton in the Nation's Service and in the Service of All Nations." I have no doubt that these discussions will make an important contribution to the understanding of intelligence analysis and of the role it played in shaping policy during the defining conflict of the latter half of the 20th century.

Back in 1997, CIA held its 50th anniversary gala. Dick Helms, a legend in the world of espionage well before he ever became Director of Central Intelligence, delivered the keynote address. I had expected Dick to focus on the operational side, but he surprised me by reminding everyone that analysis—putting all the information together, evaluating it, and warning US policymakers of key elements in the international environment—was in fact the CIA's original and central mission.

Of course, each Director of Central Intelligence has his own perspective on analysis. William Colby, a Princeton alumn, believed that, while a DCI must juggle many different things at once, his responsibility for substantive intelligence is his most important charge. A DCI should do his homework, discuss with his analysts the basis of their

assessments, then be prepared to brief—and defend—the Agency or Intelligence Community views with precision and conviction before the President—or perhaps even more daunting—the likes of a Henry Kissinger. According to Colby, Kissinger had a voracious appetite for intelligence, but he didn't necessarily believe it. "Bill," Kissinger would tell him, "give me things that make me **think**."

Allen Dulles, the only other Princeton graduate to become Director, had his own way of processing analysis. It could be tough to brief him. There were always distractions and phone calls, invariably ops-related. According to one war story, an analyst was ushered into the inner sanctum. Dulles was watching a baseball game from a reclining chair (for his gout, he said) placed directly in front of his TV. The analyst stood facing him from behind the set. As the analyst pressed ahead with his briefing, Dulles would remark "good fielder, can't hit" or something like that, leaving the hapless briefer totally at a loss. Which is not to say that Dulles was not listening—it was just hard to tell sometimes. For example, when Khrushchev kicked out the anti-Party group in 1957, he evidently took in what everyone said, then dictated his own briefing for the President. By all accounts it was brilliant. He did not miss a single nuance.

This conference coincides with the release of over 850 CIA analytic documents on the Soviet Union, totaling over 19,000 pages of text—all part of a larger effort begun by DCI Bob Gates to illuminate the intelligence component of the Cold War's history. This latest tranche of documents, combined with the approximately 2,700 CIA analytic products and National Intelligence Estimates on the USSR that were previously declassified, constitutes the largest trove of intelligence analysis on any single country ever released by any nation.

That achievement is significant, but it is not sufficient. I am determined to make more of the analytic record available. And so, the office that does most of our declassification work will be releasing to scholars within the next couple of years a substantial additional amount of CIA analysis on the Cold War and more National Intelligence Estimates on the USSR.

Declassification is not easy. There are no shortcuts. It takes experienced, knowledgeable people sitting down with each document and painstakingly going over it page by page, line by line. There is no alternative. A mistake can put a life in danger or jeopardize a bilateral relationship integral to our country's security.

Despite the difficulties involved in the declassification process, no other nation's foreign intelligence agency has voluntarily released as much information about its past as has the Central Intelligence Agency and we will continue to build upon that achievement in the years ahead.

CIA will be as forward-leaning as possible consistent with our security responsibilities. We will be forthcoming for two major reasons: One—because US intelligence is a servant of America's democratic system. We are accountable for our actions and the quality of our work to elected leaders and ultimately to the American public. The American people are best served by having available the information necessary to understand how their government functions. And two—because the men and women of US Intelligence are proud of the contributions they made to defending the security of the Free World during the Cold War. We believe that a careful study of our role in that great global struggle will show that, time and again, US Intelligence provided American leaders with critical information and insights that saved American lives and advanced our most vital interests.

Keeping the Cold War from becoming a hot one was the overriding goal of US Intelligence and American national security policy for over four decades. An intelligence effort of such magnitude and fraught with such great risk and uncertainty was bound to have its flaws and failures, both operational and analytical. I believe, however, that the overall record is one of impressive accomplishment.

I know that each of you here tonight has arrived at this conference with deep expertise, unique experiences, and strong opinions that should make for interesting discussions. This is, of course, not the first time that we have sought the views of outside specialists. For example, from the early 1950s to the early 1970s, CIA's Office of National Estimates benefited from the counsel of its "Princeton consultants"—a group of scholars who met at Princeton and exchanged ideas with CIA's top analysts. Others in universities and think tanks, individuals with family or other ties to Russia and Eastern Europe, diplomats, business people, and others from many walks of life who were interested in and knowledgeable about Soviet affairs helped our analysts greatly. Our products were enriched by their inputs, but any errors that may be found in our products are entirely our own.

We in US Intelligence never claimed to have had a monopoly on wisdom regarding the Soviet Union. It always pays to have a little humility on that score, particularly here on George Kennan's stomping ground. In recent years, as you know, Ambassador Kennan has warned American policymakers against (quote) "creating a Russia of our own imagination to take the place of the one that did, alas, once exist, but fortunately is no more." It was no less a challenge for America's scholarly, diplomatic, military—and intelligence communities—throughout the Cold War to understand the Soviet reality—so that our national leaders could base their decisions not just on fears, but on facts.

Analyzing the Soviet Union was anything but an exact science for all of our communities, and dealing effectively with Moscow was every Cold War President's ultimate leadership test. Among the first to admit the difficulties for Cold War analysts and policymakers alike was George Kennan's good friend, fellow Soviet expert and "Wise

Man," Chip Bohlen. Bohlen said (quote): "There are two statements which indicate beyond doubt that the person making them is either a liar or a fool. The first is: Whiskey has no effect on my judgment. The other is: I know how to deal with the Russians.

Bohlen's statement holds just as true today.

Assessing CIA's Analytic Contributions

To the men and women of the CIA's Analytic Directorate—the Directorate of Intelligence—their Cold War mission was very clear: to use all sources at their disposal to gauge the capabilities and intentions of the massive, closed, totalitarian system that was the Soviet Union, and by so doing, to provide the President and other US policymakers with the information and insights they needed to act and plan with confidence.

Allow me to give you only a few examples of the ways CIA analysis informed US decision making toward Moscow. I will draw from a sampling of the Agency products that were released for this conference, but in so doing I do not in any way wish to ignore the substantial analytic contributions of CIA's companion agencies in the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the armed services, and other parts of the federal government. Of course, intelligence analysts were not the only ones working on the Soviet puzzle. It should be interesting at this conference to explore how our assessments measured up to contemporaneous judgments from other quarters. And, as the former policymakers in the audience will attest, many other factors besides intelligence reports and judgments shaped their thinking and actions.

Those caveats aside, what does the record show?

From the mid-1960s on to the Soviet collapse, we knew roughly how many combat aircraft or warheads the Soviets had, and where. But why did they need that many or that kind? What did they plan to do with them? To this day, Intelligence is always much better at counting heads than divining what is going on inside them. That is, we are very good at gauging the size and location of militaries and weaponry. But for obvious reasons, we can never be as good at figuring out what leaders will do with them. In regard to the "unmeasurables," CIA analysts were keenly aware of the importance of what they would conclude and of the political pressures attendant to the issues on which their judgments were sought. And for a quarter of a century, our national leaders made strategic decisions with confidence in our analysts' knowledge of the Soviets' military strength. The record shows that confidence was justified.

In the early—and mid—1980s, for example, a radar under construction in Krasnoyarsk generated considerable debate in Washington. The Intelligence Community's analysts were at center stage, providing policymakers with their assessment of the radar's true purpose. As it turns out, the Community assessment was on the mark. The analysts maintained—correctly—that the station was to be used primarily for tracking ballistic missiles, not space tracking as the Soviets had claimed. This analysis served as the basis for the Reagan Administration's policy, which was to declare the radar a clear violation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty and to call for its dismantling.

Intelligence analysts perform a critical service when they help policymakers think through complex issues, identify possible strategies, and project likely outcomes. A case in point is the role CIA played in assessing the potential implications for the United States vis-a-vis Moscow of President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative. Our Office of Soviet Analysis, or SOVA, forecast in late 1987 that Moscow could not effectively counter SDI without severely straining the Soviet economy, discounting Moscow's assertions that it could do so quickly and cheaply. SOVA maintained that anything more than a modest acceleration of existing offensive and defensive strategic deployments would divert advanced technologies desperately needed to modernize the civilian economy. Indeed, SOVA predicted that Moscow would defer key decisions on deployments and "continue to pursue arms control measures to gain American concessions on SDI." And so it did.

Leadership analysis remains perhaps the most difficult of analytic specialties. Mikhail Gorbachev's rise to power in the Soviet Union—assessing his evolving thinking and policies, their implications and the chances for their success—posed huge analytical dilemmas. One of the first papers done in the Gorbachev era was devoted to the promises, potentials, and pitfalls of his economic agenda. Published in the fall of 1985, it expressed doubt that the economic reforms that Gorbachev had announced would actually be carried out, or that resources could be found to meet his modernization goals. Two years later our analysts were even more doubtful that he would succeed. They predicted that the radical reforms that Gorbachev might be tempted to implement risked "confusion, economic disruption, and worker discontent" that could embolden potential rivals to his power.

It is tough to divine leadership intentions in a secretive, centrally controlled society—particularly if that leadership, as was true under Gorbachev, ceases to be static. Assessing thinking beyond the leadership—identifying other societal forces at work and weighing their impacts, is even tougher. Take nationalist and ethnic pressures, for example. For decades, Moscow's policies toward minorities had combined gradual modernization with rigid suppression of any hints of separatism. CIA's analysis reported that this long-standing combination of concessions and coercion had kept a lid on a "potentially explosive source

of political instability." Our analysts picked up, however, on signs of change in Soviet policy and rising ethnic tensions under Gorbachev and drew the attention of US decision makers to their far-reaching implications.

A Business Built on Uncertainty, Analysis Based on Judgment

Obviously our record was not perfect. Intelligence analysis—even the most rigorous—can never be error-free. Our analysts may have the best information available, but they seldom have the luxury of complete information before making a judgment. The glints and glimmerings of insight that they get from examining shards of information help them peer into the unknown. But getting some forecasts wrong is an unavoidable part of the intelligence business—a business built on uncertainty.

Although we could fairly accurately count how many they already had, projecting the future development of Soviet military forces, for instance, proved to be one of the most difficult problems for the Intelligence Community during the Cold War. Every National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) written on the subject from 1974 to 1986, to which CIA analysts contributed, overestimated the rate at which Moscow would modernize its strategic forces.

But there is an important difference between getting it wrong despite thoughtful analysis, and deliberately exaggerating the threat. I think that an honest review of the documents shows that our analysts made a good-faith effort. I would also note that, in many cases, the very same analytic teams that overestimated future Soviet procurement also published volumes of analysis about existing Soviet nuclear missiles and warheads and other weapons programs that Moscow very much wanted to keep secret. It was their painstaking analysis that gave successive American Presidents and Senators the confidence to pursue, sign and ratify arms control agreements—agreements that helped contain and mitigate the very real dangers of the Cold War.

The fact that some of our analysis became controversial—and remains the subject of heated disagreement today—does not necessarily mean that the judgments were wrong. The Agency's work in assessing the state of the Soviet economy, for example, has come under criticism since the Soviet collapse. This topic will be debated at the conference, and that is all to the good. I will only note that it is all but forgotten—and the declassified studies are there to remind us—that CIA analysts reported a deceleration in Soviet economic growth as early as 1963. President Lyndon Johnson thought this analysis so important that he dispatched a delegation to brief the findings in West European capitals. American academics and the national press, however, were skeptical of CIA's analysis. Indeed, many economists of that era believed that the Soviet Union's command economy possessed

inherent advantages over the market-based systems of the West. But whatever the prevailing currents of popular thinking may be, it is the responsibility of our analysts to call it like they see it, whether the evidence supports the conventional view or not.

We can even point to an instance where CIA analysts helped to shape not only US policy, but even may have helped to shape Soviet policy as well. We now know that the Kremlin monitored economic studies done in the West on the Soviet Union, especially CIA reports published by the Joint Economic Committee of Congress. President Jimmy Carter drew particular attention to such a CIA study when he declared to a surprised world that the Soviet petroleum industry was beset by serious problems. The Agency had projected that Soviet oil production was likely to plateau by the early 1980s and then decline to the point where the USSR would become a net importer of oil. As it turned out, CIA was right on the fundamental problems that eventually brought about a fall in production. But our analysts underestimated the Soviets' ability to avert the worst by shifting investment in favor of the energy sector and changing the USSR's extraction and exploration policies—changes that perhaps resulted from Moscow's reading of the Agency's published assessment. And those changes have real implications for Russian energy production today.

US Intelligence capabilities clearly were not omniscient during the Cold War, and we are not all-seeing now. Our Soviet analysts were not prescient then and our Russia analysts are not all-knowing today. Our analysts continue to work in a climate that President Kennedy described in his day when he said that intelligence successes are often unnoticed while our failures are paraded in public.

And that is fine. Our analysts are not in this business for headlines or kudos. They are in it to make a critical difference—to advance our nation's interests and values. And that is what they do every single day. I make it a point to remind them that the fear of sometimes getting it wrong should never, ever get in the way of them doing their job. And when my analysts do call it wrong, they take responsibility and they learn from their mistakes. That means taking apart the evidence or the assumptions that got them off track. It can be a painful process, but it makes for better analysis.

What, then, if not infallibility, should our national leaders, and ultimately the American public, expect of our analysts?

- First and foremost, they should expect our analysts to deliver intelligence that is objective, pulls no punches, and is free from political taint.

- Next, that our analysts think creatively, constantly challenging the conventional wisdom, and tapping expertise wherever it lies—inside the Intelligence Community or in the private sector and academia.

- That our analysts always act with the highest standards of professionalism.

- That they take risks—analytic risks—and make the tough calls when it would be easier to waffle.

- That they respond to the President's and other decision makers' needs on demand—juggling analytic priorities and capabilities to meet the most urgent missions.

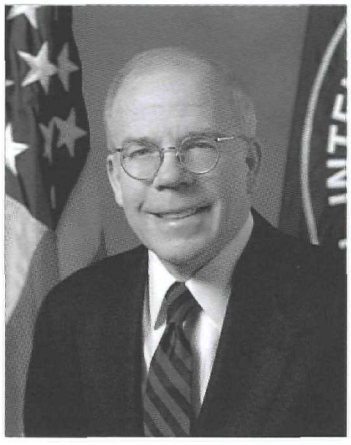
- And lastly, that our analysis not only tell policymakers about what is uppermost on their minds—but also alert them to things that have not yet reached their in-boxes.

Making a Critical Difference, Then and Now

In closing, I will only say that more that a decade after the Soviet Union's demise, we live in a world still in transition from something that was well understood—the bipolarity of the Cold War—to something that has yet to crystallize. In such a world, our country needs a strong analytic intelligence capability more than ever to help the President separate fact from fiction, avoid danger, seize opportunities, and steer a safe course to the future.

On behalf of CIA's analytic community, I want to thank you for your participation and interest in this conference and in our work—past, present and future. As always, we welcome and value your insights, and we hope that you will find the discussions stimulating.

Remarks of the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
Conference on *CIA's Analysis of the Soviet Union, 1947-1991*
Princeton University
March 2001



John E. McLaughlin

When the conference organizers asked me to give its first keynote address, I reminded them that my principal work on this part of the world came after the Soviet Union had broken up. In fact, it was just three months after that breakup that I was put in charge of the Office of Slavic and Eurasian Analysis—the name we gave to the organization that picked up the responsibility for analysis of the former Soviet Union, once it had ceased to exist. Because I had the opportunity to lead our work on this part of the world at that pivotal moment, I thought that is what I ought to talk about rather than looking back at our effort on the Soviet Union. You are going to be doing that non-stop for a day and a half, so perhaps you will welcome a brief excursion into the decade that just passed into history.

This topic is germane to the conference for a number of reasons. First, what I encountered back in March of 1992 was in every way the inheritance of our long focus on the Soviet target. And the experiences we had in those early post-Soviet years were emblematic of the Agency's efforts, successful I believe, to adjust to a new world that no longer had a universally accepted organizing principle for American intelligence.

So let me take you back to the spring of 1992 and tell you something about the journey we have been on since then. Let me begin with an anecdote that I believe says a lot. On my first day on the job in 1992, I made the rounds, shaking hands with my new colleagues. I remember stopping by one officer's cubicle, and there, sitting on top of her computer, instead of the usual souvenirs, was a big can of peas with Cyrillic lettering. When I asked why, she replied: "I'm the canned goods analyst." We also had a timber analyst back in those days.

To me, that anecdote says volumes about Soviet analysis during the Cold War. For reasons that this audience will readily grasp, it was actually important that we understand things like the food processing industry—symbolized by that can of peas—in order to gauge the underlying strength of Soviet society. As you know, we tried every conceivable way to gain insights into that fundamentally closed system—a system whose functioning was opaque in the most basic respects, not only to the rest of the world, but to its own people—even to its leadership, as Vlad Treml will attest tomorrow. Sherman Kent, the founding father of national intelligence estimates, once said: "Estimating is what you do when you do not know." We did a lot of estimating during the Cold War, and we are doing a lot of estimating now. But what we didn't know then about the Soviet Union is different in so many ways from what we don't know now about Russia. Most of what we needed to know then was at least discoverable. Much of what we'd like to know now may not even be knowable.

Today, our Office of Russian and European Analysis does not employ a canned goods analyst, or even a timber specialist. The Russia that our analysts are trying to understand is no longer cloaked from view by a totalitarian regime. But in many ways I think it is even harder to grasp—by us and by the Russians themselves.

It was not always this way. Dick Lehman, the creator of what we now call the President's Daily Brief, once remarked that the basic analytic training he got back in 1949 came down to a single piece of advice from his boss: "Whatever you do, just remember one thing—the Soviet Union is up to no good!" Simple, but that said it. To be sure, there were other targets, but as someone who worked on many of them, I can tell you that our interest was mostly derivative. For something to gain priority attention or command resources, there had to be a connection to the Soviet threat.

Many CIA analysts cut their baby teeth in SOVA—the legendary Office of Soviet Analysis—or in one of the celebrated offices that preceded SOVA's creation in 1981. And young analysts soon learned that the ultimate objective of their collective efforts—whether their expertise lay in peas or trees or tanks—came down to helping us gauge the Soviets' military strength and intentions. Everybody understood the paradigm. Everybody knew what the top analytic priorities were: the frontal threat to NATO, Moscow's first strike

capabilities, the Soviet command and control system, arms control monitoring, the capacity of the Soviet economy to sustain military power. As many of you will recall vividly, the butter-guns question of how many dishwashers equals a tank was a serious analytic calculation—also I might add, a difficult proposition from a collection standpoint, considering that Soviet dishwashers actually looked like tanks.

With the demise of the Soviet Union, the nature of our analytic questions changed. Before, threats emanated from Soviet strengths. Now, dangers stemmed largely from Russia's weaknesses or simply from the uncertainties associated with its transformation. Now, we were not so much concerned about a deliberate, surprise attack by Moscow or the sheer numbers of military forces and equipment. Instead, we worried about instability in 15 sovereign states instead of one, about the cohesiveness of Russia itself, about whether it was reconciled to the independence of the other fourteen states, about the safety and security of weapons, about proliferation fueled by Russia's economic straits, and about how to maintain momentum in arms control when your original partner no longer existed.

And this was a time of wrenching change for our analysts. Economists who had worked their entire professional lives on a command economy were suddenly confronted with free prices and privatization. And it was not enough just to apply the tried-and-true lessons of macro-economic and micro-economic theory, for this was an economic transition unlike any that preceded it. We quickly discovered that no one had the market cornered on analyzing such a thing, and we had to actually devise from scratch methodologies to do things like gauge the size of the private sector.

Our political analysts, meanwhile, had to plunge into real electoral politics while our military analysts, sharply reduced in numbers, could stop worrying about the cost of Soviet defense while they refocused on more qualitative questions such as whether the military would play a stabilizing role in the new Russia. For their part, the canned goods and timber specialists were retooling in Uzbek language class, brushing up on Ukrainian politics, or starting to focus in detail on places like Chechnya.

While we were wrestling with these challenges, outside the Intelligence Community, in the world of politics, the pundits and the press, there was expectant talk of a "Peace Dividend." The "End of History" had come—the last, great ideological conflict was over. Skepticism was rife about the need for the US to sustain a global presence—diplomatic, military and intelligence. There was talk of a US-Russian strategic partnership and after a protracted post-Tiananmen policy rollercoaster, Washington and Beijing were getting back on track. Osama bin Laden and the missile threat hadn't made headlines—yet. Sanctions had put Saddam in a straitjack. The world seemed like a much less dangerous place.

When DCI James Woolsey talked about the proliferators, traffickers, terrorists, and rogue states as the serpents that came in the wake of the slain Soviet dragon, he was accused of "creating threats" to justify an inflated intelligence budget.

As was the case with the State Department and the Defense Community, the Intelligence Community was downsized. By 1995, CIA's analytic ranks had shrunk by 17 percent from what they were in 1990. By the end of the 1990s, we were down by about 22 percent. I reduced the office I headed by 42 percent in the space of three years. Overall, our Russia effort decreased by 60%, as personnel were justifiably shifted in the ways I've described and to non-Russian areas.

Well, almost a decade has gone by since the Soviet collapse and even though there still is no organizing principle that pulls our priorities into an alignment comparable to the Soviet period, there is no shortage of work for the Intelligence Community. If anything, the list of issues the Director must discuss in the threat assessment he delivers annually to Congress grows longer and more complex each year. Those thirsting for the clarity of the Soviet period may have to live with the likelihood that what we see is what we may continue to get for a long time: a kaleidoscopic world of rapidly shifting, interconnected problems—the kind of world that presents the toughest challenge to an analyst trying to help decisionmakers minimize the risk of strategic surprise.

The future-ologist Peter Schwartz believes that we have entered an era of what he calls "fundamental discontinuity" which will go on indefinitely due to globalization and the accelerating speed of technological innovation. I think he is right. Maybe because our analysts are used to thinking in geopolitical terms and five to ten years out, they tend to refer to this post-Cold War period as a "strategic pause"—or what Paul Kennedy might call the gap between "strategic epochs." Policymakers used to worry about a missile gap—until our reconnaissance and imagery pioneers proved it didn't exist. Now, it's an "epoch gap," but I'm not so sure we can help with that.

My point is that after any great upheaval—in this case the Soviet collapse—there has usually been a period of confusion, uncertainty, and turbulence while the world sorts itself out.

Think back on the last time empires disintegrated on anything like the scale we witnessed when the Soviet Union came apart and imagine the challenge it presents to our intelligence analysts.

- For example, if we had had a US Intelligence Community when the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires collapsed after World War I, could it have predicted the enormity of what came next: the rise of Hitler, the Holocaust, Stalin's purges, World War II, the atomic bomb, the Cold War?

Just as there was high potential for surprise in that period of transition, I believe that our nation has entered an era when the potential for unwelcome surprise is greater than at any time since the end of the Second World War. There are a number of reasons for this:

- As we have seen in places as diverse as the Balkans, East Timor, and the Congo, the crumbling of Cold War constraints and the surge of globalization have unleashed forces that rapidly spill-over into open violence that can engulf entire regions.

- Second, the revolution in technology enables, drives, or magnifies dangers to us. DCI Gates has said that after the 1960s, the US was never surprised by a Soviet weapons system. We cannot be as confident today that we know about our adversaries' capabilities, because paradigm-busting advances are occurring simultaneously in so many scientific and technical fields. As we point out in our report on the world in 2015, in science and technology, the time between discovery and application is shrinking every year.

- Third, the advanced technologies that once were the preserve of the superpowers have passed into other hands. Access to advanced technology gives hostile states and non-state actors new shields and new swords. Greater power and longer reach. In today's networked world, they have easier access to information, finances, deception-and-denial techniques, and to each other. And the perception of America's so-called "hegemony" has itself become a lightning rod for the disaffected. Related to all of this, America's sole superpower status has created a global climate conducive to what I would call "experimental alliances," as various aspiring powers search for common cause, usually with the aim of off-setting American preeminence.

- Fourth, the American public—for the first time—has to face the fact that the territorial United States—our power grids, our water and transportation systems, and our public communications networks are vulnerable to new and unconventional dangers like chemical and biological weapons and cyber attacks, and also to some older conventional threats like ballistic missiles.

- Last but not least, Russia and China and other key countries in volatile regions—Iran, and the Korean peninsula—are undergoing political, economic, demographic and strategic transitions whose outcomes could have widely varying national security consequences for the United States.

From the perspective of an intelligence officer, it seems that America's next move these days must always be calculated on a three dimensional chess board.

Given such a world, I tell our analysts that I do not belong to the Peter Schwartz School of "fundamental discontinuity" or the Paul Kennedy School of "epochal gaps." I belong to the Monty Python School of "Now for Something Completely Different." I am conscious every day of how important it is for our analysts to challenge the conventional wisdom, to separate what we really know from what we merely think, to consider alternative outcomes—in short, to not fall victim to mindset, overconfidence, or anyone's pet paradigm. Our country and its interests are at their most vulnerable if its intelligence professionals are not always ready for "something completely different."

On that score, today's Russia seldom fails to disappoint. Our Russia analysts would be the first to admit that at times they have had to struggle hard to anticipate what is coming next. But they have found some consolation in the thought that Yeltsin and Putin have probably felt the same way.

That said, I think when someday we have a conference about this latest decade, our analytic record on Russia will stand up well. Among the things I think it will show:

- We got an early grip on the newly independent states and their likely evolution along different paths. In March of 1991—nine months before the Soviet breakup—a new division was created in SOVA to devote more attention to the republics.

- Our analysts anticipated the violent crisis in the fall of 1993, when Yeltsin dissolved the communist-dominated Supreme Soviet to break the constitutional gridlock that paralyzed the country.

- In 1994, we warned of the first Chechen War.

- We were forward-leaning on the outcome of the presidential and parliamentary elections in 1995-1996 and 1999-2000, and we published and briefed extensively on corruption and the rise of Russian organized crime, long before it became such a prominent issue.

- In the economic sphere, we warned policy makers of the looming economic crisis two months before the August 1998 ruble crash and called the rebound in the economy long before business and academic experts did.

- And we were frequently able to stay ahead of the curve in anticipation of Yeltsin's frequent government shake-ups.

- On the things that can inflict harm on Americans or America's vital interests or those of our allies—such as loose nukes, proliferation and efforts to stymie NATO enlargement—we didn't know everything, but we put together a pretty good picture because we had a strong factual base from which to speculate.

But there were many "softer" issues—subjects which don't lend themselves to measurement—that were more difficult for us to assess with high levels of specificity. Putin's meteoric rise to the presidency is a case in point. When he was plucked from obscurity to become Premier, we would not have told you with confidence that he would rise to the Presidency—until his handling of the Chechen war dramatically increased his popularity. But in early 1999, Putin probably did not foresee this either. On such "unmeasurables," analysts must operate with greater degrees of uncertainty—they must work in the realm not just of the unknown, but of the unknowable.

What is knowable is that Russia's efforts to find its identity at home and its place in the world cannot be divorced from larger 21st century realities—the realities of a world in which countries globalize or get left behind, where national strength is measured not just in a military's access to hardware but in civilians' access to software—an increasingly borderless world of hope and hazard and unremitting change—realities which all countries confront, including our own.

Just like their targets, to be successful in this new century, our intelligence analysts must adapt. US Intelligence must find new ways of doing its analytic business. And that is exactly what we are doing. Let me briefly describe some of the steps we are taking:

First, we have repositioned institutionally to meet the changing nature of the threats. Today we devote only a fraction of the effort we once did to Russia. In the old days, SOVA was the largest office in the Directorate of Intelligence; today, given the cross-border nature of many current and emerging threats, that distinction goes to the Office of Transnational Issues.

We also have channeled substantial analytic resources to specialized centers staffed by experts from across the Intelligence Community to deal with Nonproliferation and Crime and Narcotics issues.

And, as the National Intelligence Council's 2015 report demonstrates, we are paying increasing attention to non-traditional areas such as demographics, disease and water scarcity while continuing to chart trends in energy, economic development, and weaponry. We are spending more time on how these factors inter-connect and on how they affect security and stability.

Next, we have placed a high priority on getting our analysts the technical tools they need to deal with the growing problems of volume and speed. Information increases by about a million documents per day, and that's just on the web. Five years from now, our all-source analysts will have to deal with ten times the amount of information that they now receive from open sources and clandestine collection. One analyst recently told me that the way she does her job has changed more in one year than in the preceding nine due to her desk top links with the Internet and classified intelligence networks. Today, providing vital "value added" analysis to consumers sometimes depends as much on our analysts' ability to pluck key information out of the flood and move it quickly as it does on the analysis itself. Information-mining technologies and connectivity among our analysts within CIA, across the Intelligence Community and with our customers will help us stay ahead of the competition—I don't mean our commercial competitors, but the hostile actors who can—and will—exploit what is commercially available.

But being smart about how we configure ourselves, allocate resources and use technologies will not be enough. As Sherman Kent put it decades ago: "There is no substitute for the intellectually competent human—the person who was born with the makings of critical sense and who has developed them...through firsthand experience and study."

With that in mind, we have over the last several years begun very aggressively to strengthen our analytical ranks that were so dangerously thinned after the Cold War. CIA, for example, is engaged in the largest across-the-board recruiting drive in a decade, and we are bringing in first-rate talent. We have established a new Sherman Kent School for Intelligence Analysis to intensively train the new recruits. Beyond increasing our bench strength against key targets, we are going all out to achieve greater analytic depth. We are providing incentives for analysts to stay on their accounts longer. We are affording our analysts greater opportunities to travel and to broaden their experience. Because we claim no monopoly on wisdom, we are bringing in outside experts for short tours as scholars-in-residence. We also are encouraging our analysts to expand their contacts with specialists elsewhere in government, in the private sector and in academia.

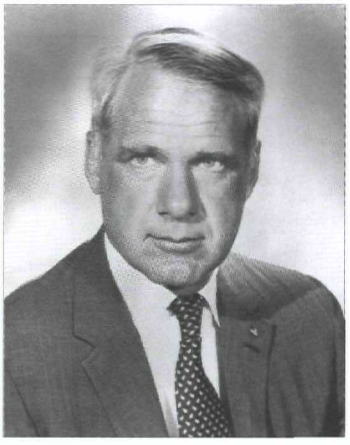
Our objective is a vigorous, creative, agile analytic capability that is equal to 21st century challenges and second to none.

I will close my comments on all that has changed in the analysis business by talking about what hasn't changed at all. I've mentioned Sherman Kent frequently, and let me say that today's analysts have the same three wishes that he used to talk about in his day: "To know everything. To be believed. And to exercise a positive influence on policy."

Of course, today's analysts don't know everything—that's why they still call 'em estimates. And they realize, as did their predecessors, that they won't always be believed, in spite of the rigor of their analysis. As to whether our analysts have a meaningful influence on policy, we will soon hear from former decision makers on that score. As for the decade I've just discussed, I can tell you that if the volume of questions we answer is any indication, our analysts have been very influential indeed. I am very proud of what they've accomplished.

Thank you. I would be happy to hear your thoughts and take your questions.

Address by Former DCI
Conference on *CIA's Analysis of the Soviet Union, 1947-1991*
Princeton University
March 2001



James R. Schlesinger

Dr. Schlesinger was introduced by Fred Hitz.

When Fred asked me to speak this evening he posed two questions: How well did the intelligence community do? Which reminds me of the standard jokes of Henny Youngman, who said, "How's your wife?" "Compared to what?" And the second question was: How influential was the reporting of the Intelligence Community with intelligence makers and was that intelligence properly utilized?

Let me start with the second question, which is, how influential was intelligence with policymakers? The basic issue is, who is influencing whom. Intelligence can be very influential when it is leaked to the press, influencing public perceptions or Congressional opinions, if not the policy makers themselves. That, of course, occurred back in the late 1950's, and in the 1960 election in particular, with the bomber gap issue and the missile gap issue. I myself worked for President Nixon who was convinced that he lost the 1960 Presidential election because of the CIA and its influence over the missile gap issue. I might add it later reduced his receptivity to any commentary from the CIA when he became President.

Now it is not always the influence of intelligence analysts on policy makers; sometimes it works the other way around. All too frequently intelligence analysts become susceptible to the policy convictions of the policy makers. Before I relate some examples of this, let me make some initial observations. First, intelligence is a tough business. It reminds one of Niels Bohr's comments that predicting is very hard, especially about the future. This comment, by the way, is often erroneously attributed to Samuel Goldwyn.

Second, intelligence officials do not normally make political decisions. That's not always the case, of course. Bill Casey, for example, had strong policy convictions and expressed them especially with regard to Central America. DCI Allen Dulles certainly played a large policymaking role in forging our position with regard to Cuba. And right now George Tenet is out in the Middle East, or was out in the Middle East, doing essentially a policy job.

Let me stress that intelligence officers can be at the mercy, I use that word carefully, of policymakers. Policymakers may not always listen to what is being said, but they are quite ready to blame their failures, or foul ups, on faulty intelligence. Intelligence and the Intelligence Community are the handiest of all scapegoats. Policymakers start with a set of presuppositions, or images of what the world is like, and for the most part, the so-called failures, the major failures of intelligence, reflect axioms in the minds of policymakers that may trickle down to the Intelligence Community. I like to relate the story of a CIA analyst who back in 1951 was studying the movements of the Chinese and had reached the conclusion that the Chinese had surreptitiously introduced their forces into North Korea, and he went around Washington peddling this scenario, and he got to the office of the then-Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, Mr. Dean Rusk. Rusk listened very carefully and politely to the presentation, and at the end of it he said, "Young man, they wouldn't dare." "They wouldn't dare" is frequently in the minds of policymakers. And particularly, of course, a major power that presupposes that others will not challenge it.

The classic example of this is not an American example, but the 1973 war in the Middle East. The Israeli's had absorbed the political axiom from their intelligence service that the Arab States would never dare to attack them unless they had achieved air superiority first. This analysis did not count on the Arab use of surface-to-air missiles that neutralized, for a while, Israeli air superiority, and thus the Israelis were surprised until the last tactical moment by the decision of the Arab States to attack. The "They wouldn't dare," concept I think, also occurred at the Marine barracks in Lebanon in 1983. And there was a large element of that thinking in the Tet Offensive in Vietnam in 1968.

Let me touch on a third point. Intelligence is not clairvoyance. Intelligence can and is pretty good regarding routine developments. It's pretty good except when you come to a turning point, and then it becomes iffy. The human mind does not readily grasp

fundamental change. Human beings find it hard to grasp such change. Likewise organizations, which consist of many human beings, and particularly large organizations, have to be convinced that change is coming, or that they've reached a turning point. It's a long process in large organizations that is reinforced by the "not invented here" factor and the bureaucratic investment in existing interpretations, structure, and organization.

Finally, one needs to remember that it is the goofs that stick in your mind, the failings, not the successes. It's the things that went wrong. I'll come back with some examples to illustrate these points later on.

But to the first question that Fred posed. How did we do? How did the Intelligence Community do in that long period of the Cold War? This morning I asked my colleague Brent Scowcroft, and he said, "Not too bad." High compliment. "Not to bad, but we should have done better." And I think that pretty well summarizes it. Do we expect, for example, baseball players to achieve nearly a thousand percent as a batting average? The answer is, of course, no. The press, the Congress, and most administrations, however, tend to feel that intelligence should be 100 percent accurate. To continue my baseball analogy, four hundred is a remarkable high batting average that hasn't been achieved since Ted Williams. Yet, that is only four hits in every ten times at bat.

Anyhow, back to trying to understand the Soviet Union. We had substantial difficulties in our analysis. First, Russia was a closed society. We also started at a low point in terms of our knowledge and our attitudes toward the Soviet Union. What saved us in my opinion was our adoption of technology. Not only overhead reconnaissance, but SIGINT became valuable tools in the intelligence game.

Earlier, there was a little tribute to the absent chairman of the technology session, Bud Wheelon, so I'll tell you a Bud Wheelon story. Back when I was in the Bureau of the Budget and one of the satellite systems was up for discussion, Wheelon was called to the executive office to justify the system. He began to explain what the system would do in general terms, and he kept getting more and more specific questions. Finally he became more and more nervous and said, "I don't think that these things are supposed to be discussed in the Executive Office of the President." He was very sensitive to discussing the highly compartmented program. Those were the old days, and I think things have changed since that time. But, he had a fundamental truth there, as President John F. Kennedy said, "The ship of state is the only one that leaks from the top."

Well, again how well did we do? Go back to 1945 before the CIA existed. We started our analysis of the Soviet Union, as I indicated, from a miserable base. Not only in terms of information about the Soviet Union but in terms of the attitudes that emerged from the Second World War, from the close of the Roosevelt administration, and even the early days

of Harry Truman. Some of you might remember the "I like old Joe Stalin, but he is a prisoner of the Politburo" type attitude that existed at the time. It was not based upon very good intelligence analysis.

There were lots of misconceptions in those days. The wartime euphoria of the allied partnership and the hostility of the Soviet Union towards the West was not presupposed are just a couple of these misconceptions. Expectations of possible Soviet hostility toward the West were the province of military men, like General George C. Patton, and reactionaries. Witness the now forgotten discussions over the Bremen Enclave. The Bremen Enclave reflected general US attitudes at the close of World War II that the real danger in the post-war world would be Britain, and its imperialist tendencies. A great deal of planning effort went into ensuring that the American forces in Southern Germany would have access to the North Sea with this established Bremen Enclave. We spent virtually no time worrying about allied access to Berlin, since the Soviet Union was not presupposed to be the danger in the post-war world. Once again, this was before the CIA existed. It was only after the Soviet take-over of Eastern Europe, the initiative of the Marshall Plan, which was rejected by the Soviet Union, not only for itself but for its new satellites, and particularly the Czech coup in 1948, that the views towards the Soviet Union universally hardened in the United States.

As I stated previously, the Soviet Union was a hard target for us. There were special problems, of course, in collecting intelligence, especially in the early years before we had the technological breakthroughs. I can remember early discussions of Soviet factory production. We took estimates of factory floor space, and made this leap of conviction about the production that could be carried on in the Soviet Union. These projections, incidentally, presupposed a much higher rate of productivity in the Soviet Union than actually existed. It was this kind of analysis that led to the misleading estimates of the bomber gap and then later the famous missile gap controversy. We were saved, basically, by the technical collection revolution that was discussed earlier today. Ultimately there was the downgrading of the Soviet threat. Intelligence was no longer based upon speculation about what the Soviet Union might be able to do, from which one leaps to the conclusion that they had done it, to concrete observation about what they were actually accomplishing.

After the technological breakthroughs in intelligence collection and after the discovery that the Soviet Union really was not pursuing as aggressive a policy as we had anticipated at the close of the 1950's, and the beginning of the 1960's, there came the new interpretation that the Soviets were merely reacting to the US positions. This was strengthened after the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the Kennedy Administration's belief that they had worked things out with the Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev. After 1962 and 1963, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara abandoned the notion of counter-force directed against the Soviet Union and moved to the concept of mutually assured destruction. Remember what I said earlier

about all too frequently intelligence is susceptible to the convictions of policy makers. McNamara's conviction, and of course he was instrumental in bringing CIA analysts into the center of strategic discussion, but McNamara's convictions on arms control began to influence, and then to drive to a considerable extent, national intelligence. That was true also of his ideas on détente.

There was also a good deal of mirror imaging of the Soviets in terms of, "They share the same ultimate goals as we do." According to some, the Soviets only wanted to match the United States, that was the cause of their rising arms build-up. In fact, with regard to their ICBM forces, the prevailing belief in the middle 1960's was that the Soviets only wanted to match us. Once they had reached a thousand missiles, just as our Minuteman force was capped at a thousand missiles, they would stop growing. When I joined the Nixon administration in 1969, the Soviets had just gone through that thousand limit and they showed no signs whatsoever of slowing down. As they built up their forces there were still continuing echoes that the Soviets were really only interested in matching us and that they would soon level off and reduce their forces.

A similar view came into the Intelligence Community, I say this with some care, with regard to détente. The Soviets obviously shared our aspirations for détente. And I can well recall August of 1968, at the time of the problems in Czechoslovakia, followed by the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Russians and the Warsaw Pact countries. I was that night at the home of Andy Marshall. We were working for the Rand Corporation, and we had as a visitor, McNamara's chief man on intelligence. As we listened to the radio reports of the invasion, all he did was to wring his hands, "How could the Russians do this?" He presupposed that Brezhnev felt about détente the way we did. He obviously understood that this was going to damage détente, and he was totally distressed. As I say this was not necessarily the view of the entire CIA, but generally speaking, the view was widespread in the Directorate of Intelligence. Nobody that I ever encountered took that view in the Operations Directorate. Enough of that particular period and those episodes.

I turn now to the other aspect that I mentioned previously, the bureaucratic investment that is made in a particular interpretation of history, or interpretation of current events, reinforced by the "not invented here" phenomenon. And here I refer to the painful progress, if I can put it that way, with regard to the economic data from the Soviet Union. This data was gradually used to make an economic model. One must remember that the output of such models is no better than the input. Some years later I was serving with Warren Nutter, down at the University of Virginia. He was doing a study for the National Bureau of Standards. To say the least, he had some harsh words for the CIA economic methodology, which I shared to some extent, and which is reflected in a book that I wrote at the time. If you believed the CIA estimates with regard to the Soviet economy and the

Soviet growth rate, the Soviets would at some early point in the 1970's according to CIA estimates, exceed the United States in total production. Mr. Khrushchev may have believed it, by the way, when he said, "We shall bury you." It seems ridiculous today.

Let me give another example on the economic side of the estimates process. Doug MacEachin please forgive me. This is a preemptive strike, I guess. Retaliation is certain, isn't it? Anyway, when I became Director of Central Intelligence, the estimate of Soviet military expenditures, in dollar terms, was about equal to that of the United States, maybe four or five percent higher - a point of view that I did not share. And one day, soon after I became Director, I sat down with the analysts, and I said, "Here's the back of an envelope, and let us go through what we are claiming." This didn't come out of any complex economic model, it was just my thoughts on the back of an envelope. I said the Soviets have nearly four million men under arms, and we have just over two million. In dollar terms what does that imply? It implies that the Soviets, excuse me, let me add one other fact. The United States was spending about 50 percent of its military budget on personnel, which in dollar terms would imply that the Soviet Union was spending about the equivalent of our dollar expenditures in the military budget simply on personnel. Right? They may have had more enlisted people and draftees, but if you put them at US dollar rates, they were spending about the same on personnel as we were. Then we went over the list of procurement items in Russia, and they were producing three thousand tanks a year, and we were producing two hundred and forty or two hundred and fifty tanks a year or thereabouts. The number of aircraft that they were producing vastly exceeded ours as well. They weren't very good aircraft, at least they didn't have the same capabilities as ours. In the final analysis, it was plain that the Russians were spending about 50% of our military budget, in dollar terms, on procurement. We gradually went through these expenditures. They had much lower expenditures, of course, for operations, particularly in view of the fact that we were still in Vietnam. But, nonetheless, the Soviet military budget looked to be about 160% or 170% of what we were spending. I think in the later years that that came to be confirmed.

Now the point of this is not that there was an initial misjudgment on our part, the point is that there was a major bureaucratic investment in that particular interpretation, because I said to them, "Go away and clear up this problem." Then a few weeks later I was summoned to go to the Department of Defense, and I was no longer there to watch the changes that would come as a result of what I regarded as very clear calculations. It took two and a half or three years of study, as I recall it, supervised by Andy Marshall once again from the Pentagon, before the adjustment in the estimates of Soviet military spending came about. Bureaucracies have to go some place to hide their head and all of that.

The point is that bureaucratic institutions, and that includes the CIA, make investments in their calculations and it is hard to get them to change their mind. That's especially true when you have honest intellectuals. The services have much greater flexibility. They seem to be able to adjust their views very quickly once their perception of their interests change.

Fred also asked me to talk a bit about the mid-period of the CIA, including Cuba and Vietnam. As for Cuba at the time of the Bay of Pigs, the analysis was not very good. I will say no more on that.

In Vietnam it was better than anybody else's, by and large. It wasn't always that good but it was a lot better, by and large, than what was coming out of the Department of Defense. That was not always the case. We had the famous case of Sihanoukville in Cambodia in which the Agency kept claiming that there was no evidence that it was a major port of armament shipments to the VC. This debate between the Pentagon and the Agency went on for a long time. Army Intelligence was in the lead, and the position that it took was, "Look . . . . .There's an awful lot being thrown at us, and its not coming down the Ho Chi Min trail." And the answer to that from the CIA analysts was, "You don't have any hard evidence for that, and until such time as there is hard evidence. . ." The Army replied, "Look, when they unload these munitions on us, that's hard evidence." The CIA was just plain wrong. When Lon Nol took over in Cambodia and we got our hands on the bills of lading, a flood of North Vietnamese munitions was going through Sihanoukville, so the Agency was not always as good as one might think.

We had another example at the close of the Vietnam War—this is not necessarily the view of Agency analysts but the voice of the Agency as expressed by the DCI Bill Colby. Colby was wedded to the belief of the salvation of South Vietnam, believed that even though the ARVN had lost most of its best divisions, and even though there was a retreat from I Corps and Second Corps, that a southern redoubt could be formed in South Vietnam. Colby thought that the relics of the ARVN could preserve Saigon and all ports, all parts South. His believe was based upon hope, nothing more. It did not come from the analysts at the CIA. It was Colby's personal belief.

Another example of this type of thinking was Stansfield Turner's at the time of the overthrow of the Shah. There was a great deal of skepticism amongst the analysts about the Shah's future. I was then Secretary of Energy so I would have the analysts come down from CIA and brief me. There was a great deal of skepticism about what form of government would follow the Shah. Stan Turner, however, had this belief that Khomeni was just another politician, and he briefed it to the National Security Council that after the overthrow of the Shah things would go pretty much as they had before, that they would have to sell us oil and so forth. Now that is a defect in intelligence, if not of the analysts at the CIA. Well, I've talked long enough.

Dr. Schlesinger also responded to a final question from the audience: How do policy makers react to intelligence? Schlesinger: The answer to that is, it varies. George Bush, the elder, loved the intelligence product. This was a part of his life. For Richard Nixon it was a different part of his life, and the reaction was not nearly as good. Let me expand the question to when do the intelligence analysts have their major impact on an administration? Usually at the start of an administration before its policy views begin to harden. As those policy views begin to harden it takes greater and greater evidence to change anybody's mind. It becomes a very hard sell. In fact it is almost impossible. Policymakers—this may shock you—like to have their own views confirmed. So they will pick over the intelligence to find the very items that support those views. And so you have to have policymakers who are open minded, and usually it is better to catch them early on in an administration. Thank you very much.

Former National Security Advisor's Recollections and Recommendations for CIA Conference on *CIA's Analysis of the Soviet Union, 1947-1991* Princeton University March 2001

Zbigniew Brzezinski

I have been interested in Soviet affairs since I was a student. My graduate work was on Soviet affairs. My undergraduate work dealt with Soviet affairs. And I have maintained a sustained interest in that area, and in that topic, since then. For two years, I served in the State Department, and I was an active consumer of what many of you in this room, or your predecessors, were producing. For four years, I served in the White House. And then I was, indeed, a very active, voracious, consumer of what you had to produce. I was a privileged consumer, not only of your finished products, but also of raw intelligence, which I insisted on seeing, and to which I wanted to have direct access.

I would like to begin my comments today by first of all saying, in all seriousness and sincerity, that I have the highest regard for the personnel of the Agency. I've worked with them over the years. In my private life I've also worked with them. There was only one occasion when I refused to work with them, which was when I was a young assistant professor at Harvard on my way to the Soviet Union in the '50s, and I was visited by some representatives of the Agency who wanted to task me with some assignments. And

I had, I think, the good common sense to say to them, "I'm going as an academic. I'll keep my eyes and ears open. I'll be happy to talk to you when I come back, and you can ask me whatever you want to know, but I will not be tasked by you."

But there were other occasions where I did cooperate, and I've never regretted it, because the people in the Agency, I found over the years, were intensely able, energetic, and dedicated, and they deserve truly high praise for their inventiveness, for their daring. When I became a major consumer of the Agency's product for four years, I must say I was immensely impressed by the innovativeness of some of the techniques that the Agency developed for the acquisition of information. Much of that has now become part of public knowledge; a great deal of it has not. It all, cumulatively, testifies to the extraordinary ability to innovate, to use science and technology for the purpose of obtaining a more accurate understanding of what was then transpiring, and is now transpiring, in areas of intense national security interest to the United States.

As a consumer, in retrospect, I have to say that sometimes we, at the level at which I was working, did not assist the Agency all that much in determining what would best help us. We were not always clear about our needs; perhaps not often enough were we engaged in very precise tasking of the Agency insofar as what would best help us make the kinds of decisions that we were engaged in. This I regret, because I know that the Agency would have been more helpful if it had been more deliberately tasked, very specifically tasked, with clearer emphasis on what was needed, and perhaps with clearer identification, earlier, of what really is not all that helpful to the top policymakers.

Today, with that as my point of departure, I'd like to talk to two subjects. The first pertains to the past. And particularly, it involves the Agency and its support for the President and his immediate associates—the relationship of the Agency to the Presidential-level decisionmaking process. One here has to pause and immediately emphasize something, which is quite obvious but needs to be stressed nonetheless: How much time can the President give to the consumption of intelligence? The answer is, "Very little." Most people don't have a sufficient appreciation of the enormous time pressures, the disruptive time pressures, under which the President works. Most people simply do not appreciate the volume of paperwork that flows to his office, under enormous pressure from every branch of the government for access to the President. I once did an analysis of how many pages come in for the President every day from the Secretary of State, from the Secretary of Defense—and through him, of course, from the Joint Chiefs as well—and from the Director of Central Intelligence. They were destined for the President, but they would come to me first. It came to 300 pages a day.

I was initially naïve enough to feel that if the Secretary of State, or the others, sent me this material for the President, I perhaps ought to annotate it and give it to the President. And then I realized that the President would actually read it. At least the President I worked for would read it and would annotate it and would send it back. It soon dawned on me that this made absolutely no sense, that I wasn't serving the President well, and that the President was becoming overwhelmed with data and facts that he couldn't consume, and from which he couldn't extract all policy-relevant insights. And I cut down the volume to about 40 pages a day, either summarizing the rest, or, very often—since I had a relationship with the President that gave me some confidence—responding on his behalf to the memoranda, on the assumption that if there was some subsequent dispute, I would be in a position to explain to the President what the reasons were for my response. I had sufficient confidence that in most cases he would say that this was the correct response.

The President, of course, would read every day the *President's Daily Brief.* This is perhaps the most important communication between the Agency and the President. And the years in which I was in the White House, the *President's Daily Brief,* I think, was very helpful to the president on some major issues, notably arms control and the strategic dimension. By and large, the quality of the reporting was excellent. It was informative. It was detailed. It was comprehensive in providing us a very detailed, essentially accurate picture of Soviet strategic development, deployments, weapons characteristics, arms control negotiating postures, and so forth. It was similarly excellent in some areas of the Soviet economy, which had either international implications or were significant to internal Soviet development, such as the oil industry. And the President would absorb that and would follow it in great detail.

It did not provide much help to the President, however, in determining what the Soviets, in general, were trying to do. What struck me about the PDBs was that they were informative specifically, but not enlightening generally. They did not, in my view, give the President and the other principal consumers of the PDB, which were three or four people in the entire government, a good sense of what the Soviet strategy of the time actually was. What is it that the Soviets were trying to do, for example, in the Persian Gulf/African area, in South Africa, in the Ethiopian Horn, subsequently in Afghanistan, and in 1980 in Poland?

The *President's Daily Briefs*, while helpful in our understanding of the specific numerical dimensions of the Soviet military establishment, were also not very helpful in giving us a comprehensive sense of Soviet war planning. We had a good understanding of Soviet capabilities in the strategic area and in the conventional area. But, curiously enough, the connection between the two was not clearly made. And it was not until much of the material that Poland's Colonel Kuklinski provided us was fully digested that the organic interrelationship between Soviet strategic forces and conventional forces in comprehensive

war-making emerged more clearly. We had a sense of the specifics, but the two were treated largely as separate phenomena: Soviet strategic war-making as one dimension, Soviet conventional war-making as a separate dimension, but the two, in my view, were not fully integrated.

More generally, I would say that when it came to drawing a broad picture that was analytically helpful to the President, "in-shop" work—in the White House—using CIA inputs, was more helpful to the President. I have in mind, for example, the product called PRM-10, Presidential Review Memorandum No. 10, which is a comprehensive assessment of the American-Soviet competition. It was produced under the directorship of Samuel Huntington, who was detailed at the time to the White House, and it reached the basic conclusion that while there was military equivalence between the United States and the Soviet Union, trends in the military dimension were essentially adverse for the United States, but the United States was superior and gaining in all other areas—and that, hence, the competition outside of the military dimension was actually favoring the United States, and increasingly so. Now that was an important conclusion. But it emerged out of the use of intelligence data by White House staffers, sensitive to the larger picture that the President needed to have, which they then, using the data, were able to provide.

I would say that, in general, I found it helpful for the NSC staffers to have access to raw intelligence, because that greatly increased their ability to draw the right kinds of conclusions for Presidential use. When it came to broad, sweeping, bold insights into the future, by and large the PDB did not provide it, and the Agency did not provide it, whereas from within the staff, occasionally, it was developed. I have in mind, for example, a document that was prepared by my military aide, who subsequently became the head of NSA, General William Odom, in which the conclusion was stated very explicitly—this was in the late'70s—"The Soviet Union," and I'm quoting, "The Soviet Union, however militarily strong it is becoming, suffers enormous centrifugal political forces. A shock could bring surprising developments within the USSR, just as we have seen occurring in Poland. The dissolution of the Soviet empire is not a wholly fanciful prediction for later in this century. US policy should sight on that strategic goal."

Now this is something which some of us in the White House also felt instinctively. I, for example, felt very strongly that the nationalities problem in the Soviet Union was the Achilles heel of the Soviet Union, and I insisted that there be an interagency group created to address the nationalities problem. The State Department opposed that initiative, and I remember vividly the argument that was made to the effect that there is no nationalities problem in the Soviet Union—that there is, in fact, a Soviet nation emerging. The interagency group was created, and then it led to a covert program which the Agency

undertook, euphemistically and elegantly called a program for the "delegitimization" of the Soviet system. It was a program designed to exploit national tensions within the Soviet Union.

And all that leads me to two basic conclusions. First, that intelligence for the President was excellent on the level of factology, weak on the level of "politology." And the President, and people around him, needed "politological" assessments and insights. It is very difficult for an institution which has to concentrate on being reliable, whose data has to be verifiable, to provide such broad insights, and yet that is what policymakers need.

This leads me to another conclusion, which perhaps is equally unpalatable to some in this room, namely that the president's intelligence briefing should not be, in most cases, given by the Agency. It should be given by the President's National Security Advisor, because the President's National Security Advisor knows what the presidential interests are. He knows the policy issues that are being discussed. He knows how the President's mind works—or should know after a while. And he is, therefore, in a better position to digest that information, to reinforce it with his own views, or from his own access to raw data, and to provide for the President the kind of picture that he needs to have when dealing with an important challenge such as that from the Soviet Union.

In specific instances, when it comes to briefing the President, for example, on the personalities of Soviet leaders, or on the characteristics of Soviet weapon systems, or on particular Soviet initiatives, yes, direct briefings by the Agency, either by its Director or, better still, by the pertinent analysts, make a great deal of sense. But only in that context, and not as a general routine. This is a sensitive point because there used to be times when the President was regularly briefed by the head of the Intelligence Community. There were other times when he was not. My own experience leads me to the view that, by and large, in most cases the latter is the preferred bureaucratic course of action.

Now let me use that as a point of departure for sharing with you some thoughts in the second half of my presentation. Since this is a keynote address toward the end of your conference, it doesn't quite fit into the format of this event, but I hope you'll forgive me, and perhaps some of you might find it of interest. Essentially, the second half of my comments is an attempt, on the basis of what I have said, to share with you what it is that I would want to task the Agency to do today if I were the current National Security Advisor, and if I were in the position, therefore, to task the Agency as to what ought to go into the *President's Daily Brief.*

And in doing so, I want to preface my remarks by saying that, in focusing this tasking on Russia, I'm aware of two new realities. The first is that Russia is not an enemy, and, therefore, the whole spirit of the tasking is different. But Russia is a player, and Russia is a

competitor, and Russia is probably more a competitor than a partner, and, therefore, the need for good intelligence is as intense as ever. Second—and this is important in view of what I will now be saying—I find Russia today obviously much more porous than ever before. Much more porous. I felt in the earlier phase that we never had enough HUMINT, but I was also aware of the fact that there were obvious objective impediments, which restricted the acquisition of human intelligence. This is no longer the case. Russia is a very porous society. Its elite is very corrupt and very susceptible to material incentives. And, as a consequence, I think there is relatively little excuse today for not having good HUMINT regarding Russia. I can see some excuses being still pertinent in regard to China. In regard to Russia, there's really no excuse for the Agency not to have truly, truly excellent HUMINT. And that would be my assumption in tasking the Agency. And if the Agency was unresponsive to the tasking, I'd view it as a bureaucratic deficiency from which appropriate conclusions ought to be drawn regarding the leadership and operations of the Agency. [laughter] View it as an incentive.

The **first** tasking is very obvious. I would like the President to be told by the Agency what Russia's strategy is toward the United States? What is it, exactly, that Putin and his leadership are trying to achieve in the relationship with the United States? And more broadly, can its view of the role of the United States in the world be defined? Can it be crystallized? What are the essential components? And, in that context, how realistic is that strategy? Is there a relationship between goals and means that is reasonably balanced in that Russian strategy? More specifically, how is one to view Russia's courtship of Cuba, North Korea, Iraq, Libya, Iran, and Vietnam? Is it to be viewed as a strategy, or as a stupidity? Or, perhaps, as a combination of the two? In other words, a stupid strategy. [laughter] How do we assess it? What conclusions do we draw from it? Is there a significant difference between Russia's declaratory policy—what is stated by Russian leaders, including the President of Russia—and actual policy? Can we see that there is a difference between the two? Or are they the same? And here, obviously, the thing to do would be to compare the thinking of Russian think tanks, some of which produce serious papers on Russian geo-strategy, with internal Kremlin policy papers. Yes, compare the two. And if the Agency doesn't have access to them, it's not doing its job, because these papers do involve a lot of officials and presumably, in the new circumstances, some form of cooperative access to such people should by now have been established.

Second, I would like to see the Agency provide the President with a comprehensive counterintelligence assessment of Russia's intelligence goals in the United States. What is their scope? And how comprehensive are Russian intelligence programs in the United States? This, incidentally, should inform us somewhat about the first cluster of issues as well, and therefore it is an important undertaking, since we do know that Russian intelligence operations continue. What is their scope? How coherent are they? How would we assess them?

Third, what is the Russians' assessment of Bush's foreign policy team? How do they assess the individuals on the team and the relations between them? What policy and personal weaknesses in the Bush team have the Russians detected? And what conclusions did they draw from the foregoing assessment? Obviously, that is important also in determining the nature of Russian-American interplay.

The **fourth** cluster of issues pertains to NATO, and, specifically, in what NATO governments do the Russians have the greatest influence? They do have some influence in some governments. We know that they had an influence in the earlier years, and we learned a great deal more about that after the unification of Germany, when certain files became accessible, and when it became obvious that some very senior West German officials were, perhaps, subject to classification as agents of influence. How is that influence now exercised within the NATO agreements? And are the new members heavily penetrated? And who among them the most? I think that is certainly of relevance, given the continued importance of NATO in American national security policy.

The **fifth** cluster of issues pertains to Russia's short-term intentions and likely actions regarding its immediate neighbors—most specifically, Ukraine and Georgia. What are the principal targets of Russian policy insofar as these two countries are concerned? More specifically still, how is [Ukrainian President] Kuchma's crisis being exploited? Do we see any alternatives to Kuchma? Incidentally, in the context of that crisis and challenge, what do we know about the Russian role in the attempts to assassinate Shevardnadze? And what does it tell us about Russian policy towards the Southern Caucasus?

The **sixth** cluster of issues pertains to weaponry. What new weapons, with emphasis on the word "new," are the Russians producing, or more likely, still developing? Are they likely, given their financial limitations, to attempt to skip a generation of weapons and to leapfrog in weapons development? If one is strapped financially, perhaps it makes more sense to skip a generation and then to obtain a marginal advantage. What do we know about that? Connected with it, of course, is the question of Russian weapons sales, and there is a sustained interest in this. It's probably "carrying coals to Newcastle," but it is important to note. And one might add to it the question of whether and, if so, how much of the Nunn-Lugar funds have been siphoned off by the Russians, either for weapons development, or, more likely, simply because of corruption, because the Nunn-Lugar program is of some importance.

The **seventh** set of issues pertains to other aspects of Russia's foreign policy, and, specifically, the world of Islam. Have the Agency and/or the Bureau been drawn into Russia's conflict with Islam to the south of Russia? Have the Russians been aided by US agencies in the war against Chechens, perhaps under the rubric of antiterrorism? For there have been such allegations in the mass media. This is an issue not easy to deal with, because

it raises very sensitive moral and political problems, and it is probably not an issue that any of the elements in the agencies would like to own up to if it is seriously probed. And yet it has a bearing on foreign policy and also has a bearing on our own definition of our national interests, and on how we best pursue it.

The **eighth** set of questions pertains to some of our own domestic aspects. More specifically, what is the role of the Russian mafia in the United States? Has any of the money of the Russian mafia in the United States been channeled into the political process in the United States? And, if so, to whom and why? And, is it purely a criminal activity? Or is there a tie-in here between criminal activity and political objectives of the Russian government?

Ninth is an extension of the foregoing, namely, how active and well-financed are American PR firms and law firms in acting as representatives of Russian interests in the United States? Which ones can be identified as purely private business activities? And, which ones spill over, essentially, into activities which also promote more directly the national political objectives of Russia? Which firms are most active? The same set of questions can be applied to some American think tanks. To what extent do some of them have a relationship with Russia that has become extensive to a degree in which it is at least worthy of observation?

Tenth, and last, what American policies is Russia most determined to counter, and, if so, how might it seek to achieve effective countering of such American policies?

I would love to see the answers to these questions. I'd love to be a consumer, and to see what they present. I want to emphasize again that the purpose of these questions is not to wage some sort of a new Cold War against Russia. But it is to deal with Russia as a serious competitive player on the international scene, and a country with highly developed intelligence traditions—a country which puts a lot of emphasis on the use of covert activity in the context of the pursuit of its foreign policy goals. I assume that many of the answers to my questions would be benign. But I think answers to these questions are needed. And I think a President, in shaping policy and in trying to establish a stable relationship with Russia in this day and age, would be well-served if he had access to essentially politically oriented, policy-decisionmaking-oriented questions of this sort, which I would be tempted to task the Agency if I were still in office today. Thank you.

Questions and Answers

Question: Toward the end of your list of taskings, Zbig, you entered a zone of fuzziness of the boundaries among the traditional disciplines of intelligence, counterintelligence, law enforcement, business, politics, and crime. That's a fuzziness that

has gotten a lot worse since you were the National Security Advisor, just because of the globalization of everything. You could give the same speech about tasking on China. Could you reflect on how our institutions and our policies and our laws might have to adjust to deal with this fuzziness? I mean, you might go in and say, "Mr. President, a Russian criminal syndicate, let's call it Beta, has just bought a position of strength in the law firm for which your golfing partner now works." And he says, "Zbig, I don't want to hear that."

ZB: Well, he might say, "I don't want to hear that," or he might say, "I can't do anything about it, but it's good to know it." That's an important difference. I would want him to know it. Now, if he decides he doesn't want to do anything about it, he is the President, not I. But I think it's the kind of thing he ought to know about. You're right—fuzziness, yes. But fuzziness does not mean that one should not know about it. The area is gray, and, therefore, what we do specifically about it is limited. Not every kind of activity is subject to criminal litigation. But, because it isn't subject to criminal litigation, it isn't the kind of activity you don't want to know about.

And I think the President precisely needs to know that, because we do, indeed, live in a more fuzzy era, a more porous era, and an era in which peculiarities of the American political system are being perhaps exploited, in a much more intelligent fashion than was the case heretofore. You know, during the height of the Cold War, the Communist Party of the United States was probably of very limited assistance to the Soviets, but it was a major preoccupation to us. And far more important are potential agents of influence, or people who play an ambiguous role, essentially performing a perfectly legal activity, for example lobbying, but at the same time being instruments of foreign policy, which affects American national interest. So this fuzziness, I think, underlines the difficulty of the task, but it doesn't negate the importance of the task. And I would say the task is more important than ever, precisely because the situation is fuzzier.

And you're quite right: the same is true of the Chinese. I think a lot of the things I said about what I would task the Agency to do in regard to Russia, I would apply to China—a lot of it, not all of it. But I would say also that I would have far lower expectations of the Agency delivering in the case of China today. Right now, there's no excuse for not having very good penetration of the Russians. Actually, we've done pretty well in this regard. One of the reasons, for example—just as an aside—that I don't worry too much over Russian arms sales to the Chinese is that I'd rather have the Chinese buy Russian weapons, which we now know extremely well—some of which we could perhaps show the Chinese ourselves—than have the Chinese buying the stuff from the French, or the British, or the Israelis. Anybody else? Or was this the only question?

Question: Because of our Constitution, we have three elements of government, and, of course, there is the Congress. The questions that you pose should be also posed by those gentlemen on the Hill, not all of whom understand anything about the world, and the constitution doesn't allow weighted votes depending upon knowledge. I understand that recently there was a survey, and it found that a great percentage of our Congressmen don't even have a passport. Under these circumstances, how can we, from your background and experience, also educate Congress so that it, in turn, can support the Executive?

ZB: You know, actually, this business about most of the Congressmen not having passports and not having traveled abroad is a canard. It is totally inaccurate. Most of them actually do have passports, and a very large majority of them travel abroad a lot, to the point that at the same time Congress is also criticized for a lot of boondoggles, such as Congressmen traveling to Paris to have serious discussions, let's say, about SDI, with a prolonged stopover on the Riviera—which, however, still is culturally enlightening, I have no doubt. [laughter]

You know, Congress is not all that bad. I have had a lot of dealings with Congressmen and Senators. When I say that, of course, I really mean the three Committees that are of interest to me, which are the Armed Services Committees, the Foreign Relations Committees, and the Intelligence Committees. I would say the quality is pretty good, the staffs are pretty good, and the Chairmen of the Committees are pretty good. Don't underestimate the US Congress. It's not bad at all in terms of seriousness, hard work, and dedication. So, yes, of course, the same kind of educational process that engages the top policymakers, which the Intelligence Community furthers, would serve the Congress well, but a great deal of it takes place, and, in any case, basic decisions in the national security area are still made by the Executive Branch.

My own experience—and that is what I wanted to talk about today—my own focus was on the President, and here the relationship between the President and the Agency is very important. And it hasn't been over the years all that satisfactory. There have been tensions between National Security Advisors and DCIs. Not always has intelligence been used well, and particularly, I think, not always has intelligence been tasked well. And I plead guilty to that myself, because I remember as I look back now over the years in which I served, that very often we were critical of what we were getting, but we weren't very clear in demanding what we needed, although probably the Agency could not have provided it then the way it can provide it, in some cases, now.

Question: I think I know what your answer's going to be to this, but I'd be interested in your comments on the recent Council on Foreign Relations Report. I just speed-read it when it came across my desk last week, and as I understood it, it was to downgrade the

position of the National Security Advisor to one of administration, and upgrade the State Department to make it the primary formulator and source of recommendations on foreign policy

ZB: It's a report which is being read with intense interest and admiration in the Department of State [laughter] and it's a report of a task force chaired by a very good friend of mine, Frank Carlucci, who was a National Security Advisor and Secretary of Defense. It's a report which was written by my son, [laughter] so I know the report well. [laughter]

I think the report, actually, comes at a very good moment for two reasons. One, the Department of State is in a mess. It has been badly run. It has been badly organized. It has been badly financed. It needs, really, pulling together, and I think the new Secretary is determined to do that.

Secondly, there's another good reason for this report right now. Not every President makes foreign policy decisions the same way. It is my absolute conviction, based on some degree on experience, that the role of the National Security Advisor and the role of the President's Secretary of State are not determined by the degree to which they're able, or energetic, or ambitious, or assertive, or whatever. It is determined predominantly—I would say exclusively—by the kind of decisionmaking process in the area of foreign policy that the President practices by his own personal, as well as political, proclivity. If a President is interested in foreign affairs, and wants to make foreign policy decisions on the basis of his own informed judgments, and to make them, I repeat, personally, the National Security Advisor becomes the automatic bureaucratic beneficiary of the propensity. He is the person who sees the President all the time; he is the person whom the President appointed because, presumably, he finds him or her congenial, personally as well as intellectually. He is the person with whom the President works, and given the volume of decisionmaking that goes to the President, and comes back from him, not every decision can be made by the President. In that setting, the National Security Advisor makes decisions on behalf of the President, and, unless the Secretary of State, or the Secretary of Defense, is particularly obtuse, he or she will realize that the National Security Advisor has a relationship with the President. They know if they go back to the President, the National Security Advisor will go to the President's office, explain why he did that on his behalf, and the President, in most cases, will say, "You did the right thing." If he didn't feel that way, he wouldn't have that person around.

But if the President is not interested in foreign affairs, basically, or is preoccupied with domestic affairs, the Secretary of State is the natural Constitutional and institutional beneficiary of that condition and is the principal player. And we have seen both systems since 1945, and some of them have worked well in both cases, and some of them have not worked well in both cases, but we have had both systems. And I think this President is much

more like President Reagan—and President Reagan was a very successful President—more like President Ford, more like President Truman. Eisenhower, actually, was, I think, falsely presented as being different. He was much more of an internal player than most people realize—once you read the NSC archives, you realize he was a much more hands-on President. But Bush is much more like Reagan, Ford, maybe Johnson, Truman. I don't think when the decision was made recently to bomb Iraq that President Bush spent much time meditating upon it or reflecting upon it. I suspect the decision came in with a recommendation, and the President probably said to the Vice President, "Do you have any problems with it?" And he said, "No." And the National Security Advisor said, "No." "Well, if Rummie and Colin are for it, that's fine. That's it." And in that setting, the Secretary of State is going to predominate. So I think that report, actually, came in at the right moment, because the State Department needs revitalization, and the Secretary of State in this Administration is going to be much more the central player.

Question: You have alluded to the content of the tasking. But what about an "op ed" that would appear with advice on how the National Security Advisor would task the DCI, because I think you have alluded to some things, and it would be interesting if you could sketch out two or three, if you were writing advice to Condoleezza Rice, for example.

ZB: Well, you know, again, that's to some extent something that's very difficult to generalize about, because it's very much a question of the personal relationship. My DCI—my, meaning in my time—was a Naval person, an Admiral, you know, used to operating in a military setting. Clear-cut orders, clear-cut execution. He had a very sophisticated Deputy, Frank Carlucci, who was politically savvy. That dictates one pattern of behavior. If you have a more politically minded DCI, it becomes a different process. Some people prefer oral instructions to written instructions, but I think probably if I were the DCI today, I would have written up what I said today. But I wouldn't have sent it all at once, because I think that would have caused internal disruption at the Agency. I'd probably kind of give it to them once every ten days. [laughter] And see how they handle it. [laughter]

Question: Zbig, let me go back to the first half of your remarks— what you thought of intelligence, especially when you were Security Advisor. We've had a lot of discussion on and off about politicization of intelligence, and I have a twofold question about it from your perspective. First, did you feel that at least in some areas the intelligence you were getting was excessively influenced by the political predispositions of either the institutions of the CIA or the individuals in it? And, second, perhaps contradictory, did you sometimes feel that the Agency, the extent of the excellence, or the acuity of the analysis, was inhibited by their fear of being politicized, by their fear of either catering to what you wanted, or knowing they felt that if they learned too much about what people, who we now call consumers, were interested in, that they would be sacrificing their professional standing?

ZB: Well, to the first question the answer is clear—never. I never had the sense that the analysis or the data I was getting was somehow or other contaminated by political preferences or leanings. I can't really say the extent to which people in the Agency sensed some sort of maybe indirect pressure emanating from my office or from me personally. It's hard for me to answer that. But knowing both Turner and Carlucci, I would say they were not the kind of people who would be intimidated by that. I think they sensed a different kind of pressure, namely a feeling of impatience and dissatisfaction with the quality of political intelligence, which was, to some extent, a criticism of the level of political analysis, because it didn't fit well enough with what we were thinking about, and perhaps we weren't clear enough here in indicating that. And, secondly, because they didn't have the kind of access, political intelligence, or HUMINT, that I really felt even then they should have had more of. And I did feel that the culture of the Agency did not emphasize enough the need for HUMINT. So, in that respect, I do think there may have been some sort of a problem here, but on balance I would say no.

Question: Aren't you worried about the fact that if the National Security Advisor takes over the function of briefing the President, that that person would tend to emphasize those things which bear out the wisdom of his previous advice? Even with the best will in the world, the fact that the Advisor had been giving advice on a given set of issues would tend to lead him or her to emphasize those aspects of the briefing.

ZB: Well, there's probably some risk of that, but, you know, at those levels of government, you have colleagues who are never shy in revealing your shortcomings to your boss. [laughter} So there would be certainly some instruments capable of correcting that reality. The question is, would the briefings be better and more informative if they were delivered directly by the DCI? And here, without making personal judgments about individual DCIs, I would say in most cases it is quite clear that they would not be. Because most DCIs are not chosen for either their briefing ability or because of their engagement in foreign policy issues and policymaking. And, therefore, they don't have that kind of ability to relate to the central interests of a President. So, no, I don't think that would be a problem. I think one of the reasons that some Presidents have, in fact, shied away from direct briefings by either the DCI or the Agency is that they simply don't find these briefings helpful to what preoccupies them.

Perhaps the DCI could be helped in that respect by the National Security Advisor, but the National Security Advisor has many other tasks, you know. You try to do the best job you can, as effectively as you can, and as directly as you can. It is normal for the National Security Advisor and the DCI to be bureaucratic allies. That's very important. In my case, for example, I wanted the DCI to be in on the foreign policy breakfast that the President had every Friday with his National Security Advisor, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Defense. I repeatedly tried to get the DCI in there, but, for

reasons which I've never quite understood—because it wasn't explained to me—I was told repeatedly by the person who made the decision as to who attended that breakfast--and to whom we then subsequently always refunded the $1.75 fee for the breakfast [laughter]—that he didn't want that. And that's his choice. It's he who decides that. But I think the bureaucratic relationship between the National Security Advisor and DCI is normally that of an alliance.

Question: Just before lunch, we listened to a number of speakers at the last panel who told us that the feeding of raw intelligence to the Soviet leaders, the Politburo people, was a bad thing for their decisions. But in your talk, you said both for yourself and on behalf of the NSC Staff that getting raw intelligence would be a good thing. I wonder if you'd expand on that, and say why you think that would be good.

ZB: The reason I think it's good is that I think that, generally speaking, the people who are on the NSC Staff are there because they are very good analysts, and because they have a pretty good grasp of the issues that they face. They are typically the cream of the crop from State Department, the cream of the crop from Defense, and from the Agency itself, with an occasional smattering of leading policy-oriented academics. It's an elite group. So, by and large, the chances are that they are at least as good or better than analysts working within the departments, and the same time, they are working in tune with the National Security Advisor, and through him, with the President. Therefore, they know better than the others what are the issues that confront the decisonmakers, and which kind of information is most important to them.

Last, but not least, having access to raw data also provides you with an opportunity to test your own judgment against the subsequent inflow of duly processed and vetted intelligence analysis from the agencies that used that raw data, and, therefore it gives them an additional framework. For example, I mentioned the material from Col Kuklinski. I used to get it both ways, as raw and as analysis. And I found it very useful to have that combination. But I certainly liked raw data. I was always fascinated in reading, for example, what certain governments were talking about, or what people were reporting, and so forth. It's very useful if you're negotiating with someone to know what their instructions were in real time, and what they're then reporting. You can't wait for that to come back vetted by three layers within some institution.

Question: We've been talking at the conference about National Intelligence Estimates and larger products. Can you comment on how you used them, if you did, and what you thought of the quality of the ones you read while you were using them?

ZB: I would say, on balance, that they tended somewhat to lag behind the flow of events. While they were useful in a kind of broad perspective sense, they tended to be somewhat outpaced by the flow of issues, and, therefore, they weren't really central to the kind of decisions one had to make, most often on the basis of somewhat imperfect knowledge. I would say that would be broadly my reflection on it. It's the kind of thing that I would read, and I would expect my staff to read; I'm not sure in most cases the President really had the time to read and digest it. I think the real problem everywhere, as we talk on this subject, is the connectivity between the dilemmas of decisionmaking and the direct relevance of the information that should enlighten it. And it's very hard to achieve in an institution in which the culture over the years was greatly influenced by scientific, technological successes, with a lot of emphasis on hard data, and the relative absence of more traditional intelligence successes. This is why I said earlier in my comments that I thought the Agency was superb in "factology," not very good in "politology."