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Intelligence: The Left Hand of Curiosity
Denis Clift

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Intelligence—The Left Hand of Curiosity

A. Denis Clift

*A. Denis Clift is President of the Joint Military Intelligence College, a position he has held since 1994. Mr. Clift joined the U.S. Navy in 1958, where he served in the Fleet Intelligence Center Pacific; on two Antarctic expeditions; and in the Office of Naval Intelligence. From 1963–1966, Mr. Clift was the editor of the United States Naval Institute Proceedings. In 1967, he began 13 successive years of service in the Executive Office of the President and the White House. His assignments included Executive Secretary, Panel on International Programs, Committee on Marine Research, Education and Facilities; Executive Secretary, Committee for Policy Review, National Council on Marine Resources and Engineering Development; Senior Staff Member, Europe, and then Senior Staff Member, Eastern and Western Europe and Soviet Union, National Security Council; and Assistant to Vice President Mondale for National Security Affairs. Mr. Clift joined the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) as Defense Intelligence Officer at Large in 1981. He was promoted to Assistant Deputy Director for External Affairs in 1982, to Deputy Director for External Relations in 1985, and to DIA Chief of Staff in 1991. In 1992 he was appointed a U.S. Commissioner on the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs. Among his many decorations are the President's Award, Rank of Meritorious Executive, DOD Distinguished Civilian Service Award, Secretary of Defense Meritorious Civilian Service Medal, DOD Medal for Distinguished Public Service, and the Director of Central Intelligence's Sherman Kent Award. Mr. Clift is the author of numerous works, including *Our World in Antarctica*, *With Presidents to the Summit*, and the novel *A Death in Geneva*. He holds a B.A. from Stanford University and an M.S. in political science from the London School of Economics and Political Science.*

Oettinger: It is a great pleasure to introduce the speaker for the day. You have all seen his biography and I won't go into those details. He is a remarkable sort of guy. In his memoirs,¹ former CIA Director Bob Gates described our speaker as the "most competent senior staff officer I ever knew." Since I have had the enormous pleasure of experiencing association with Denis, I can confirm this at first hand. So this is an extraordinary, delightful opportunity for us to share some of Denis' experiences.

If you look at his biography, it covers an enormous span of time and agencies and experiences and so on. I said to him, "It would be wonderful if you would take us through that career and the things you've

learned and the people you've talked to and the things you've gleaned from it." So, if this seems somewhat narcissistic I want you to understand that it's responsive to my request, not some fit of excessive narcissism on his part. With that, I turn it over to our guest, who would prefer not to be interrupted. He's got a coherent presentation. He'll accept questions on points of clarification, if you can't hold yourselves in, but he'd rather not be interrupted for a while.

Clift: Thank you. Really, I lose my train of thought easily, and so an interruption might throw me off irreparably.

Last evening, I had the pleasure of being with some marvelous creatures of the Hasty Pudding. I went to see "Me and My Galaxy," and to spend a night with people like Sally Vader and her spitting problem, Marian Formoney, in her beautiful green costume, and the inimitable Natalie Attired and her ways, not to mention the spaceship

¹ Robert Michael Gates, *From the Shadows: the Ultimate Insider's Story of Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.

commander Captain Anton Neal, was an experience that is humbling. I arrive humbled, and, I would also say, greatly entertained. It's the first time I've seen the Hasty Pudding and it's a marvelous part of this institution that is Harvard.

I like to think that this will be a student-friendly session in that, as your seminar chair has said, I have prepared a paper, and so I'll do the reading. I'd be happy to have interruptions if any of you think it's appropriate, but otherwise, I'll just cut through this and then I think we'll have plenty of time for discussion afterwards.

I would say, as Maxim Gorki wrote in his short story "Creatures That Once Were Men": "All things are relative in this world, and a man cannot sink into a condition so bad that it could not be worse." For those entrusted with safeguarding American lives and the nation's well-being, the world continues to spin into a condition that is more and more challenging, if not worse—exquisitely challenging.

In this first of the post-Cold War decades, the watchstanders in the nation's command and intelligence centers are not sitting and waiting for the strategic hotline to ring anymore; they're answering the 911 call. It is the role of the United States, President Clinton told Marines at Camp LeJeune two months ago, to be "the world's indispensable nation that must stand up to those who threaten international peace, whether they are Iraq's Saddam Hussein or China's Communist regime. Because of your experience," he said, "people everywhere look to America for help and inspiration." "So it is proper"—to continue quoting—"that we assure our friends once again that, in the discharge of this responsibility, we Americans know and observe the difference between world leadership and imperialism; between firmness and truculence; between a thoughtfully calculated goal and spasmodic reaction to the stimulus of emergencies."

I should note that in continuing my quotation with the "so it is proper," I jumped back from Clinton to Eisenhower, a sentence from his first inaugural address in January 1953—and I have three reasons for doing so. First, your seminar chairman has invited me to discuss my experiences, and

those experiences run thus far in my career from Eisenhower through Clinton. Secondly, there's a soothing sense of flow between the two quotations that serves to underscore Gorki's relativity. Thirdly, our increasing ability to manipulate ever-greater amounts of information—indeed, going beyond the joining of two separate quotations—and to fire the results of our work around the world, must bring with it a recognized respect for the burden of our limitations and the burden of our accountability.

Just over a month ago, *US News & World Report* took a look at some of the Army's growing pains on the evolving high-tech battlefield as it plays its part in the indispensable nation's armed forces. The article described the big computer monitors in the field command center of an unfolding wargame at Fort Hood. Closer to the front line of the mock battle, the author reported: "Inside a Bradley fighting vehicle, the keyboard for a \$100,000 'militarized' PC is jammed behind the seat in the cramped turret. The crew is supposed to have used the PC to update the battle-tracking network, but their hands are full just trying to survive, so they radio in their reports. And, one might ask, are the radio reports being captured on the computer monitors?"

And so, to indulge in another quotation, I shall follow the practice of Aldous Huxley's Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning in *Brave New World*—the D.H.C., as he was known: "'I shall begin at the beginning,' said the D.H.C., and the zealous students recorded his intention in their notebooks: 'Begin at the beginning.'"

The early 1950s marked my first experience in moving information, print and graphic, in a timely, accountable manner most useful to the consumer. Back then, ocean liners were still holding their own with transatlantic aircraft, and the hulking first-generation vacuum-tube computers were rare beasts dwelling, in the main, in defense and research laboratories. More importantly, it was an era in which the Brooklyn Dodgers, the New York Giants, and the New York Yankees all dwelled in New York City.

A year and a half after President Eisenhower delivered his inaugural address, I

began my first stint as a copy boy with the *New York Daily News*. The best part of the job was going to the ballparks—Yankee Stadium, the Polo Grounds, Ebbetts Field—with the news photographers assigned to the games. The photographers still used the big Speed-Graphic glass-plate cameras, complete with 24-inch long, 6-inch diameter, telephoto lenses. These photographers were of the old school—heavy drinkers, dyspeptic, hilarious storytellers when they weren't cursing their lot. Their gear was heavy, and the copy boy, first and foremost, was a useful beast of burden.

The photographer's boxes, hanging out from the faces of the ballparks up behind home plate, were the best free-beer seats in the house. The photographers would pivot their big cameras on stanchions, following the action and taking their shots. There would be a loud click of the thumb trigger when they did so. My job was to put down my beer and follow the swing of the camera, listen for the click, and write down the action—let's say a double play at second, the name of the runner out at second, the name of the second-base umpire, the name of the batter, the inning (top or bottom), the game, and the number of the glass plate exposed—and then attach that to the glass plate when the photographer gave it to me.

To meet deadlines, usually around the bottom of the fifth or the top of the sixth, I would stuff all of the exposed film plates and my rough caption materials into an envelope and catch a subway back to the *Daily News* building, the one with the big revolving globe in the lobby that Superman made famous. I would drop off the plates in the photo lab and deliver the captions to the news-floor captions department, where grizzled veterans would turn my rough data into the slick captions of the nation's premier tabloid newspaper. Later that evening, I would see the results of my work when the first edition of the next day's paper hit the newsstands. This has to be one of the most efficient collection, analysis, and dissemination processes I've ever had a hand in during my life.

In the early spring of 1995, my secretary at the Joint Military Intelligence College buzzed me on the intercom to advise

me that there was a Gary Powers on the telephone. In fact, it was the son of the late U-2 pilot, who was calling to invite me to be the speaker at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum on the occasion of the formal inclusion of artifacts from his father's career into the museum's permanent collection.

I had been a naval officer serving at the Fleet Intelligence Center, Pacific, when Francis Gary Powers' U-2 was shot down over Sverdlovsk on May 1, 1960. The news of his capture was a shock. The revelation of the U-2 program was fascinating, and there was other news that was being whispered in our classified circles. With President Eisenhower providing quiet, determined leadership, the nation was racing to develop a far better source of information on the USSR's strategic ICBM (intercontinental ballistic missile) and bomber forces. The allegation of a "missile gap" that would have the Soviets holding a 3-to-1 superiority in strategic nuclear forces by the early 1960s was figuring prominently in the presidential campaign. To quote Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., "By 1960, it was a staple of Democratic oratory." With debate raging, the nation needed new ways, better information, harder analysis, and better answers on the exact nature and capability of the USSR's forces for the shaping of our own strategic deterrent.

The downing of Powers' U-2 came just 110 days before the first successful recovery of a CORONA overhead satellite payload—the dawning of the space reconnaissance age. While I was not part of the CORONA program, I was privy to the gossip about the exotic missions being flown by Air Force twin-boom C-119 aircraft, planes flying out of Hawaii, and then trailing trapezes designed to snag payload parachutes descending over the Pacific—payloads that I would learn were the first of the recovered CORONA capsules. Here, I was witness to the birth of a film delivery system even more exotic than that which had involved me at the *New York Daily News*. Here I was witness to one small facet of the immense pioneering enterprise and commitment that must accompany the accountability of power. "Aerial photos," the legendary photointerpreter Arthur Lun-

dahl once said, “give crisp, hard information, like the dawn after a long darkness.”

In September 1960, freshly promoted from ensign to lieutenant junior grade, I headed south from Hawaii to Christchurch, New Zealand, en route to the first of two Antarctic expeditions—Operation Deep Freeze and Deep Freeze 61. In these operations, the thrill of a lifetime, there were important lessons on the usability of information and the accountability of man.

September—spring down there—meant the launch of the first flights from New Zealand to the ice runway at McMurdo Sound more than 2,000 miles to the south across the unforgiving Southern Ocean, the pack ice and the mountains, snow, and ice of the Antarctic land mass. The aircraft supporting the expedition were lineal descendants of Waldo Pepper’s Flying Circus—the Marine Corps version of the DC-3; R4Ds with names like Semper Shaftus, fitted with skis and JATO (jet-assisted takeoff) bottles; Navy P2V Neptunes, the photo-mappers; Air Force double-decker Globemasters hauling bulk cargo, people, helicopters, and fixed-wing Otters; the Super Constellations; the Willie Victors; and the new C-130 Hercules, each fitted with 7,500 pounds of snow skis.

Weather forecasts literally were vital to mission accomplishment. The task force commander had to rely on three or four hopelessly separated ground stations and one lonely picket ship in trying to outguess potentially deadly headwinds, storms, and whiteouts. This would change within days of my arrival. I can picture clearly the first morning that the staff meteorologist, a Navy four-striper, strode into the morning operations and planning meeting, a smile from ear to ear, with the first take from the first weather bird, the first TIROS television and infrared observation satellite, in hand. There was a combination of awe and elation in the room. For the first time, the commander had a picture of the current and incoming weather over the entire route, from takeoff to landing—the picture, I should note, to be checked against the data still flowing from ship and ground stations.

I would learn quickly in Antarctica that photography and imagery could meet only a limited part of the commander’s need for

usable information. There were no photo satellites to assist in the exploration and mapping of the continent. The mapping aircraft had limited range and were few in number. There were parts of the continent you still had to explore if you wished to learn with certainty what was there. In 1961, I sailed on the Bellingshausen Sea Expedition aboard the icebreaker *USS Glacier*, accompanied by the icebreaker *USS Staten Island*. This was a four-month odyssey, during which our surveying parties would develop data that would lead to a re-drawing of the world’s maps of that part of the continent. In 1962, when I was re-viewing the Rand-McNally page proofs of my book on Antarctica (here comes the narcissism), I would have the pleasure of instructing that august publisher’s cartographers to change Thurston Peninsula to Thurston Island.

The value of having the right people on scene, on site, on the ground in Antarctica was not limited to the requirements of exploration and research. Among my several responsibilities 37 years ago in 1960, I was to become a front-line participant in the Cold War era’s first successful treaty-based international on-site inspections. In 1958, during the International Geophysical Year, President Eisenhower had proposed to the 11 nations engaged with the United States in scientific research on the Antarctic continent that they enter into a treaty preserving the continent for such research and other peaceful purposes. The treaty was quickly negotiated and entered into force. Under Article VII, I quote: “Treaty state observers have free access, including aerial observation, to any area, and may inspect all stations, installations, and equipment. Advance notice of all activities and the introduction of military personnel must be given.”

Oettinger: May I just break in for a moment? That’s a very important incident, which also deals with aspects of the space program and the latitude that both the United States and the USSR had in over-flying each other’s territories. There’s an

account of that in Matt von Bencke's book *The Politics of Space*.²

Clift: Under the treaty, the United States invited and welcomed the other treaty signatories, including the Soviet Union, to visit our stations and inspect our research at first hand. As a liaison officer, I was responsible for looking after the foreign diplomatic, military, and academic visitors inspecting our far-flung Antarctic research operations. In 1961, I would accompany Norwegian and British delegations to the South Pole to lay a plaque marking the 50th anniversary of the first attainment of the Pole, and I would walk around the world in the process. We took pride in our research. We attached importance to the confidence-building nature of the treaty's provisions. Other nations reciprocated. It was a splendid example of international cooperation.

Information, derived "real-time" from on-site inspections, has become an increasingly important source of usable information—information for which there can be accountability in world politics. In the strategic arms negotiations and monitoring, we have moved beyond the near-total reliance we placed on satellites, or National Technical Means, from the 1960s through the mid-1980s. The Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, ratified in May 1988, was the pathfinder, with Article XI and its 18-page protocol flowing from that article providing for on-site inspections.

Oettinger: Let me make another footnote here. "National Technical Means" is an earlier way of referring to satellites and other things. There was a period, up to the Carter Administration, where one didn't admit the existence of satellites, even though everybody knew about them, and euphemisms used in the treaties were things like National Technical Means. So, if you want to go back to the seminar record and other literature, you need to make that connection.

Clift: The acceptability and expectation of on-site inspections have moved beyond U.S.-Soviet, NATO-Warsaw Pact, and U.S.-Russia arms agreements to enter the mainstream of international politics. To cite just one prominent example, I have the greatest respect for the ongoing work of Chairman Rolf Ekeus and the U.N. Special Commission pursuing their on-site work in Iraq under U.N. Resolutions 606 and 687 until there is full and final disclosure that all capabilities for weapons of mass destruction have been eliminated and that disclosure has been verified.

Before leaving Antarctica, I would also learn there that accurate, usable information can be subject to major distortion and misinterpretation as it moves up and down the line of command. I had listened to President John F. Kennedy's inaugural address via the BBC at a friend's home in Wellington, New Zealand, while the *Glacier* was in dry dock fitting new propellers for our expedition. Once we were at sea, underway, I was responsible for the international visitors aboard. By the way, I'll digress and say that this responsibility really had a core appreciation, and that was that while drinking was not the practice aboard our ships in Antarctica, you asked your visitor whether he wanted gin or scotch, and if you provided him with his preferred selection, everything was smooth as silk thereafter. These were lovely imperial quarts. Once the person had that tucked under his arm, he was just fine.

I was also the expedition's sole filing correspondent, and my news dispatches were beamed from the icebreakers to New Zealand and to the United States and began appearing in newspapers around the world. There were some exciting stories. At one point, our ships were locked in by pack ice for several days. Winter was not far away; would the expedition have to winter over? The stories were being carried by the Associated Press and running in the *New York Times*.

I would learn half a year later that the new President had taken a casual interest in the drama and had asked his naval aide to keep him abreast of developments. For those of you who have served in the Penta-

² Matthew J. von Bencke, *The Politics of Space: A History of U.S.-Soviet/Russian Competition and Cooperation in Space*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997.

gon, or have dreamed of such a life, you can imagine how garbled and twisted this expression of interest would become as it moved down the line. Down at the bottom of the world, the *Glacier's* communicator handed the expedition's commodore a message with a clipped order. He was told to extricate his ship from the ice immediately—immediately!—to avoid being trapped for the winter. We had been biding our time, as polar seamen must, awaiting a shift in the winds that would open leads of water in the pack ice permitting us to steam north. But an order was an order. Officers and men went over the side onto the ice with dynamite to blast a path to the open water. The Keystone Cops couldn't have done it better. We blasted for more than a day with little effect. The masses of ice absorbed the explosive force in their elasticity. We paused to sleep. The winds shifted. The leads opened, and we were steaming free.

My tales of derring-do landed me a position first as assistant editor, then editor, of the *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*. The lesson I learned quickly, and practiced, was that if the information I published was to be useful to my professional readership, the essays had to be authoritative—the views of members of the sea services, of prime participants, of those with expert knowledge. The *Proceedings'* strength lay in the contributions of those with the best minds in the profession, not in the writings of the journal's staff. If we are to be accountable, in these exquisitely challenging times, we must seek out the views of experts—even if those views are not in vogue, even if they are not readily available for the mouse to command on our computer screen. In keeping with this preaching, I took myself off in 1966 to the marvelous bedlam of the London School of Economics to write and to receive my graduate degree.

From October 1967 through early 1981, I served continuously in the Executive Office of the President in the White House—the administrations of Presidents Johnson, Nixon, Ford, and Carter. The White House is a dispenser of lightning, with decisions that shape and shake the world coming down from the Oval Office

and other lower power points within the institutional perimeter. The White House is a lightning rod, a place of extreme pressure, with the agencies of government, the Congress, the nation, and the world on the one hand vying for influence and favorable consideration and, on the other, seeking to bring the structure down. It is a place where information is guarded on a strict need-to-know basis as a priceless, sought-after commodity. It is a place where accountability is at a premium as you collect, analyze, and act on information that literally within minutes can become national or international policy.

My years on the staff of the National Security Council, 1971–1977, first as a member of the European staff, then as head of the Soviet and European staffs, were years of unmatched power for the NSC. The desktop computers and local area networks that one would learn so much about in the mid-1980s had not yet arrived. When Henry Kissinger or Brent Scowcroft had a communication for us, we were either summoned from the Old Executive Office Building to the West Wing to receive it in person, or it was sealed in an envelope, placed in a pneumatic tube in the White House Situation Room, and sucked across to the NSC secretariat in the Old EOB to be hand-delivered to us by a member of the secretariat. Being a curator at heart, I've kept one of those envelopes: red tag in the upper right-hand corner, THE WHITE HOUSE, SECRET & Exclusively Eyes Only, Henry Kissinger (crossed out), Denis Clift, Priority Action, double underlined, rolled, and put in the tube. I'll pass it around.

Oettinger: Please return it! Otherwise, if you feel moved to steal it, turn it back quietly at midnight on my doorstep.

Clift: It's heady stuff, and the White House is heady stuff.

One afternoon, in a meeting of the NSC senior staff in the Situation Room, Hal Saunders, who was heading Middle East affairs, said to Brent Scowcroft, who was in the chair, "I understand the need for close hold, but yesterday I received one of those sealed, red-tagged envelopes from

Henry marked for my eyes only, and I opened it and it was empty. Can you give me a least a hint of what he had on his mind?"

"No one can experience with the President the glory and the agony of his office," Lyndon Johnson wrote. "The President represents all the people and must face up to all the problems." In serving on the staffs of Presidents dealing with all the problems, I became a student of, and a participant in, the extraordinary command, control, and communications systems supporting the President. I became an admirer of the White House Communications Agency, WHCA, and its seeming ability to put its hands on anyone, anytime, anywhere.

When I traveled with Nixon and Brezhnev to the Black Sea in 1974, I was quartered in a worker's paradise hotel, the Paris Sanitarium. To reach the beach, one descended by elevator 240 feet through a shaft cut in the granite cliff, then walked another 100 feet to the seaside face of the shaft's horizontal arm. Here, on a stand at the edge of the beach's worn granite rocks, stood a telephone with the symbol of the White House Communications Agency and the words "Oreanda White House" on its dial. I complained to General Larry Adams, the WHCA commander, later in the day that he had forgotten the phone on the inflatable seahorse for us swimmers offshore.

In the early to mid-1970s, the Soviets took the occasion of the several U.S.-Soviet summits on détente to study at first hand the command and control support the United States was providing our Presidents. As in several other fields of the superpower competition, they had a reputation for replicating, to the degree possible, the U.S. approach to the task at hand.

In November 1974, the Soviets had brought the best train in the entire USSR to the Far East for the 90-minute run from the fighter air base where Air Force One had just landed to the conference site of the Ford-Brezhnev Vladivostok summit. The President and General Secretary rode in a dining car rich in paneling, oriental carpets, cut glass, and crystal. I was one or two cars back, in a staff car of continental layout—windowed compartments with sliding

doors opening onto a corridor running the length of the carriage. My eye caught several cables on the edge of the corridor floor. I followed them the length of the carriage, past the ajar door of the toilet compartment, where they plunged down through the open flap at the base of the toilet bowl before twisting and climbing like vines to the roof of the carriage. Once again, the White House Communications Agency had preceded our summit party, giving the President secure communications leaping from the roof of the train to a global link of communications relays. In the years that followed, as the United States monitored the evolution of the USSR's rail-mobile command and control systems, I could never tell from National Technical Means whether their new cables went from the train's comm centers down through their toilet bowls up and out to the roof antennas!

WHCA's long reach rolled me out of bed between 2:00 and 3:00 a.m. in June 1974. I was at my residence in Annapolis, Maryland. President Nixon was in Salzburg, Austria, en route to the Middle East, and at the moment of the call was behind closed doors in conversation with Chancellor Bruno Kreisky. The Assistant White House Press Secretary came on the line, a sharp young character by the name of Diane Sawyer, to advise that she needed a text that the press secretary could draw on an hour later in reporting to the awaiting traveling press corps on the President's conversation. It had been so easy to pick up that phone in that staff room in Salzburg and say, "I need to speak to Denis Clift, NSC." It had been a bit harder to peel my eyes open and pound out some cogent highlights of the President's emerging conversation.

As to the global communications of the 1970s, I might as well be here before you marveling at the wonders of the steam engine. Now, day after day, during the morning and evening commutes, the phones are to the ears. I don't know whether they're talking to Diane Sawyer or Brezhnev's ghost, but they have communications, and they are communicating. We all have communications—global communications—with a difference. That differ-

ence is that our ability to move information is outracing accountability—the accountability so central to national security affairs. This poses a nice challenge to us that has to be met for those in positions of trust, for those responsible for lives, and for security beyond the moment and the immediate walls. It is a challenge that must be accepted as part of the core mission.

Three more points on the White House years. Following the election of 1976, President-elect Carter took the decision to send his Vice President-elect, Fritz [Walter] Mondale, on a mission to NATO Headquarters, major European capitals, and Japan, in the first week of the new administration for face-to-face “getting-to-know-you” talks at the highest level. As a member of President Ford’s NSC staff, with a reputation as a scarred veteran of bilateral and multilateral summit travels, I was asked by the Vice President-elect to help organize and carry out his mission.

We launched three days into the new administration. Early in our whirlwind tour, a member of the crew aboard Air Force Two, who had come to know me from earlier flights, took me aside. “Sir,” he said, “these guys are sending out every message FLASH—logistics stuff, who’s to be in what car, you name it.” Accountability! I had been unaware, certainly the Vice President was unaware, that well-intentioned members of his new staff, fresh from the battles of the political campaign, were slugging the most routine of communications FLASH. “Why not?” they thought. “This is the Vice President of the United States.”

Why not? Beyond our winging airborne fuselage, we were causing some rather remarkable reverberations within the national command structure. When a Vice President sends a message FLASH, the entire national command structure comes up on line. These were just people saying, “Let’s put so and so in this car; let’s have lunch here and not there.” It was agreed by all that we would switch to ROUTINE, with an occasional leavening of PRIORITY, for such traffic.

We visited many capitals and traveled many miles in a very few days. I remember Strobe Talbott, then traveling with us as a

correspondent for *Time*, showing me his calculations on the thousands of miles during the final leg of the mission from Tokyo to Washington. The pressures of the schedule had been such that we had been unable to include Portugal, with its new democratically elected government, on the itinerary. This was a source of concern, and to avoid even the hint of a slight, Vice President Mondale said he would call Prime Minister Soares from London and that we should have our traveling press party present to report on the conversation.

The call was placed from the Vice President’s hotel suite. The Prime Minister was to be in our ambassador’s office in Lisbon for the occasion. Secretary-to-secretary connection had been made, and the phone at the Vice President’s end lay off the cradle at the ready on a coffee table. When word was received that our press was heading into the elevators, coming up to the suite, the Vice President’s secretary again picked up the phone ... and there was no one at the other end of the line. Shouting didn’t fix the problem. I said, “Hold the press.” I was told, “Too late.” Now, for the Vice President to speak to Soares with the press present would be a good event. For the Vice President to pick up the phone and have no reply ... I’ll leave it to you. It’s a multiple-choice answer.

I ran down the hotel corridor to the Secret Service command post and had the agents use their circuit via Washington to Lisbon, instantaneously, to bring up Embassy Lisbon on another line. The Prime Minister and Ambassador Carlucci had been out on a balcony. Our press would have no more than a minute of pleasant light-hearted banter with the Vice President as the call went through: a splendid event, and it was so reported. If information is to be usable, if communications are to flow; there is nothing like immediate backups and work-arounds; multiple channels. This is a lesson we worked repeatedly, very hard, to forget.

Then again, “no channel of communications” may be the preferred answer. From September 7 through September 17, 1978, I would be sequestered in the Catocin Mountains as a staff member at the Camp David Summit with President Carter,

Prime Minister Begin, and President Sadat. The place of the Camp David summit in history, its impact on the Middle East peace process, on U.S. security, and on international stability, continue to be assessed. Clearly the summit will stand as an enduring page in diplomatic achievement. It was an event made remarkable by the historical appreciation and the contributions to history that radiated from the Egyptian and Israeli leaders. It was an event that succeeded because of President Carter's clear understanding of the likely impact of communications from the summit, and his imposition at the outset, from the outset, of a news blackout.

A word or two about the Egyptians and the Israelis. Anwar Sadat had pointed the way with his visit to Jerusalem in November 1977. I had gained an even earlier appreciation of his statesmanship during his meeting with President Ford in Salzburg two years earlier. Our host for the state dinner on that occasion, again, had been Chancellor Bruno Kreisky. When Sadat rose, he delivered his lengthy extemporaneous response to the Chancellor's toast in German, a tongue he had learned during the era of his opposition to British rule in his country.

The Israeli team at Camp David, led by Menachem Begin, the guerrilla fighter for independence, included Minister of Defense Ezer Weizmann, today the President of Israel. In the shade of the Maryland mountainside, Weizmann, the former fighter pilot and commander of the Israeli Air Force, would tell us of days earlier still, in World War II, when he was delivering fuel to British airfields in Egypt and ferrying new vehicles for the British army in the desert. "The desert has its own rules of life and war; in those wide spaces," he would write, "battle is waged as near as possible to the roads, to the main routes. There is a striking paradox: the desert covers an enormous area, but control of its central routes is enough to dominate it all."

The Israeli Foreign Minister, Moshe Dayan, was a charismatic, legendary warrior who exuded the spirit of his nation. Between the long, intense negotiating sessions, he would speak of his love of archeology, his passion for new uncoverings of

antiquities in his Land of the Book. He would give me a copy of his work *Living with the Bible*, in which he had written, "The people closest to me were the founders of our nation, the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They wandered the length and breadth of the land with a staff in their hand, a knotted stick fashioned from the branch of an oak, the strongest and stoutest of trees."

Following the summit, Begin would laughingly describe Camp David as "a concentration camp deluxe." On the final early evening of the summit, I was with a colleague in Laurel Lodge. There was the rumbling of thunder building to a Wagnerian finale. Prime Minister Begin and an aide entered the lodge and joined us. Begin shook our hands warmly; he was still absorbing the splendid meaning of his actions that day. "For years," he said, "all the time I was in the Opposition, they said, 'Don't elect him; he will bring war.' Last year I was contemplating retirement, and now I am bringing peace."

These were genuine leaders, leaders who knew their nations, leaders able to frame and take the most important of decisions. The challenge the U.S. President faced was how to enable them and assist them in the taking of such decisions. President Carter knew in planning the summit that the slim chance of negotiating a peace agreement between Israel and Egypt would be eliminated if he, Begin, and Sadat were available to the press, or if members of their teams were available during the difficult negotiations. No matter what might be said, it would be subject to reporting, to different interpretations, to different reactions in each capital and elsewhere around the world. He knew that resultant pressures would build on the summit participants, requiring them to stand firm, blocking flexibility and the chance of compromise and progress. I witnessed the use of zero external communications as a remarkable tool in the hands of the Commander in Chief.

In testimony as Director of USIA (U.S. Information Agency) in 1962, Edward R. Murrow addressed another facet of government-media relations. He reflected on the links between foreign governments, media, and public opinion, and on the role

of official U.S. information directed at influencing minds abroad. "Governments," he said, "are susceptible to what appears in print, what is on the radio, and what is on television [and today, I am sure, he would add the World Wide Web]. All these exercises," he said, "have some degree of influence. The degree varies from country to country. Certain governments are responsive to the general climate of opinion and the will of the electorate, and to the extent that we can persuade these media to tell our story, it is part of our function to provide the mass media the background and the information upon which our policy is based in order that they may give a more sympathetic treatment."

The pictures that CNN's camera caught of cruise missiles winging their way past the Al Rashid Hotel in Baghdad en route to target remain etched in my mind. This truly was picture collection and dissemination without the benefit of any copy boy whatsoever. What were the implications of these images for execution of U.S. policy? As a nation, we had learned from certain of our experiences in Vietnam. In Desert Storm, we knew that the pursuit of our military and policy objectives would require our military and civilian leaders to speak with authority and accountability, live to the media, live on television, on a regular basis, to provide the background and the information on which our policy and actions were based, if we were not to surrender the molding of international public opinion to the media.

For the preceding decade, returning to the thread of my everyman's travels, I had had a considerable role to play in the molding of national and international public opinion in the terminal phase of the Cold War. As part of his participation in the NATO Defense Ministers' meeting in the spring of 1981, Secretary of Defense Weinberger had presented highly classified briefings on the breadth and rapidity of the Soviet Union's military build-up and capabilities. The late German Defense Minister Manfred Woerner had asked him to help make as much of this information as possible available to the public. Freshly arrived at the Pentagon from my White House years, I would become the founding editor-in-chief of *Soviet Military Power*. The first

of 10 editions of the Department of Defense's annual report on Soviet military capabilities would be published in September 1981; the final edition in 1991.

In 1990, when Secretary Cheney and Defense Minister Yazov dropped in on a committee of the Supreme Soviet in session, one of the Soviet members waved the most recent edition of our report in Yazov's face, yelling "Why is it that we have to depend on the Americans for information on our forces?" In 1991, when the Soviet Chief of the General Staff, General Moiseyev, was in the United States as the guest of General Powell, I was introduced to him, and their defense attaché told him of my *Soviet Military Power* role. He smiled throwing his arms open wide, "Ah," he said, "the man from whom I have learned each year how powerful I really am!"

In producing *Soviet Military Power*, in providing the public with levels of detail about these forces never before presented in official open publications, the Department of Defense drew on the most authoritative information from classified sources, and then formally reviewed and declassified the entire publication for release. *Izvestia* labeled the first edition "99 Pages of Lies." However, the United States accepted full accountability for the information we were presenting. The report's stature as an authoritative document would grow with each new edition.

Soviet Military Power was so new and different a creature that Secretary Weinberger sent me to Brussels to brief the international press corps at NATO headquarters at the same time that he was having his formal press conference in Washington. One contentious area in the questions I received related to the first edition's use of paintings to depict various Soviet weapons systems, either fielded or in development; the Typhoon-class ballistic missile system, for example. Good unclassified photography was hard to come by in 1981. Some excellent classified photography could not yet be declassified. Thus, we decided to use combat art, if you will—illustrations derived from a number of sources.

The first good photo of the Typhoon would appear in the 1985 edition. I remember how pleased I was the following year,

when I headed off to Brussels for the 1986 edition's press conference, that we were now able to move from artwork to the first releasable photos of the SS-20 intermediate-range ballistic missile system. The press conference began, and one of the first questions was "Why do you have to have such poor photography of the SS-20 missile? Why can't you give us better photographs?" The pictures *were* grainy. They were stills from a TV broadcast of a night-training film. I looked at the guy and said, "You know, if I drove an SS-20 right into this conference room, you would tell me that the oil was dirty."

Earlier this year, in a C-Span interview with George Plimpton, the novelist John LeCarre was asked whether he thought intelligence still has a useful role to play now that the Cold War is over. While generally decrying subversion and the darker side of covert operations, LeCarre said, "Intelligence is the left hand of curiosity. Gathering, analyzing and using information is a natural part of what we do if we are doing it well."

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the National Security Act of 1947, a truly remarkable act that created the National Security Council and the Central Intelligence Agency under Title I, on the Coordination of National Security, and then went on to provide for the Secretary of Defense and the national military establishment under Title II.

The U.S. intelligence community has emerged with evolutionary adjustments from an intense 1995–1996 examination by presidential commission and the oversight committees of the Congress. The community and the government are more generally exploring new and better ways for the left hand to meet the needs of a curious nation focused both on world leadership and survival. Of tremendous importance, intelligence is emerging from behind its fabled green door—the door that for decades had the sign that said, "We can't tell you. You are not cleared." We see this emergence, for example, in CIA's intelligence project with Harvard. We see it in the publications of the Director of Central Intelligence's Center for the Study of Intelligence. We see it in the occasional papers of the Joint Mili-

tary Intelligence College, and in the essays published in the College Foundation's *Defense Intelligence Journal*. More importantly, we see it in the emerging partnership among intelligence, policy, and operations.

When the late Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Mike Boorda, met with my graduate students in 1995, he talked about the change in attitude, the new approach. He said that intelligence now had a seat with him at his table from start to finish on all major issues—a far cry from the days when the intelligence officer entered such a meeting, gave his briefing, and then was excused. Intelligence has come to recognize that in military affairs, for example, it is not there to support the commander. It is there as one of the commander's participants. It has a stake in the outcome, from start to finish; a full stake in the fight.

Operations—the commander—has come to recognize that the gifted, unique contributions of the left hand are essential to the effective functioning of the right. There is more than symbology in bricks and mortar and the disappearance thereof. A few years back, at the turn of the decade, the left hand and the right hand opened the Pentagon wall between the National Military Command Center and the National Military Intelligence Center—miracle of miracles.

The evolution continues. It has not always been smooth. It's not in the nature of the menagerie. I remember the anger of a former DIA director in the late 1980s, prior to the start of tanker escort operations in the Persian Gulf, after he had been counseled by a higher-up (and that's fairly high up) to be a team player and not push ahead with an intelligence estimate forecasting an increased threat to shipping in the Gulf. He rejected the counsel.

Going beyond the increasing partnership in our own nation, we have come to recognize that intelligence, properly shared to the fullest extent possible (protecting sources and methods) with other nations, can make a major contribution to U.S. national security and foreign policy. We saw this in the coalition operations of Desert Storm. We read public recognition of this from none other than the former Defense Minister of France, Pierre Joxe, who said

in a speech in May 1991 that French forces had been overwhelmingly dependent on military intelligence provided by the United States. "Without allied intelligence in the war," he said, "we would have been almost blind." Shared intelligence was important to the successes in the field. Shared intelligence was important up and down the national command structures of each of the coalition partners. What was being said by the United States publicly could be confirmed, verified, through other channels in each capital. The information they were receiving was good. It was usable. It was verifiable.

With the above said, I like to think we have followed the everyman thread to the threshold of your field of seminar deliberations. On December 4, 1996, *Washington Post* staff writer Joel Achenbach published a piece titled "Reality Check," which began, "The Information Age has one nagging problem. Much of the information is not true ... There has always been bad information in our society," he continued, "but it moves faster now, via new technologies and a new generation of information manipulators."

College presidents—small colleges, not Harvard perhaps—attend conferences of bodies such as the Commission on Higher Education. I did so in mid-December and heard one of the speakers, a college librarian, play on Achenbach's theme when she referred to the World Wide Web as an "information dumpster."

At the Joint Military Intelligence College, I am working to provide our graduate and undergraduate students with improved computer, secure video, and systems connectivity that will permit them to increase gaming and exercises with the war colleges and the National Defense University, to open a new window of professional dialogue with staffs at commands around the world, and to increase sources available to them for their research. At the same time, I am increasing the priority we give to on-site research: to work overseas with principal players in the international security scene; to walk the land they are writing about; to meet eye-to-eye; to draw from living, interacting human beings' insights that might not splash on a screen. These are travels to

Japan; to Eastern Slavonia; and to South Africa, to sit down with former ANC (African National Congress) guerrillas, now executive assistants to the minister of defense, in researching the integration of former rival forces in the armed forces of South Africa.

Going beyond the sources readily available—electronic, hard copy, or live human beings—developing multiple sources of information (some we might at first find hard to imagine) is not a new business. It is, however, a business that is more than ever central to the effective interaction between intelligence as the left hand of curiosity and the right hand as the exercise and accountability of power. In his foreword to Gorki's *Short Stories*, Aldous Huxley said of Gorki's characters: "Their failings permit us to retain our self-esteem. We are all shorn lambs and, unless the wind were tempered for us, should feel extremely chilly for the blast." We are at a point in the availability of information where first, the condition is not so bad that it could not be worse, and second, the standard of accountability is raised higher and higher. It is not a matter of other's failings permitting us to retain our self-esteem; rather, it is a sobering reminder of our own vulnerability to failure and the larger cost that such failure may involve.

"People everywhere look to America for help and inspiration," the President told the Marines. This is true. I have seen it to be the case in humanitarian work I have been privileged to perform over the past five years: work as a U.S. commissioner on a U.S.-Russian Joint Commission on Prisoners of War and Missing in Action created by the U.S. and Russian presidents to help account for those still unaccounted for from World War II, the Cold War, Korea, Vietnam, and Afghanistan. I have traveled the length and breadth of Russia, traveled 13 of the 15 former Soviet Republics, and without fail, during the course of my meetings with presidents, generals, men, and women in each land, they grow misty eyed, they weep, and they bless America for the example we are setting in our efforts to account for, and to repatriate, and to honor the missing and the dead. We are using and cross-checking multiple sources

in this work: archival research here and abroad, interviews here and abroad, and appeals on mass media for those with any information to come forward and assist.

Sometimes we receive information that is invaluable, that moves us a step ahead in our mission. Sometimes we deal with information that is not so useful. In September 1992, my fellow commissioners and I were visiting the regional Interior Ministry headquarters in Khabarovsk. Our meeting with veterans was to be on the ninth floor. The elevator stopped somewhere between the seventh and eighth floors. The lights went out. I thought "Hmm ... maybe this is as far as it goes for Denis Clift." Our Russian escort started yelling from inside the elevator. Then, the sound of footsteps, voices, and a woman calling out, "How many of you are in there?" There was an in-the-dark head count. "Eight." "That's too many," the voice called back. "We know," we yelled in English and Russian, "Get us out of here!"

I have a piece of Francis Gary Powers' U-2 in my office at the Joint Military Intelligence College, given to me by the Russian side of the Commission, General Volkogonov, the former Russian co-chair, and his deputy, General Volkov, both now dead. This small framed piece of aircraft skin serves to remind me of how high the left hand has soared, and at what peril, to meet the information needs essential to a full exercise and accountability of power.

Thanks very much.

Oettinger: Marvelous! Thank you very much for this. We have a fair amount of time for questions and comments. Let me open up with a small footnote, because I want to make the record complete. You mentioned WHCA, the White House Communications Agency, in magnificent wit with telephones on the beach but not on the seahorse, and so on. There was a book that I want to call to your attention, which some of you may want to follow up on, by a fellow named Gulley, called *Breaking Cover*.³ This is a Navy petty officer who worked for WHCA and who gives a mar-

³ Bill Gulley and Mary E. Reese, *Breaking Cover*. New York: Warner Books, 1981.

velous first-hand account of how the President of the United States, the leader of the free world, has to beg, borrow and, yes, steal in order to run his establishment. Then a parsimonious Congress closes these avenues, and the President has to find some other way, such as renting out bedrooms like in a motel and so on. So, maybe a term paper looking at the ins and outs of operating the Presidential establishment would be a possibility. It's not as simple as it seems, like there's all this marvelous stuff there. In an accountable democracy, with low budget, the problem of providing such facilities is nontrivial.

Clift: May I comment on that? Because there's another side to that, and that is: Presidents hate to have it suggested that they have large staffs. I remember when I worked in the Johnson Administration, and one of Hubert Humphrey's former secretaries came to join the staff I was on. She said she had been on the Labor Department payroll when she had been on the Vice President's staff. I would learn that everyone is on someone else's payroll. The White House professes that it has almost no budget at all. So, when Dr. Oettinger comes to the Joint Military Intelligence College, from my windows he looks out on Naval Station Anacostia, and you see the Marine Corps' huge helicopter hangar and landing pads for the HMX-1 helicopters that support the President. Just beyond that you see the elaborate modern WHCA building, run by the Department of Defense in support. Defense picks up all of these tabs. Everyone, everywhere, is picking up the tab. What I'm saying is, it's by design, but it's awkward. It's our style as a nation.

Oettinger: Good point. Now, that leads to a question. From the vantage point of occasional service on the staff of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, I have this recurrent observation that at a change of administration there seems to be total amnesia, in that all the records of the preceding administration disappear with the preceding administration, and a new one comes in essentially like a babe in the woods, and there's nothing there. What

kind of smoke and mirrors is that from what you've observed?

Clift: In the White House this is largely true. For one who has done the improbable, as I did, of going from Johnson to Nixon to Ford to Carter, it's exhausting, because what you do with the beginning of each new administration is to re-look at every policy. New hard-chargers from the Kennedy School and elsewhere in the nation come down and they work 18 hours a day, seven days a week, coming up with new strategy papers, being driven by NSC directive, which often end up being essentially the same policy after everything settles down. The bureaucracy tears its hair out because here comes the new crowd, and they're going to look at this.

This isn't always true, but White Houses take their papers with them. You distributed a paper by the Institute for National Strategic Studies. This is headed by Dr. Hans Binnendijk. Hans Binnendijk and Bob Gates worked for me in the Ford Administration. I can remember at the end of that administration Hans Binnendijk's alarm when we were told to dump our files, to send back for archiving only that which was institutionally relevant to the NSC. Hans said, "This stuff is terrific. Why are we tearing it up?" I said, "There's no need for it. The incoming group hasn't asked for it. The President doesn't think they need it. Out it goes."

Don't get me wrong. The NSC secretariat maintains a formal file of NSC documents, but this was just our informal working papers. For a political scientist, such as Dr. Binnendijk, and indeed for myself, it was marvelous stuff. But, out it goes, though much of it finally shows up in presidential libraries.

I keep getting letters every year from the Ford Library asking me to turn over my papers, if I haven't yet, to the Ford Library. I said, "If I haven't yet, I would have long been in jail. They were all classified." I did that before the Ford Administration ended. But that's what happens in our country. They go in, and when a guy like Bob Gates is writing his book *From*

the Shadows,⁴ he has to go to presidential libraries to research it, or up to the Library of Congress. It's a very clumsy part of the government.

Oettinger: Open for questions. Discussion? You've never been shy before.

Student: If I could take you back to a comment you made during the lunch, it's certainly à propos to what you just gave us, but it's about the amount of information and intelligence that's getting down to our armed forces today. You made the comment, "It's working very well to division level." That ties in with something that Colonel Allard, our previous speaker, told us about his experiences in Bosnia. Could you comment as to your feeling whether it should be going lower than that? Is our system failing in not getting good tactical intelligence to the soldier on the battlefield? It's one of those tensions and balances that Professor Oettinger alludes to. Some people say the soldier should have all the information available; others say his job is to fire the rifle and not be analyzing.

Clift: I think it relates not only to what I was saying at lunch, but I hope also to what I was saying just now about learning how to handle this incredible rush of increasing information, and how to do it in a way that makes us accountable for that individual, if the information is available. Remember our F-16 pilot flying over Bosnia [Scott O'Grady]? Did NSA send the warning in time of the SAM (surface-to-air missile) site about to shoot him down, or didn't they? Remember that the director of NSA, Admiral McConnell, rushed to defend his agency: "Yes, we had it, and yes, we made it available." Then there was a big debate in the press and in the government over whether or not we had failed this young pilot.

Of course we should be trying to move it down further, but we need to move it down further in a way that doesn't put raw information in the hands of a tactical unit that could hurt that unit because it doesn't

⁴ See note 1.

understand the context in which it's getting it. If analysis is required, and if you're sitting somewhere in a Humvee, banging around, you may not be able to perform that analysis. You may be able to assist, to the degree possible, your battalion commander in knowing what's over the next ridge. It may be that as we move into this new era of unmanned surveillance aircraft, UAVs, that we're going to move much more quickly to get information down in a way that is interoperable to the tactical level. We're moving in that direction.

It is part of the sort of harsh reality of government, as I see it, that this substantive effort is hampered to a degree by institutional resistance to becoming too interoperable too fast for fear of losing one's share of the resources, of the systems, because there would suddenly be just a single system, and you would have to share in it rather than owning your own system. As I understand it today, to talk to senior intelligence officers in the Army, their needs simply cannot be met by the tactical system that the Air Force has, or by the tactical system that the Marine Corps has. They don't think that this is the way it should remain, but they want to move very carefully. They don't want to surrender what they have before it's worked out to serve everyone's interests and have it interoperable.

We're at a point where the further down you go the harder it is to keep moving it out in real time, but the demand is there. The era that we're in just says that the demand is there. Look at the situation of the bombing of the barracks in Saudi Arabia [in 1996]. Look at the debate that's raging over whether the senior Air Force officer should be found derelict of duty or whether he should be exonerated. Look at the challenge that the Air Force is facing in this regard. People say, "Well, there was a report saying that there was a threat of this very nature: that a van could be driven up, and it could blow the whole face off that building." These days, if there's a report somewhere, it's assumed that everyone's going to have access, analysis, and usable information based on that report that they can act on. I am not privy to this investigation, so I don't know if that was the case with this

Air Force general or not—whether or not he even was aware of this report.

Oettinger: This is not a new phenomenon. Look at the history of Pearl Harbor and the court-martialing of Admiral Kimmel and General Short and so on. This notion that they should have known; well, yes, buried somewhere were indicators that with hindsight, et cetera, they should have known. How derelict were they in their duty? That remains arguable 50 years later.

Clift: I think the mindset these days expects more, though, of those in command than it expected even then, and just the volumes of information that have to be sifted through are incredible. We have to protect the people at the tactical level in terms of how we shape the systems that will support them.

Student: The comment I would have is that in the book that we read by Mann,⁵ which goes into the C³I contributions in the Gulf, at least naval intelligence was described as an apparatus working as intelligence being pushed through rather than pulled through. The intelligence apparatus was determining what it thought was usable to the operator, and the operator just got what (in many cases) nonoperators deemed necessary for them. I've seen the same operational mode in naval intelligence and to a certain extent in defense intelligence. I'm not sure about the national intelligence apparatus.

In Bosnia, I think that a similar phenomenon occurred. I don't doubt the need for analyzed information to be pushed to the operators, as opposed to raw information. I think the operators are not trained to analyze this information. It's not put into context. It's not particularly useful. However, I think the operators do understand what they need, generally, and there is kind of an inertia in the defense intelligence agencies about giving out this information.

I think one of the other problems in the O'Grady incident is that there was also an

⁵ Edward C. Mann, *Thunder and Lightning: Desert Storm and the Airpower Debates*. Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University Press, 1995.

inertia about believing that things change. The information was there that the overall surface-to-air threat was changing, but they didn't believe it because, from what I've heard from some of the other people there, they didn't think it was going to change or that it could change. So anything that came over that wasn't the same as it was two months ago was disregarded.

Clift: This, in itself, is changing. I have the benefit, which I hope you will appreciate, given my job, of having just been chatting this week with the Army two-star, Major General Chuck Thomas, who runs Fort Huachuca, where Army intelligence is taught. Today, the Army insists, from the top down, that the commander, not the intelligence officer, shape the intelligence requirement, and that the commander be in on the intelligence end of it from the very beginning. So this partnership between operations and intelligence that I talked about in my prepared remarks is a fact these days. Operators understand, in a way they didn't understand sometimes in the past, that they really have to have the benefit of all that intelligence can bring to bear, and they look to intelligence for this from the outset as they prepare the battlefield in the Army. This is an integral part, and it's driven not by the intelligence officer, but by the operator. This is changing very, very significantly.

It's overdue to reflect what you're saying, but it is changing. As I mentioned about Admiral Mike Boorda, he said it has changed in the Navy and that he has his Director of Naval Intelligence with him as a principal officer at the table, and so does the new CNO. He's no longer just the briefer.

Oettinger: I think there's another element to this, though. Let me put this out as a subject for you to comment on—a moving target, both literally and figuratively. One of the comments you made early on, which struck me, was your quoting Art Lundahl about pictures, what was it, "crisp and clear ..." ?

Clift: "Aerial photos are like the dawn after a long darkness."

Oettinger: Now, what a marvelous surprise it was when it first happened, but, of course, in the meanwhile everybody has learned, as always, that measures breed countermeasures. Folks now hide stuff, or they move it. If you look at the situation in the Gulf War and the problem of spotting Scud launchers, even with everything in place and all of these administrative issues solved, the other guy isn't standing still. He's taking his Scud launchers and moving them around in a manner that is not necessarily visible by "crisp, clear, like the dawn," et cetera, and is, in fact, once again murky. So now you need multiple assets to figure out what's going on, and that, again, is something that is very hard to have under the sole control of the field commander. The question of delivering it in timely fashion to a shooter now involves how many different kinds of assets, even if you're lucky, you have to have in place to spot a Scud and feed back the information in time to do something about a launch. The objective situation is getting more complicated again because of the measures and countermeasures.

Clift: In that regard, in the imagery field you see the push now to develop these unmanned aerial vehicles that will be available down at the tactical level, when it is understood that an orbiting satellite may not be able to provide the operational information about a shifting situation just a few kilometers away. The UAV orbiting overhead may very well be able to do so, and there's a huge rush to bring these systems into existence.

There's no lag time anymore. People expect information instantaneously, and when it isn't there, there's a push to develop that capability. The pressure just continues and continues and continues, and it's a nice time to be studying it.

Student: You were speaking of National Technical Means and the Keyhole satellites and capsule recovery. What do you think is the effect of current efforts to privatize sat-

elite platforms on the future of the National Reconnaissance Office, the NRO?

Clift: I think NRO is fascinating. NRO has new leadership: an extremely talented acting director by the name of Keith Hall.

Oettinger: You'll find him in an earlier session of the seminar.⁶

Clift: He has had an amazing career, which has had him in national security affairs in the Office of Management and Budget; on the staff of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence; Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Intelligence; director of the Community Management Staff of the intelligence community, and now acting director, and I would guess soon to be confirmed as director, of NRO. Keith is bringing NRO out of the closet. He is making it a stated, formal part of the intelligence community. NRO announces its launches these days. NRO is far more open about its work, and NRO is very innovative in its thinking about its future work.

I don't think that NRO will go out of business because of private satellite launches and private satellite take in the near future. We've had a very modest experience with the commercial satellite product as it related to operations in the early 1990s—with the French product [SPOT]—and, indeed, the Russians have been offering dated satellite imagery for sale at a rather exorbitant price. I think that the move to have private satellites is one that has been rushing right along with Dolly, the cloned sheep, as something that was going to happen. It is coming to pass, and it's just part of this incredible era.

One of my favorite quotations comes from Joseph Conrad: "In his own time, a man is always very modern." And so,

⁶ Keith Hall, "Intelligence Needs in the Post-Cold War Environment," in *Seminar on Intelligence, Command and Control, Guest Presentations, Spring 1994*. Cambridge, MA: Program on Information Resources Policy, Harvard University, January 1995. Mr. Hall was Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security at the time of this presentation.

when I marvel at the rush of technology, I'm sure that people have been doing this in every decade for centuries. There's incredible change. Everyone is trying to come to grips with the times in which they live. But it is the pace today, I do think, that exceeds anything that we have seen in the past.

Oettinger: Let me spin for you an inference that may be useful to you guys as you plot your own reactions to the implications of what Denis has said, and that is: "focus on process, never on end-state." You have a vague hope that any process you put in place might last long enough to do something, but the odds of putting something in place that is a desirable end-state when everything keeps shifting around you are nil. Even processes, organizational structures, and so on have a shorter half-life now than they used to, because the situations you have to respond to shift so rapidly that a process for which you can create organizational structures needs to adapt at a faster rate than before. I think those are unavoidable challenges by virtue of the fact that every reaction invites a reaction, and every measure invites a countermeasure. In the information realm, with the technology being more and more widely available, the game can be played by folks of greater diversity and lesser means than ever before.

Clift: Correct me if this doesn't make sense to you, but I see a fascinating new partnership between government and the private sector in the United States which, to use one of the buzzwords of our time, to me is a new paradigm. That is the sudden realization on the part of the government that if it wants to stay current in technology it has to shift to using commercial off-the-shelf technology being produced by the private sector. We can no longer do this behind four rows of barbed wire in a guarded vault with a Manhattan Project-type approach because the private sector was rushing ahead of us. While we might produce a marvelous new Veeblepheezer, in 10 years we would find out that it was totally outdated when we brought it out from behind all that barbed wire.

And so, what we're learning to do in the government is to take advantage of each new jump in commercial off-the-shelf technology, and then adapt it so that somehow we can use it with the security that whatever it is doing may require, whether it's encrypting or what have you. This to me is a marvelous change in how we go about doing our business, and it's very healthy for the nation in terms of the economy.

We were discussing DIA at lunchtime. In the Defense Intelligence Agency, as we look to the next generation of computer systems for our analysts, there is an absolute determination to make this a type of system that you can continue to upgrade with new software, and not something that's suddenly going to become isolated and require replacement in its entirety. This is a big challenge: how to buy the sort of gear, the sort of systems, that you can evolve with rather than replace, because replacement is too expensive. You can get money for evolution from the Congress far more quickly than you can for total change, in day-to-day work in the government.

Oettinger: Yes, but there's again this sort of cyclical and time-lag character to this. Later on this semester we'll have Dr. Anita Jones, the Director of Defense Research and Engineering, and you might ask her then about placing bets where the private sector is not yet placing bets. It is certainly true that in areas such as information display, et cetera, the civilian, private, commercial sector is way ahead of the military, but it depends on the area. The civilian sector got to where it is today by government investments that were made 30 years ago, when there was no thought in the civilian sector of networks. The ARPANET was a shot in the dark at the time. Thirty years ago, one would have had to hunt long and hard. Even Bolt, Beranek and Newman, which then got some of the contracts for developing some of this stuff, wouldn't have touched it with a 10-foot pole if they hadn't been funded by the Pentagon.

Student: DCIs (Directors of Central Intelligence) Woolsey and Deutch seem to have weathered some of the concerns about sizing of the CIA, and I wondered what sort

of restructuring has occurred over the period of the last year and a half. What position do they see themselves in over the next five years? What is the new agenda?

Clift: I'm really not an authority to speak on the details of CIA restructuring. DCIs are moving through there on veritable one-night stands. There's a tremendous turnover. What has it been ... four or five in the last five years? The agency really hasn't changed that much in its basic structure. They are reorganizing within existing frameworks. When the Directorate for Intelligence reorganizes, it's reorganizing within the basic current structure. There is no radical new reorganization that's being discussed right now.

The issue (and we touched on this at lunch) before the CIA that to me is one of its most fundamental challenges is the substantive challenge of how best to handle the new target sets that it has as the Central Intelligence Agency—as the intelligence advisor to the President. Those target sets have shifted from the nation state to groups within nation states, to groups transcending nation states, to international crime, to weapons proliferation—to any number of activities that in anyone else's language are law enforcement activities.

Today there's a tremendous amount of activity going on in the U.S. government, in other governments, and between the U.S. and other governments. You may remember that four or five months ago the FBI Director, Louis Freeh, announced that he was going overseas and was opening 23 new FBI attaché posts around the world. This is a very different world when you have the FBI in embassies all over the world, and they have to learn how to work with the CIA stations, the CIA station chiefs.

Then we in the United States have to learn the ground rules for doing this within our Constitution. The National Security Act of 1947 proscribed the CIA from any domestic involvement. They didn't want a "secret service" operating against U.S. citizens. So when the CIA, for example, is asked to collect information abroad, and that information may deal with people who may include Americans abroad, permis-

sions have to be sought. We're very, very strict about this in our government, and God bless us. We do not collect against our own people with our intelligence organizations.

Counterintelligence, certainly, is working counterintelligence within the community. But the whole lesson of the 1970s and the Rockefeller Commission, and then the Pike Commission and the Church Committee—that whole look at CIA domestic activities during the Vietnam era and the crashing halt to those—is still very much a part of our government, and we do not collect against U.S. citizens. So, if you've got a crime, it may involve people who have residences wherever they wish, and they're talking to each other instantaneously via computer. We're dealing with individuals, and this is one of CIA's big challenges: not *can* it do the job of collecting intelligence, but *how best* to do it.

As I was saying recently, one of the interesting issues that arises is: Does this change the nature of the individual you need doing it? Do you need someone who has more of a sort of detective's mentality than a spy's mentality? Do you need someone who is more a law enforcer—a cop—who's able to run down a criminal, rather than someone who is able to interface with others about issues relating to activities in still another country, or someone who was working the Soviet target from wherever he or she may have been during the Cold War? You have a new type of character required to do this job, and so this will be an issue that CIA, in my view, is going to examine its entry-level hires up through its mid-career retraining. How do we best tailor our work force to do the new job?

Oettinger: You mention this with regard to CIA, but in passing you mentioned the FBI opening up offices abroad. If you go back to the presentation a couple of weeks ago by Phil Heymann, from his law enforcement viewpoint, it's a mirror image, the same thing with regard to the FBI.⁷ Think about it. These guys, historically, come from a particular socioeconomic

stratum in the United States, and now here they've got to go abroad and be suave and multilingual and so on. So you need a very different kind of recruiting from the traditional FBI personality, plus, when you cross-reference to Heymann's presentation, there are the points he made about the need for international agreements over one's police operating on somebody else's turf.

It's somewhat sinister, but it's long been accepted, that spies are everywhere. But the notion of a police force having operations abroad is somewhat novel, so you have to go back to Heymann's comments about the need for agreements that will provide appropriate authority for police forces operating on each other's turf. Then you add to that the kind of element you get with the news in recent days of the chief Mexican narc himself being arrested, and you begin to get a sense of the complexities of evolving relationships.

Clift: In one context there is no more abroad. Everywhere is here, because that's the way the world now works. People are fluid. Information is fluid. It all just flows. Crime conducts transactions around the world through all sorts of layers and fences, using satellite communications and computer networks and the Internet with a snap of the fingers, and so there is no more abroad in one sense. In the other sense, you still have nation states and you have all of the ramifications. You can't fly your balloon over Libya unless you get permission from Khadafy. And so, you have these contradictions that you have to deal with.

Student: From that perspective, do you think this infrastructure we have in place will ever be open for industrial business applications?

Clift: The intelligence infrastructure? This is another issue before the nation on how best to manage collection of economic information, and how to differentiate collection of information clearly. Who is penetrating us, for example? How may certain nations be trying to exploit us against our national interest, to their national interest?

⁷ See Professor Heymann's presentation earlier in this volume.

In many, many other states there is no such thing, really, as private industry. You have large commercial-governmental combines, but the United States is one of the rarer nations in terms of private industry. So there's a legitimate role, in my view, for understanding what's going on in the world economically, and understanding what people are doing.

Where you run up against the wall, if you will, what you should observe is that there is no role for the intelligence community providing this information to one U.S. company but not to another. Suddenly, you've broken all the china, and you have a mess on your hands. This isn't the way the United States works, because you're then working against your own citizens. This is an issue that continues to be discussed in councils that I'm not privy to at the highest levels of government.

Oettinger: For more detail on that, Randall Fort's presentation on this in the seminar will give you a little bit more detail.⁸ Fort himself has now left government and, in fact, is working for Goldman-Sachs in London.

Clift: There's a way to make this information available within the U.S. community so that we can protect ourselves as a nation, and, indeed, I think there's a way to make it available so that we can move ahead more rapidly than we might otherwise. But we're not correctly positioned. We're not doing our job correctly if we're in industrial espionage.

Oettinger: But there is a role for defending against it, and that's complicated by virtue of the fact that some of our best friends, like the Israelis and the French, are among the most egregious industrial espions. It's a funny world.

⁸ Randall M. Fort, "The Role of Intelligence in Economic and Other Crises," in *Seminar on Intelligence, Command and Control, Guest Presentations, Spring 1993*. Cambridge, MA: Program on Information Resources Policy, Harvard University, August 1994.

Student: Sir, has the intelligence community made the case that the smaller military capability argues for a more robust intelligence capability? In the days of the Powell doctrine, we attempted to make up for lapses in intelligence and lapses in political judgment with an overwhelming force at the point of attack. Given that we don't have the capabilities to do that in a circumstance like the Gulf War immediately right now, wouldn't a natural antidotal reaction be an increased intelligence capability, so that the application is more precise?

Clift: I believe that is generally appreciated, and that the military intelligence community has been spared radical cuts in the first instance and, indeed, remains a very large part of the community. I learned a statistic recently that military intelligence is the third largest branch out of all the branches in the Army. It's larger than armor; it's larger than artillery. Intelligence is seen as essential at all echelons of the Army these days, and people aren't willing to surrender that. General Shalikashvili, I think, if he were seated where I am, would tell you that greater importance is attached to intelligence in the post-Cold War era than it was in the Cold War era.

These days people wake up terrified to turn on the television and take a look at their newspapers just to see what's happened in the last four hours while they were asleep. During the Cold War, you knew the silos were there. You assumed some boomers were out at sea. You knew that various systems were on alert, and that was the joyous setting in which we survived. But today, you don't know what's happened overnight. You're probably going to face something completely unexpected, and you're going to have to grapple with it.

Oettinger: You could be spending a quiet weekend in New York around Grand Central Station, and you hear the ambulances going by, and then little by little you realize what happened and you thank your God that you weren't a tourist at the top of the Empire State Building that day. It's weird.

Clift: From my perspective now, I see the policy level of the government using intelligence far more than it did in the Cold War era. In the Department of Defense, I see policy civilians working in partnership with intelligence from the policy level far more than they did in the 1970s and 1980s.

There is a need for information. I was talking about the White House years. When I was in the White House, CNN didn't exist. You'd go down into the White House Situation Room and, of course, you had network television, and you had Agence France Presse, Reuter's, and UPI tickers that told you that you'd better start looking at this because something's breaking in Bangui or you name it—somewhere. Now, of course, we have the CNN-type television coverage and, as I call her, "The Angel of Death," Christiane Amanpour, standing over a corpse somewhere, with bullets whistling through her hair and skirt, as she reports fearlessly on the latest disaster. She's an amazing correspondent, and it doesn't take her long to find peril.

This is fascinating, because I believe it is one of the reasons why the U.N. publicly announced that it was creating an "information center." The U.N. for decades refused to address the word "intelligence." But the U.N. needs information. The Secretary General, just like everyone else, needs to know what's going on because, bang, it's coming across CNN; it's coming across the wire services; and they can't be sitting overlooking Turtle Bay on the East River wondering what's going on. So they are creating their own information-gathering center, which draws on as much as possible from participating nations.

Oettinger: This is not a new phenomenon. Colonel Besson's predecessor many times removed, Colonel A'Hearn, has written a paper on Lyndon Johnson and the Eastern power failure, which was a notable event because it wasn't clear at the beginning, when the whole Eastern Seaboard blacked out, that this was not the product of a nuclear attack.⁹ We document, rather ex-

⁹ Francis W. A'Hearn, "The Northeast Power Failure and Lyndon B. Johnson: An Interview with

tensively, that Lyndon Johnson learned about this on the radio while cruising his ranch in his car. Meanwhile, the President's science advisor, Donald Hornig, learned about it because his daughter, who at that time was a student here at Harvard, had her lights go out and phoned daddy to say, "What the hell's going on? Are we being nuked?" Her father, who was sitting in the White House, said, "What's your problem, kid? The lights are on." The blackout stopped somewhere in the middle of Maryland, and so in Washington they didn't know anything. So the first thing the White House knew about the Eastern power failure was from a personal phone call from the science advisor's daughter to her daddy in the White House, which got him to call up Con Edison to find out the rest. By the time McNamara got the call from Johnson and called Hornig, because he figured some technical guy would have to explain all that was going on, Hornig had already psyched it all out. But it was a CNN-like thing, except in those days, it was a car radio and a phone call.

Student: But it's precisely the "CNN effect" that I think is having a counter effect in the military or the U.N. In the paper that was passed out today,¹⁰ Colonel Allard mentions that the operations in Bosnia have become so sensitive to public perception that their motto is "perception is reality." They have created this IFOR (Implementation Force) public affairs command post to react instantly, if not to precede CNN, in putting out the correct perception. Do you see that as a role for the intelligence community in the future?

Clift: I addressed this in my remarks. In Desert Storm, not only did General Schwarzkopf have daily briefings from Riyadh, but you also had that famous team

Donald F. Hornig, June 30, 1983," Incidental Paper I-83-3. Cambridge, MA: Program on Information Resources Policy, Harvard University, October 1983.

¹⁰ Kenneth Allard, "Information Operations in Bosnia: A Preliminary Assessment," *INSS Strategic Forum*, No. 91, November 1996.

of Kelly and McConnell on stage day after day at the Pentagon, giving a briefing—General Kelly, the J-3, and Admiral McConnell, the J-2, telling it like it was. Occasionally, George Bush would come on at the White House, and occasionally, Colin Powell or Dick Cheney would come on.

The world is being provided with lots of information. Is it the right information? Is it correct? What we have found, in the government, is that no, it's not correct, and, because perception is reality, if it is misleading it can be very damaging very quickly. There can be a lot of confusion, and so we now regularly trot people out. I think if you just look at the way the Pentagon brings senior officers out to discuss any issue that's happening at any time, it's very different than in years past, when this would just be handled by a press secretary from the Pentagon press office and no one would say a thing.

Information is zooming around the world. You have to be able to put it in context. You have to be able to anticipate it. You have to advance the nation's interests if you're in a position of authority. That's what I was talking about as it relates to national security. It's inherent in everything we do now, and force protection is inherent. It's in that purple document you were given today.¹¹ Force protection is now critically important.

Why is this? Let's step back a minute— I may be more profound than I'm capable of being—but go back to Vietnam and the great failure of the elected representatives of the nation, executive and legislative, to vote, "Yes, let's put our forces in Vietnam," and everything that unraveled after that. Then come forward to Desert Storm, and what I think was the marvelous diplomatic success of first bringing the U.N. to support that mission. One of Gorbachev's great acts was not to exercise the veto at the time of those resolutions. Then the President went forward to the Congress, and the elected representatives in the Congress voted to support the President, and then

¹¹ Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Vision 2010*. Washington, DC: Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1997.

you proceeded the way the nation is supposed to proceed.

When we send people to one of these fire-fights, as I said at the beginning, the 911 call rings, and the President says we're the world's indispensable nation: "Saddle up, boys and girls, we're heading off for wherever." But you don't want to lose lives in this process. The protection of lives is a far, far more important issue than it used to be, because not only is it a tragedy, but it's also politically intolerable to have any suggestion, let alone reality, that you have been cavalier about the lives of our servicemen and servicewomen.

Student: I'd like to inquire about something in terms of your assessment of this business of relying increasingly on public sources, open sources, for various information gathering and information structural support. I realize that I understand this only on the conceptual level, but because of the budget cutting that's been going on for the last several years in the intelligence community in general, the intelligence gathering effort in various nations has been greatly reduced. Let me say first, there's been a sort of priority established of certain strategic nations, lesser-interest nations, and a whole lot of other nations where the intelligence gathering capability is basically being folded up like a tent and taken home because there just isn't a budget to support it.

When I hear this idea, which I've heard repeatedly over time, that CNN is often the first good source of information about something breaking out, I understand very well that it works as a trip wire or early notification system. But it seems to me that for the role of intelligence gathering and information usage that you've described, what you really need is not only notification that something's broken out, but you also need the in-depth information to provide you with an intelligent way to respond to that situation based on an ongoing analysis of what's been going on in that country.

My concern, and again I'd like your much more experienced and insightful perception of this, is that if one of these third-tier or fourth-tier countries suddenly has a situation where the flag goes up, we say,

“We don’t have any intelligence assets in that country,” and when we get the bulletin from CNN that something has suddenly come up, we don’t know what has been going on inside there for the last three years. Is this a realistic concern, or do you see it differently?

Clift: I’m not sure. I thought the question shifted midway through. Open source intelligence: we’re talking about unclassified information. Starting with my cutting my teeth with the *New York Daily News* in 1954, being, in part, a journalist by academic training, and being an author, a writer, and an editor, I happen to believe that unclassified information is essentially what we’re talking about, and a lot of this is the best information that exists in the world. It’s often far better than any classified intelligence.

Let me give you an example. When I worked for Vice President Mondale, and we were preparing, as he was in 1977, to go to Vienna for talks with Prime Minister Voerster of South Africa to lay the law down for him on what the United States believed had to happen in Rhodesia, Namibia, and South Africa, the first thing the Vice President did was not to call the DCI. He called Barbara Tuchman, and he said, “What should I be reading?” This was about two months out. Then we moved on from there and we brought scholars in, and we talked about South Africa and what was going on in southern Africa. There were some government people and there were nongovernment people. Then we started moving in to the formulation of the actual

U.S. position, and this was honed down until finally, literally, I had two 3 x 5 cards for him that he put in his pocket—and in the event he never referred to them in about 10 hours of very intensive talks with Voerster. He had it all in his head. Most of his work was from open sources. Most of his work was talking to experts in the field. I’m not down-playing intelligence. I’m reminding you of the value of good information from all sources.

By the way, there’s a nice footnote to that. When we were getting ready to go into these talks the room was full of important people who had been assisting him: Ambassador Don McHenry and Tony Lake and Bill Bowdler, our Ambassador to South Africa, and lesser lights like myself. Mondale said, “I want to thank all of you. You’ve done a great job of preparing me. If I do well, it’s thanks to you. And if I don’t, pray for your country.” Then he went in, and they were great talks. He was saying that we needed independence for Rhodesia; we needed independence for Namibia; and we needed progress for majority rule in South Africa. Of course, you look at what we have today, and that little bit of diplomacy is behind us.

Oettinger: What is also regrettably behind us is today’s presentation. But we want to thank you very warmly for it. We have for you a literally small, but figuratively large, token of our appreciation.

Clift: Thank you very much. Thanks for the chance to chat with you. I really enjoyed the session.



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