

Understanding Special Operations

And Their Impact on The Vietnam War Era



1989 Interview with L. Fletcher Prouty
Colonel USAF (Retired)

David T. Ratcliffe

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rat.haus.reality.press
Santa Cruz, California

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rat haus reality press, 567 35th Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95062

www.ratical.org

Printer and binder: Thomson-Shore, Inc., Dexter, Michigan

1st edition, first printing.

ISBN 0-9673507-0-0

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 99-75115

Manufactured in the United States of America
on 60% recovered and 25% post-consumer waste recycled paper
with soy-based inks.

For

my parents, John and Elizabeth Ratcliffe,
who taught me to seek out life's infinite possibilities,

and

all who strive to build a sustainable civilization
where nature, humanity, and technology manifest
a contemporary wholeness that serves and honors life.

Special Operations are an *ad hoc* creation—probably the strongest *ad hoc* creation in our government today.

—L. Fletcher Prouty, 1999

Acknowledgments

This book exists because of the generosity of L. Fletcher Prouty. I am indebted to him for sharing many, many hours of time, both during my five-day visit with him in 1989, as well as during the long process of editing the original audio recordings. I am especially grateful for Fletcher's patience with my many questions and willingness to provide a broad historical perspective. I deeply value the friendship that has grown up between us.

Chris Everett has been my "master typography mechanic", teaching me much about the specific software used to lay out this book, and the dynamic world of printing. Without Chris' great patience and knowledge I could not have created this book.

Special thanks to Len Osanic and the people who worked with him to create the original on-line form of Fletcher's 1997 version of *The Secret Team*¹, from which I fashioned the hypertext version² referenced in footnote citations throughout Chapter 2.

Tom Davis and John Judge were also instrumental in making this book possible. Both friends have given me many critical insights by sharing their knowledge and experience of history, how it is made, and guiding me to books that provided essential background to formulate well-conceived questions. Tom also provided me with copies of the *Freedom* articles and John introduced me to Fletcher.

And then there is Mae Brusell. I am indebted to the indefatigable spirit of this first-generation JFK assassination researcher. In 1963, a housewife in Carmel, California, Mae was stunned to see Lee Harvey Oswald executed on live television — just as her daughter was packing up her teddy bear to send to Lee because she felt sorry for him. "What

1. See <http://www.prouty.org/cdrom.html>

2. Available at <http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/>

is happening to this country of ours?!” This question led Mae to pursue decades of research seeking to unravel the meaning of this seminal post-WWII event which so shaped succeeding decades. Mae’s *World Watchers* radio program eventually led me to Tom and John and thus to Fletcher.

Finally I am especially grateful to my parents who raised me with a deep curiosity about what the nature of being human means and who encouraged in me a deep desire to understand the inner and outer worlds as clearly and honestly as possible.

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Forward

In 1988, I read a series of 19 articles on the CIA and the Vietnam war era spanning the period from 1945 to 1964, written by Colonel L. Fletcher Prouty, USAF (Retired), and published in *Freedom* magazine from 1985 to 1987. These articles were provided by Tom Davis, a first-generation JFK assassination researcher. I met Tom through his capacity as bookseller after some years of listening to Mae Brussell's weekly radio program, *World Watchers*. Tom generously loaned me copies of the issues he no longer had extras of. I proceeded to cut-and-paste photocopies of the complete series to create a reader-type format (minus headers, footers, and ads) to share with people.

I felt Prouty's insights and perspective were extraordinary, given his active role in organizing and providing Air Force logistical support for U.S. Government clandestine operations world-wide from 1955 through 1963. The breadth and depth of detail of the CIA's evolution in post-WWII America was also fascinating, as well as the way in which the series culminated in describing events surrounding the assassination of President Kennedy.

On November 22, 1963, I was eight years old and sick in bed at home. I recall my father coming up the stairs saying, "President Kennedy's been shot." I don't remember anyone else's reaction, or watching television. Fourteen years later in the fall of 1977, a friend loaned me a copy of Arthur Schlesinger's *A Thousand Days, John F. Kennedy in the White House*. For the first time I was caught up in the story of Kennedy's presidency and his assassination. Over the next eleven years I read voluminously about the assassinations of the 1960s, and about the rise of the American National Security State. Fletcher's writings gave me a much greater understanding of these subjects.

Through Tom Davis I met John Judge, another first-generation assassination researcher who had grown up in Washington D.C. At the end of 1988, John introduced me to Fletcher who was intrigued that someone was sufficiently interested in his articles to compile them into a “Reader”. We then began to correspond directly and he agreed to be interviewed.

Already very familiar with the contents of the 19 articles, in the months prior to our interview I meticulously studied Fletcher’s monumental work, *The Secret Team, The CIA and its Allies in Control of the United States and the World* (1973). It is difficult to exaggerate the scope and depth of information presented in *The Secret Team*. Its contents were based on the first-hand experience of the author, who was intimately involved in formulating and implementing the CIA Focal Point System in the Pentagon and throughout the Executive Branch. The book also sets forth insights gained during his stint as a military briefing officer specializing in Special Operations. It is also difficult to overstate the magnitude of seminal changes that have taken place between 1941 and 1963 in the way that Americans and people in the west thought about the world and their lives.

To provide additional background and give people a broader grasp of Fletcher’s qualifications to discuss Special Operations, three versions of the Preface to *The Secret Team* are included in Appendix A. The Preface to the 1973 first edition (starting on page 256) describes Fletcher as “the behind the scenes, faceless, nameless, ubiquitous briefing officer” whose job required both presenting “the most skillfully detailed information” as well as being “trained by years of experience in the precise way to present that information to assure its effectiveness.” I was struck by the thought that for Fletcher to have been successful in this area of work, he would need a highly developed ability to size up the character of the person he was briefing. Further, given that Fletcher read “all of the messages, regardless of classification” and had virtually unfettered access to anyone he wanted to talk with, I reasoned that he could provide a wealth of details about this historic period.

Some might consider that I may have been taken in by a man who has engaged in his own dissembling and artfully planted “cover stories” on behalf of anonymous persons. Perhaps I am naive and was simply one more person he sized up accurately for a briefing. However, I have always felt Fletcher’s openness with me was

motivated by a genuine interest to shed light on his areas of expertise as expressed in the last sentence of the 1973 Preface: “It is the object of this book to bring reality and understanding into this vast unknown area.” For anyone interested in learning more about the contradictory nature of this subject, *The Secret Team* is required reading.

I flew east May 4-8, 1989. Spending the nights at my cousin’s home in Reston, Virginia, I drove each morning to Fletcher’s house in Alexandria. The first day we had wide-ranging conversations that included looking through various publications and papers in his study. In this way we were able to create a feeling of familiarity between us and a sense of some of the specific topics we wanted to explore during the actual interview.

The interview itself fell into three distinct parts: (1) Fletcher’s 23 years of military duty in the Air Force from 1941 through January 1, 1964, (2) his 1973 book *The Secret Team*, (3) and the assassination of President Kennedy.

These transcripts of the recordings were edited to make them as readable as possible without sacrificing their conversational tone.¹ In a few select spots, Fletcher has augmented what he said with text providing more details of his experiences during WWII and other information. The nature of what I wanted Fletcher to talk about concerning what he knew and had experienced made it imperative to lay down a sufficiently robust foundation to support the twists and turns of the “Alice in Wonderland” journey we were preparing to take.

In essence, this interview explores one man’s first-hand experience of the way in which the United States political system became a government of reaction in the post-WWII world—reaction based upon the inputs of selective intelligence gathered from around the world and interpreted according to a specific bias. These inputs became a primary source of direction for the government’s economic, political, and social actions through the influence of such individuals as Allen Dulles, John Foster Dulles, Walter Bedell Smith, Louis Johnson, L. K. “Red” White, Richard Helms, and Frank Hand, as well as from the development of nuclear technology and weapons. This influence produced such laws as the National Security Act of 1947 and the CIA Act of 1949.

1. The complete set of eight tapes is available from rat haus reality press. See: <http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/USO/tapes.html>

During our interview and in additional conversations, Fletcher has emphasized the importance of Buckminster Fuller's world-view. He made special note of Bucky's final book, *Critical Path*. An exceedingly relevant passage to keep in mind throughout this interview is Fuller's awareness of where real power lies:

Finally, bigger ships got out of the Mediterranean and into the Atlantic, around Africa to the Orient, and then around the world. Thus, "those in the know" rediscovered that the world is a sphere and not an infinitely extended lateral plane. Great battles ensued — waged under the flags of England, France, and Spain — to determine who would become supreme master of the world's high-seas line of supply. These great nations were simply the operating fronts of behind-the-scenes, vastly ambitious individuals who had become so effectively powerful because of their ability to remain invisible while operating behind the national scenery. Always their victories were in the name of some powerful sovereign-ruled country. The real power structures were always the invisible ones behind the visible sovereign powers.²

Fletcher draws heavily upon Fuller's explication of *the philosophy that derived from knowing the world was round and thus finite* to describe the era of global colonization at the hands of the East India Trading companies whose overriding goal was to claim and own property. Since September, 1945, the United States has pursued its own brand of empire following in the footsteps of its Portuguese, British, Dutch, French, and Spanish antecedents. Some of the means that enabled this pursuit are described in this exchange. I hope this book will expand people's understanding regarding some of the less obvious dynamics which continue to shape the story of our time. Also, I hope it will help the reader identify more of the vast number of "pseudo facts" being perpetuated as "truth".

David Ratcliffe
Santa Cruz, California
May, 1999

2. R. Buckminster Fuller, *Critical Path*, St. Martin's Press, 1981, p. 72.

Introduction

This book explores some of the details of how the United States got into the business of conducting Special Operations after World War II. The term “special operations” means “military services providing support to the clandestine activities of the United States Government.” The term is a euphemism¹ for overthrowing governments, sabotage, murder, contrived wars, espionage, torture and assassination. These and other similarly indefensible acts are all justified with equally euphemistic masks such as “in the interests of national security”, “defending our way of life”, “the American Way” “the promotion of democracy”, and even, “national sovereignty”.

The impersonal world of our 20th century has been marked by a reality increasingly cloaked in euphemism. Defined by Webster’s as “the use of a word or phrase that is less expressive or direct but considered less distasteful, less offensive, ... than another,” euphemisms are an essential practice in a political system that places an exceptionally high value on expediency at the expense of moral behavior. They are employed for the benefit of a small group of people who attempt to keep the rest of the population in the dark about what is actually going on. Tragically, and with increasingly dangerous consequences to all life on earth, euphemism is used to achieve whatever goal or purpose is sought by means of subterfuge, omission and deception. The results of deliberately choosing to rename things to prevent their true nature from being correctly perceived is a primary area of focus in this book.

The term “Special Operations” is a euphemism for clandestine operations which are the peacetime equivalent of activities conducted

1. Derived from the Greek *euphemizein*, “to use a good or auspicious word for an evil or inauspicious”.

by the United States Office of Strategic Services (OSS) during World War II. George Orwell clearly describes this corrupted double-talk of substitution in his 1946 essay, “Politics and the English Language”:

In our time, political speech and writing are largely the defence of the indefensible. Things like the continuance of British rule in India, the Russian purges and deportations, the dropping of the atom bombs on Japan, can indeed be defended, but only by arguments which are too brutal for most people to face, and which do not square with the professed aims of political parties. Thus political language has to consist largely of euphemism, question-begging and sheer cloudy vagueness. Defenceless villages are bombarded from the air, the inhabitants driven out into the countryside, the cattle machine-gunned, the huts set on fire with incendiary bullets: this is called “pacification”. Millions of peasants are robbed of their farms and sent trudging along the roads with no more than they can carry: this is called “transfer of population” or “rectification of frontiers”. People are imprisoned for years without trial, or shot in the back of the neck or sent to die of scurvy in Arctic lumber camps: this is called “elimination of unreliable elements”. Such phraseology is needed if one wants to name things without calling up mental pictures of them.

Living in such a euphemistic culture year in, year out, can produce an attitude of expediency towards life itself. We can become increasingly inured to the contradictions of such surreptitious living. However, when we do learn about the actual degree to which the culture as a whole is living in this secretive, indirect way, this can be a liberating experience which opens one up to previously unimagined possibilities for social renewal.

How did our present-day culture of euphemism become so pronounced? What were some of its more formative influences? L. Fletcher Prouty was there at the birth of this euphemistic era of American politics. An Air Force officer already with 14 years of active duty, Prouty was assigned to the Pentagon in 1955 to set up the new office of Special Operations. Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Thomas D. White told him,

We have no policy on this. This is new. You are going to be the ‘Focal Point’ Officer, and given an office in which you will draw up this policy in conjunction with all of the air staff experts that are needed and in conjunction with the CIA.

General White went on to tell Prouty that the National Security Council had published Directive 5412 in 1954, which established how the United States government would perform and support covert operations.

It required that the Department of Defense provide the material support, the personnel support, the bases, the equipment for clandestine operations, whether they were run by the CIA or by the Defense Department or both. Whatever clandestine operation, we would provide the logistic support. This would require special techniques and special procedures to keep it secret, to pay the bills, and all that sort of thing—handle people who were killed, and so on.²

A primary component for such military support of clandestine activities was the creation of a system of Focal Point Offices run by a group of specialized military officers who would act as liaisons between their respective branches and the Central Intelligence Agency. Prouty was selected and assigned to create and head up the Focal Point Office within the U.S. Air Force.

Prouty proceeded to draw up the requested policy, spending more than six months writing the formal paper, “Military Support of the Clandestine Operations of the United States Government.” It was approved by the Air Force, and he then worked to coordinate it with similar documents written by counterparts in the Army and Navy Focal Point Offices. The entire system was then approved by the Secretary of Defense.

Prouty worked very closely with Allen Dulles, appointed Director of Central Intelligence after President Eisenhower’s inauguration in January of 1953. Prouty explains Dulles’ intentions and expectations for how the Focal Point System would function:

As Mr. Dulles told me later, “I do not want various people from my agency going into the Pentagon and dealing with different people there and therefore exposing the activities of the CIA to a large number of people, because obviously such a ring would then proliferate to others and if they wanted submarines, they would have to bring in some navy people and if they wanted helicopters, they would have to talk to some army people.” He said, “I want a focal point. I want an office that’s cleared to do what we have to have done; an office that knows us very, very well and then an office that has access to a system in the

2. See Chapter 1, Military Experiences, Part II, page 42.

Pentagon. But the system will not be aware of what initiated the request—they'll think it came from the Secretary of Defense. They won't realize it came from the Director of Central Intelligence."

The Dulles philosophy was to control the focal point area. This then led to the creation of focal point offices everywhere. As I established this "Tab-6" organization³, as we called it, in every major staff area within the Air Force (because that was my jurisdiction at the time), I would "clear" people—another focal point, you might say a sub-focal point—a person I could go to who had been given, ahead of time, the authority to do whatever it was that he was authorized to do. We stressed this was only for "authorized" business—he would have to be sure he had orders, either from my office or directly up to the Chief of Staff, and that we knew what we were doing for CIA.⁴

To perform all its authorized functions the network of Focal Point Offices expanded out beyond the confines of the Department of Defense to encompass many other Departments in the Executive Branch. The people placed in these positions were not only active duty military personnel—they were also employees of the CIA. Prouty continues,

This leads to another step, of what you might call "breeding". We had to work with various agencies of the government, not just the Defense Department. We had to have contact points in the State Department, in the FAA, in the Customs Service, in the Treasury, in the FBI and all around through the government—up in the White House. Gradually we wove a network of people who understood the symbols and the code names and the activities we were doing, and how we handled money which was the most important part. Then we began to assign people there who, those agencies thought, were from the Defense Department. But they actually were people that we put there from the CIA.

This led to the creation of a system of powerful individuals—people whose jobs were quite dominant in some of these other agencies. Especially after they'd been there two or three years, because we put them in there by talking to the top man, the cabinet officer or the head of the agency. We would say, "This man is being placed here so that he can facilitate covert activities and so that he can retain the secrecy that's required and

3. Also called "Team B", these were euphemisms for the Office of Special Operations.

4. Chapter 2, Understanding the Secret Team: Part I, p. 123.

he will keep you informed at all times.” Well, in the over-all U.S. bureaucracy, the top people tend to move from one job to another faster than anybody else, not the career people who are there for a life-time. So the man we had explained the “Focal Point” structure to, perhaps a year-and-a-half earlier, would be transferred or leave the government. But our trained and fully cleared “Focal Point” man was still there. So after one or two cycles of this, that agency might not even know that employee was our man and not actually theirs because they would have no record of his special assignment, of what his origins were. They would think he was just another one of their own employees.

As a result, he became extremely effective. Because if we wanted something done—I remember a very sensitive operation that I needed some information on, and I needed it from the FBI. I didn’t go to the FBI. I went to this guy that we had planted, and he got it twice as fast and in a much better form than I would have gotten it from the FBI, even though I was at that time working for the office of the Secretary of Defense. We had no trouble working with the FBI. This process was just to facilitate it and conceal the CIA role. These people became very, very adept.⁵

Thus, with the passage of time, the true roles and purposes of these Focal Point personnel who had been placed in select positions outside the Department of Defense became more and more camouflaged and entrenched.

Along with the establishment of the Focal Point Network, the other key element in military support for clandestine government activities was the system of reimbursing secret, behind-the-scenes activities. Prouty emphasizes the significance of a 1949 paper written by then-Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson. This paper defined the basis by which money spent on behalf of the CIA’s logistical needs would appear to be simply a cost paid for by the military branch from which the CIA was getting its materiel and support:

[Secretary Johnson] said that the Department of Defense would fully support the CIA in any of its approved covert operations, provided that the CIA would reimburse the Department of Defense for all ‘out-of-pocket’ costs ...

This philosophy of reimbursement is very important in covert operations because it keeps bills from appearing in public that would stir up questions about why this money was spent when it wasn’t spent for the items in the budget. Thus when we created the Tab-6 system [the code name for the USAF Focal

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 123-4.

Point System] we worked this reimbursement system in throughout so that you never saw the spending of any money. The Air Force never spent any money on the CIA operations, technically. The money was immediately transferred through a comptroller's office arrangement up in the office of the Comptroller of the Secretary of Defense. And that expenditure was, actually, Agency money.

Within a few years, the Agency was able to point out to Congress that a lot of money was flowing in that channel because, effectively, they were paying for the utilization of very high-cost equipment: aircraft, submarines, even aircraft carriers in a few places. Very expensive things to operate on a reimbursable basis. So based on that, the agency began to get a much larger budget.⁶

By definition clandestine operations must be deniable by the government conducting them. Military officers like Prouty, assigned the task of designing and implementing the actual process whereby the military would support clandestine operations of the U.S. government, employed a reimbursement system to make the money trail "disappear" and likewise be deniable. Creating a clandestine means to prevent public scrutiny "that would stir up questions about why this money was spent when it wasn't spent for the items in the budget" contradicts a constitutional guarantee provided by Article I, Section 9, Clause 7: "No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time." Such contradiction was and is essential to conducting special operations.

From creating a clandestine Focal Point System throughout the Executive Branch, to a clandestine system of reimbursement, Fletcher Prouty describes how the United States government established a largely *ad hoc* system of euphemism and deception devoid of any public awareness or consent.

The shift towards reacting to intelligence inputs put in place worldwide is closely related to the creation of the Department of Defense. The National Security Act of 1947, crafted in Congress and signed into law by President Truman, created the Department of Defense (DOD), a new department in the Executive Branch. Previously there had been a Department of War and a Department of the Navy. The DOD was established with a single Secretary at its

6. Chapter 2, Understanding the Secret Team: Part II, p. 132.

head and three equal and independent services: Army, Navy and Air Force. The National Security Act of 1947 also created the National Security Council and the Central Intelligence Agency.

In his 1973 book, *The Secret Team*, Prouty provided a great deal of insight into the climate of the times after World War II when the National Security Act of 1947 was being written:

But certainly there can be no liberty if there is no action, because one is not free to act if frozen in the posture of defense, waiting to counteract the free action of his adversaries, real and imagined. For the greatest nation in the world suddenly to assume the role of a defensive power is a certain signal of some major change in national character....

This national defense posture places even greater emphasis upon the role of intelligence. If any nation goes on the defensive, then by its very nature it must be—it is forced to be—totally dependent upon intelligence. If a man is adequately armed, and he is hiding behind a wall reasonably secure from his adversary, the one thing he needs most is information to tell him where his adversary is, what he is doing, whether he is armed, and even what his intentions are. In that unusual year, 1947, the great pressures upon Congress and the Administration somehow impressed upon the Government of this country the beginnings of a belief in reliance upon a major intelligence structure to be backed up by a powerful Department of Defense.

It takes a long time, as Darwin made very clear, for an evolutionary process to make itself known. For many years, this nation of veterans, and mothers and fathers of veterans, along with the sisters and brothers of veterans, has looked upon the post-1947 Army, Navy and Air Force, not as they were becoming, but as they had known them at first hand at Normandy and Iwo Jima, at the Battle of Midway and the undersea services, in the Eighth Air Force over Fortress Germany, and with the B-29s of the Twentieth Air Force flying back from a fire-ravaged Tokyo.

Thus it was that while the country was caught up in the great debate about “unification”, about the new role of nuclear weapons and about anti-Communism, it failed to note that our military establishment was being diverted from an active role as an essential element of national planning to a response position of re-action to the inputs of intelligence. This was not evident during the remaining years of the forties. Its first indication became apparent at the time of the Korean War, and what was not prominently apparent in the more open and overt military establishment certainly was scarcely noticed in the early days of the CIA.⁷

In our conversations Prouty amplified on this, noting what he and many other WWII career military officers felt was the enormous mistake made by shifting our country's military posture from offensive to defensive and as part of this, creating the Department of Defense.

The philosophy of the entire military structure of this country changed with this business of the Department of Defense. And coming as it did, right when we were the most powerful nation in the world, with an enormous army, navy and air force, and the nuclear weapon which nobody else had in that period—to put all of that on the defense was an enormous oversight. Those of us who were close to all that felt it that way.

There was no way to say that the World War II armies of the United States were to go on the defense. That really destroyed the structure of the Army and a lot of people on active service felt that at that time. I say that because this business of the communists/anti-communists bit, and the idea of a Department of War or Department of Navy as against a Department of Defense—another major shift—was then joined by this new idea of a Central Intelligence Agency.⁸

As Prouty notes, the shift to a defensive stance was accompanied by a requisite dependency upon a centralized intelligence structure. Section 403, part (d) of the National Security Act of 1947 defined the *complete* “Powers and duties” that would be conferred upon the Central Intelligence Agency:

For the purpose of coordinating the intelligence activities of the several Government departments and agencies in the interest of national security, it shall be the duty of the Agency, under the direction of the National Security Council—

(1) to advise the National Security Council in matters concerning such intelligence activities of the Government departments and agencies as relate to national security;

(2) to make recommendations to the National Security Council for the coordination of such intelligence activities of the departments and agencies of the Government as relate to the national security;

(3) to correlate and evaluate intelligence relating to the national security, and provide for the appropriate

7. *The Secret Team, The CIA and Its Allies in Control of the United States and the World*, 1973, Prentice Hall, pp. 204-5,
<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp9.html#p204-5>

8. Chapter 2, Understanding the Secret Team: Part I, pp. 92-3.

dissemination of such intelligence within the Government using where appropriate existing agencies and facilities: Provided, That the Agency shall have no police, subpoena, law-enforcement powers, or internal-security functions: Provided further, That the departments and other agencies of the Government shall continue to collect, evaluate, correlate, and disseminate departmental intelligence: And provided further, That the Director of Central Intelligence shall be responsible for protecting intelligence sources and methods from unauthorized disclosure;

(4) to perform, for the benefit of the existing intelligence agencies, such additional services of common concern as the National Security Council determines can be more efficiently accomplished centrally;

(5) to perform such other functions and duties related to intelligence affecting the national security as the National Security Council may from time to time direct.

As Prouty has repeatedly emphasized, “To really understand the CIA, you have to remember that perhaps its best cover story is that it’s an intelligence organization. It doesn’t do much intelligence.” The fact is, the CIA was never authorized or empowered to even *collect* or *gather* intelligence. By law it is defined to be nothing more nor less than a *coordinating* agency. Most reporters and journalists who write about the activities and duties of the CIA either are ignorant of this fact, or they are serving special interests. And by examining the defined power and duties—which have not been changed since the Agency was created over 50 years ago—we see that it is paragraph 5 that has been used to support the claim that the CIA is authorized by law to conduct special operations.

Among its other functions, the National Security Council (NSC) was set up as the sole oversight mechanism of the Central Intelligence Agency. The NSC contains four statutory members: the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense. The CIA’s original duties were clearly specified: “to correlate and evaluate intelligence relating to the national security”. But the original intent of this law, written and ratified during the calm before the storm of the Cold War and anti-communist sentiment beginning in the 1950s, was quite different from later interpretations. Regarding the National Security Act of 1947, Prouty explains,

[W]hen Congress wrote the language of this legislation for the CIA—and I printed this literally in the [*Secret Team*] book so that anyone who wants to read it will see exactly what the law

says⁹—it said that the CIA is created to coordinate the intelligence of the rest of the government. That was why it was created. With that as a primary duty of CIA, then the other little tasks and things they were supposed to do come forward and it is a clearer explanation—in fact, it is the only explanation when it is put that way. There was not a single word, for example, in the law that said that the CIA should collect intelligence. There wasn't a single word in the law that said the CIA should get involved in covert operations, and this is the same law that exists today ... We haven't changed it.

But gradually things changed, whether they were written into the law or not.... The people that first became members of this new CIA knew that their job was the coordination of intelligence. They had no doubt about that. The enormous move toward Cold War, anti-communism and all that—all the buzz words that we've lived on for the last 30 or 40 years—did not exist then, at least not strongly. It was coming over the horizon.¹⁰

Prouty acknowledges that the U.S. Government did not confront the fact that there was no real legal basis and no approved structure for covert operations when it wrote the National Security Act.

There is no law, there is no structure, for covert operations. The Government didn't confront that in 1947 when they wrote the law. There has been no revision of the law to accommodate that. There have been decisions by the National Security Council which do assign covert operations, primarily to CIA but, on a time-to-time basis.

In fact, one of the strongest of these papers—the designation was NSC 10/2—was in my files early in the business back in 1955. And I remember that on the side of the paper—written in pencil and in his own hand, President Eisenhower had written that any time a decision had been made for the Defense Department to support the agency with arms, equipment, money, people, bases, etc., that the equipment was to be limited to that one time only and afterwards withdrawn. He did not want the CIA to create a capability that was on-going. He was very specific about it.

That was 1955. Those things change with the times. And they got more powerful and more powerful. And because of that kind of growth, you don't have the legal structure, you don't have the approved structure to deal with it. It's an *ad hoc*

9. *The Secret Team*, Appendix II

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STappendix2.html>

10. Chapter 2, Understanding the Secret Team: Part I, pp. 93-4.

creation. Probably the strongest *ad hoc* creation in our government today.¹¹

In the early formulations for how special operations would be conducted and controlled, President Eisenhower was adamant that logistical support given to the CIA would be limited to a “one time only” basis, without “a capability that was on-going.” And yet through such means as post-World War II nuclear war planning, where the CIA was allowed to take on the role of a “fourth-force”—Army, Navy, Air Force and CIA—to participate in post-nuclear strike functions behind enemy lines, Prouty explains how “the agency was able, despite President Eisenhower’s warning, to create quite a well-equipped military force.”

Right after World War II and on into the early fifties, we visualized that a war would begin with some attack ... [that] would immediately elevate to the level of a nuclear exchange. It was planned that ... we would try to preserve certain areas in the target countries ... [and] have the CIA create certain network agent functions and groups of Special Forces people that we could immediately send in by paradrop. This was the original Special Forces function, not the contrived one that grew out of the Vietnam War.

With this in the war plan, it then becomes included in the basic military budget each year. And with the CIA considered as a fourth force—Army, Navy, Air Force and CIA—what the CIA needed for its war planning functions on behalf of the United States Government, the total Government, would then be treated as part of the military budget—not the agency’s budget. In the beginning, this amounted to trucks, aircraft, weapons, radios and everything else that they visualized their function would require right after what we used to call the “post-strike” function.¹²

Time and time again during our interview—and throughout *The Secret Team*—Prouty described how the CIA, particularly with the nimble mind of Allen Dulles directing it, was always quick to seize any and all opportunities to expand its capability to conduct covert operations anywhere, anytime. Prouty continues,

The agency learned that this system worked in its favor. They had warehouses under their name, in the name of a military unit.... They’d have trucks and jeeps and guns and radios and

11. Chapter 2, Understanding the Secret Team: Part II, p. 130.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 136.

ambulances and everything else the rest of the military had. So the agency was quick to see that if they visualized their post-strike function as bigger this year than it was last year, they'd have more things to put in the warehouse. Then, since NATO exercises are run every year to train in the war plan, they would have to have more and more equipment for the NATO exercises. They did a very good job of filling their warehouses and then in using this equipment, on “exercises”, which really were covert operations.

So this was an area in this business of reimbursement we weren't able to keep up with. We knew it existed, we knew what they were doing, we supplied the equipment, and it was sort of an even exchange. We figured, ‘Well, we've told the agency they're to be the fourth force and they're going to do a job in wartime so we might as well let them use it and train themselves and everything else.’¹³

More than anyone else, Allen Dulles imbued the CIA with his sense of how it should be organized and run. Prouty, who worked very closely with Allen Dulles for eight years, writes in the original edition's Acknowledgments, “... to Allen W. and John Foster Dulles, General Charles P. Cabell, General Graves B. Erskine, General Victor H. (Brute) Krulak for close personal relationships that shaped the course of these events.” Prouty remarked at one point both that the CIA was primarily molded by Allen Dulles while at the same time stating unequivocally that according to the law, it is a coordinating—not a covert operations—agency.

The single primary character of the CIA is Mr. Dulles. There's no question about it, it was his agency. Nobody else has left any mark like his. But you need to see that background to understand what the passage of the National Security Act really meant in 1947. What it says in law is what creates many of these controversies about intelligence today. Because there still is no law that says that the CIA is an intelligence organization—it says that it is a coordinating agency. There is no law that says it is a covert operations agency.¹⁴

Prouty points out how Allen Dulles circumvented the watchdog role given to the NSC (to prevent the CIA from carrying out clandestine operations the NSC did not approve) by such moves as engineering the creation of the Special Group 5412/2 and by shifting

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 136-7.

14. Chapter 2, Understanding the Secret Team: Part I, p. 99.

NSC oversight from directing to *approving* plans. In a 1998 letter to me, Prouty again emphasized the pivotal nature of NSC 5412¹⁵:

During the first ten years after World War II the policy makers of the great powers attempted to define the grand strategy of future warfare while at the same time prohibiting all warlike unit actions on the Vietnamese arena that might lead to the employment of nuclear weapons. As *The Secret Team* has described, a solution to this strategic stalemate that came about during the Eisenhower administration with the publication of the National Security Council directive #5412 of March 15, 1954, which has been known as “The Focal Point Office”, and that function is controlled by the CIA.¹⁶

Prouty also describes the extremely important committee established by President Truman (1948) to study the progress of the CIA’s effectiveness. Allen Dulles and two other people who served on this produced the Dulles-Jackson-Correa Report at the end of that year which “recommended a move more into the clandestine operations area, and more into the traditional deep intelligence area than the law had visualized.” After Dulles was appointed Director of Central Intelligence (1953), he was able to turn NSC oversight to his own designs:

The CIA had been kept rather quiet. It was coordinating intelligence, and it was doing very little in the covert activities field. He felt that should change, but he didn’t have any lawful way to do it. So what he did was he would take a plan that they had made up because of some input from a foreign country or from one of his station chiefs around the world that was in response to some action. Then he would go to the National Security Council. They didn’t direct him to go to X country and do something; they were approving something that he felt he ought to do in response to an action that some of his operators, some of his agents, had seen in a foreign country. That device

15. Appendix C contains an excerpt from *The U.S. Government and the Vietnam War, Executive and Legislative Roles and Relationships, Part I, 1945-1961* describing NSC 5412, “National Security Council Directive on Covert Operations”, approved by President Eisenhower on March 15, 1954. NSC 5412 “marked the official recognition and sanctioning of a much larger program of anti-Communist activities in Indochina and throughout the world,” and includes some of the original formative language that defined “covert operations” in the way the U.S. would come to systemize the justification and process for conducting them.

16. Personal correspondence, June 12, 1998.

enabled him to create activities that most of the time were reactions or responses.

So the NSC found itself not directing covert operations, but approving reactive covert operations. There's quite a bit of difference. When you're doing that with an organization like the CIA, under an ambitious leader like Allen Dulles, it's pretty hard to tell the difference because sometimes you can create a response by kicking somebody under the table and they pound you in the nose and then you point to your partner and say, 'Look at that guy—he just hit me!' But your partner didn't know that you kicked the other person from under the table.¹⁷

Despite the extensive history of how the CIA successfully circumvented the original intent of the 1947 National Security Act, Prouty notes that there are safeguards built into the law that actually address the issue of the CIA conducting special operations that are not directed by the NSC:

[T]here is one part of the law that can take care of this, and this was one of the really beautiful things about that law. No matter what the CIA wants to do or tries to do or is funded to do, it has to have the money to operate. The critically important statement is "funded to do"—because Congress permits the CIA to do an awful lot by pouring money into the CIA.¹⁸

Citing the 1980s example of the Iran-Contra hearings, Prouty explains how the system of oversight and control of special operations is fundamentally out of control if the four statutory members of the NSC are, or claim they are, "out of the loop":

What we've been talking about emphasizes the very great importance of the National Security Council. If the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense can't handle the CIA, then nobody can. If they permit the funding from Congress or any other really covert work to put CIA into areas that they didn't approve, it's their fault and nobody else's.... And here we have the men who were members of the National Security Council—Reagan, Bush, Weinberger and Schultz—all walking off and saying, 'We had nothing to do with it.' Now that, for the next era, is going to create enormous problems, even worse than it did for Reagan.

If Congress doesn't recognize what's happening, they had better do so pretty soon or else they're going to find covert

17. Chapter 2, Understanding the Secret Team: Part I, p. 104.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

operations going on that nobody knows anything about because what they are doing then is regularizing what I said in my book: that there exists a Secret Team that is out of control. And now by doing nothing they have regularized it. That's the danger. If they don't keep the National Security Council directing these organizations, they'll never get the genie back in the bottle.¹⁹

Further, Prouty points out the critically important fact to recognize in understanding how this system actually works. The reality is that carrying out special operations includes capabilities not solely limited to the CIA but also includes people in positions throughout the government:

If you analyze the Bay of Pigs operation very carefully, you will see that its components were far beyond any capability of the Agency unless they had the very willing and active support of the rest of the government. And the rest of the government in a Secret Team mode, not in a regularly established air arm of the Air Force, nor a regularly established sea arm of the Navy, with Navy logistics. For instance, in the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Navy logistics behind all that was enormous. People didn't realize it, but it took place. The same thing occurred with the Bay of Pigs—the Navy was there. They weren't called upon, they shouldn't have been called upon, but they were there. Even the State Department was somewhat involved in the political side of this: Who would follow Castro? Who would be the chosen people to follow Castro? And there are large financial expenditures in such an operation.

These activities don't take place within the CIA alone. And it's important to see the CIA that way. The CIA is always merged with the rest of the government that's taking part in these actions. Because this was true over such a long period of time, there were people who were very familiar with and well-trained for these operations. Every time a covert activity came up, they were involved again. This is the Secret Team. They can carry out these activities.

... You can't say that the Bay of Pigs was 100% a CIA operation—much of the government becomes involved—any more than you can say the Vietnam war, from '45 to '65, was simply under the operational control of CIA. From '65 on the CIA was still there, more than ever, but the military moved in and the military took over. It became too big for the CIA.²⁰

19. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

20. Chapter 2, Understanding the Secret Team: Part III, pp. 186-7, 188.

Prouty believes that special operations are slated to become a thing of the past: “We reside in [a] global community now. That’s the way things are. The idea that there are such things as covert operations is kind of an old-time deal, it’s like going back to the horse and buggy.”²¹

But how soon will such “old-fashioned” ways actually give way to more truly democratic processes? When *all* people—women, other races, aboriginals, the poor, the disenfranchised—have a full voice in shaping how we shall live together on our planet, sharing its bounty equitably for the benefit of *all*, now and for future generations.

As W.H. Auden observed, “the world is divided not into the hypocritical and the sincere, but into the insane and the sane who know they pretend.” It is a colossal understatement to say that it is “difficult” to live coherent lives in a society wracked by over 40 years of government-by-deception and government-by-stealth presented as a “normal” and “civilized”. Before we can change, we must first understand the true nature of society. We must face the facts squarely: what really *is* going on? Only then, standing on the firm foundation of reality, can we take a bold step forward to creatively transform our society in a way which re-connects us with the fabric of all life.

In moving toward a more accurate and honest appraisal of current reality, we are much indebted to L. Fletcher Prouty who has shared so generously his experience in setting up on a world-wide scale “this business that we euphemistically call ‘special operations’.” In this, Prouty was in the unique position of coordinating logistical support for all U.S. military branches in support of government clandestine activities—Air Force (1955-1960), Office of the Secretary of Defense (1960-62), and Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (1962-63).

From this vantage point Prouty states categorically, “there is no law, there is no structure, for covert operations.” Yet today, more than 50 years after this clandestine system of political authority originated, we live in a society governed by laws which fail to acknowledge the reality of unaccountable (and unconscionable) government activities paid for by taxes levied against the unwitting public. There is no informed debate about these global covert operations. There is no discussion about their moral, ethical, or legal appropriateness. This *ad*

21. *Ibid.*, p. 190.

hoc creation has not even been acknowledged by our elected officials who are sworn to represent our interests.

Buckminster Fuller called the CIA “Capitalism’s Invisible Army”²². David Korten does a superlative job in his most recent book, *The Post-Corporate World, Life After Capitalism*²³, of showing how capitalism, celebrated for its “victory over communism”, is now in a position to achieve its “victory over democracy.” Capitalism seduces people with the song of money. Korten enumerates many instances of how the song of money is literally killing our world and our selves; instead, we can choose to once more hear and join in the song of life, that melodic rhythm which includes and loves all sentient beings. *The Post-Corporate World* is required reading for all who are building a sustainable civilization that mimics the self-directing and self-organizing living economies in the holarchy of Earth’s living systems.

The exciting part about being at this point of choosing between alienation and connection is that we have everything to gain when we relink with our souls and allow them to resonate with the song of life. As Loren Eiseley put it so beautifully in his classic work *The Immense Journey*,

All beings in the web of life, all ideas in the web of knowledge,
are part of an immense and evolving whole, as old and as new as
the universe itself.

Sir Laurens van der Post writes in *The Seed and the Sower*, that we need to be “obedient to [our own] awareness and mak[ing the] collective situation individual.”²⁴ Widespread societal changes begin in the changed awareness of a few individuals.

Carl Jung, who demonstrated the existence of the collective unconscious, makes a similar point:

The great events of world history are, at bottom, profoundly
unimportant. In the last analysis, the essential thing is the life of
the individual.

This alone makes history, here alone do the great
transformations first take place, and the whole future, the whole

22. *Critical Path*, p. 103.

23. For a review of the book, see:

http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/seeingPCW.html

24. Laurens van der Post, *The Seed and the Sower*, 1963, p. 155.

history of the world, ultimately spring as a gigantic summation from these hidden sources in individuals.

In our most private and more subjective lives we are not only the passive witnesses of our age, and its sufferers, but also its makers. We are our own epoch.²⁵

L. Fletcher Prouty gives us important facts to consider in reshaping our understanding of our society as it has come to operate since World War II. Not as we were taught in school or would like to believe it works, but how society actually functions.

25. Carl Jung, *Collected Works, Vol X, The Meaning of Psychology for Modern Man*, 1934, Bolligen Series XX, 2nd Edition, 1970, para 315.

C H A P T E R 1

Colonel L. Fletcher Prouty's
Military Experiences
1941-1963

Part I: 1941-1945

Entering the Army, the Air Corps, and Air Transport Command

Ratliffe: We're here with Fletcher Prouty. The date is May 5, 1989. We are going to explore some key aspects of American history starting with World War II and going up to the present day. To begin, and establish a frame of reference for what we will be discussing, why don't you give an overview of your 23 years of active military service in the United States Air Force; where that started and how you got into it.

Prouty: I came on duty before the beginning of WWII. I went to the University of Massachusetts and they had an ROTC program. And in those days—the mid thirties—very few of us knew anything about the military, least of all about ROTC. What I observed was that, out on campus there were some horses. And being a city boy, I didn't know anything about a horse. And I asked them whose horses they were, and they belonged to the army.

So, we had a compulsory freshman year ROTC, which was body work; but the second year, they taught us to ride horses, because this was a cavalry unit. And for me, that was new—leading the horse was something—riding him was really something else. And for the junior and senior year, you had to be selected to go into the course, because that led to being commissioned as an officer in the reserves for the U.S. Army. And I was selected, one of 22 men for the advanced course. That meant we practically had our own horse; three days a week we rode horses and we were getting cavalry training and cavalry education in our classes.

The summer between junior and senior year, we actually took 40 horses and rode over 600 miles on horseback as an army march—as

a unit—we really experienced what it's like to live with those horses for 600 miles. At the end of our senior year, when it came time to graduate, we received, rolled up in our diplomas, our orders to active duty. We weren't drafted, we weren't asked whether we wanted to go or not—we were just given orders, and off we went. I went to Pine Camp up in Watertown, New York, with the Fourth Armored Division.

Ratcliffe: That was what year?

Prouty: That was in 1941, on July 10th. In other words, World War II was going in Europe; we were not involved directly, and the Army was beginning to build new divisions—one of them was this Fourth Armored Division in northern New York. The Army had decided to do away with horses and we had no horse cavalry to be ordered to.

Well, something interesting: little things that happen sometimes lead to important things down the line. The very first man that I reported to as an officer—when I came on duty that day—was Creighton W. Abrams, who became Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army and was our Commander in Vietnam years later. Abrams was from my own home town, Springfield, Massachusetts. He was a graduate of West Point, famous for his football-playing; a very skilled officer with a terrific career during WWII, where he was the Brigade Commander for General Patton's lead brigade of the Third Army that crashed across Europe, defeated the Germans and shook hands with the Russians. A terrific man: Creighton Abrams. So, he was the very first man I reported to in July of 1941, and had much to do with guiding my early career.

Shortly after that, I got orders from Pine Camp, New York, to go to Fort Knox, Kentucky, to a Communication Officers course. And while I was there, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. So then we were in the war.

About a month and a half after that I came back to the Fourth Armored Division. And in some of the mail I picked up when I returned there was an offer from the U.S. Army Air Corps to fly in the Army. I already had a flying license. I had been through flight training in a civilian course while I was in college. And, since I had a license, the Air Force had taken the list of people with licenses—had written to me and said that if you want to transfer to the Air Force you can stay in grade and go right along. So I talked to Captain Abrams, and

he said, "Sure, it's all U.S. Army, we're doing this all together, we're for this Air Force business, why don't you go ahead?"

So I transferred down to Maxwell Field in Alabama and began flight training.

Ratcliffe: And that was about when?

Prouty: That was in about May of 1942. I got my wings on November 10th of 1942, and immediately was ordered into the Air Transport Command and to an assignment at the University of Vermont in Burlington, which was very interesting. They taught us a lot about instrument flying and arctic flying, because, at that time, there was the intent on the part of the U.S. Army that we were going into the north and help the Soviets, and of course we'd be exposed to flying arctic weather and all that sort of thing in the Transport Command, as our Armored Division would be operating as a Ski Division. And actually, the Fourth Armored Division had been issued skis and other northern gear so they could operate with the Russians in their territory. Well now, this is a sudden change of U.S. Army plans, to have divisions operating on Soviet territory—and to have us flying on Soviet territory.

I've often wondered why my orders went that way. Because, when I went into the Fourth Armored Division, all of a sudden I had to learn to ski and everything else (as well as drive tanks, or operate tanks)—and then, when I went into the Air Force, I ended up with a comparable set of orders to Burlington, Vermont. From Burlington I was transferred to northern Maine—to Presque Isle, Maine.

When we arrived the temperature was about 30 below zero—and, as things happen in the military sometimes, it was an abrupt shift. Where there were 50-some young officers just out of flying school in this group in the Air Transport Command at Presque Isle, Maine, and I happened to be the only one who was a First Lieutenant (because of my prior duty with the Armored Force). So, a telephone call one day came, and they asked for me—it was from Washington—and they said: "We want you to tell all 50 officers (and they read the list for me!) that you are being transferred from Presque Isle, Maine, immediately, to Palm Beach, Florida, en route to Africa for overseas service."

Air Transport Command Pilot: North Africa

Ratcliffe: And that was when?

Prouty: That was in February of 1943. So we turned in all our arctic gear, our fur-lined jackets and our heavy boots and everything, and drove to Palm Beach, Florida, and within a month or so almost all 50 of us were in Africa. I was assigned to what in those days was called the Gold Coast—British West Africa (now it's called Ghana). I flew out of a base at the city of Accra—a new air base that actually had been created by Pan American for an airline they'd planned to operate there before the war, called Pan-Africa. Fortunately for us, many of our instructors over there were these Pan American pilots who had assumed their reserve commission ranks of captain and major, and they trained this group of new lieutenants that had just arrived.

We began flying from Ghana across Africa to India, we flew to Cairo; we flew to North Africa. At that time, it was not too long after the American invasion of North Africa, so that we could fly to Casablanca, to Oran, and to Algiers, but we could not fly to Tunis because the Germans held Tunis—and they held the desert all the way across to Egypt, so we couldn't fly in that part of North Africa. But as Transport Command pilots, we were flying both troops and supplies into this battle area. A lot of times we just landed on bare ground, unloaded the plane, and then went back to get another load. It involved flying the Sahara Desert, sometimes as often as five days out of seven. We'd just fly across the desert—we knew the desert as well as we'd know our home country.

Interestingly there, we were immersed in flying. We did an awful lot of flying, a lot of good experience with these Pan American pilots and pilots from other airlines. One day, a Lieutenant Colonel—who, to those of us who were Lieutenants, was a pretty elevated rank in those days—and an older man who had been a Vice President of Pan American—asked me to fly with him on a flight. I didn't realize it at the time, but it represented a personal checkout. He needed somebody to do some other flying and he wanted some experience with me. So we flew a few times together across Africa. Then he said, "Lieutenant, we are going to use you now for a VIP pilot."

Ratcliffe: Who was this man?

Prouty: His name was George Kraigher—a very, very interesting man. He was born in Yugoslavia, and he had a great interest in the Balkans through the war and did a lot of undercover work with units in the Balkans. But, basically, was a strong pilot, a good maintenance man, and a very knowledgeable airline-type operator. I learned an awful lot from George Kraigher.

What this meant for my career was that, a few days later, I was notified that I was going to pick up a general in Casablanca and fly him wherever he wanted to go, and as long as he needed a pilot and crew. Well, this turned out to be Major General Omar Bradley. Without question, one of the finest military men—one of the finest men—I have ever met in my life. I knew General Bradley for many years, even when he was with the Bulova Watch Company after his retirement.

We flew him into the battle-zone areas of North Africa—in Constantine and areas near—I think it was called Telergma and Beaune. These are places just east of Algiers, over where our army was fighting and getting its first taste of battle against the Germans. And General Bradley loved to fly—I mean, actually pilot the plane. He wasn't a pilot, but he liked to sit in the seat and fly the plane. So as soon as we'd get off the ground, I'd send my co-pilot back and invite the general up front. He'd sit there and fly the plane and really enjoyed it.

But what I enjoyed was, he'd look down out of the plane—not very high (an old DC-3, a very comfortable plane), and he'd tell me all the action that had taken place below. He'd say, "Now, see those three tanks over there? Those are German tanks. We knocked them out last week. Now look over here..." It was a terrific briefing of exactly how General Bradley was operating this campaign in North Africa. After that, I flew with him for a couple of weeks and he was called back to England for some meetings.

Ratcliffe: What period was that?

Prouty: This period of flying in North Africa spanned 1943 to 1944.

When General Bradley had gone back to England, I continued to fly many VIP's. One day I had Captain Butcher, General Eisenhower's Naval Advisor, and some others on board and we were flying back to Algiers. The weather was very bad. As I approached Algiers, the Maison Blanche airport, I had to stay at high altitude because of the proximity of the High-Atlas Mountains. I was cleared

by the tower radio to make a let-down on the north leg of the Algiers radio range. This would take me out over the Mediterranean and away from the mountains. I let-down quickly on the north leg and kept letting down until I was below 1000 feet. At about 800 feet I could see the whitecaps on the waves in the big wind that was blowing.

All of a sudden, in those whitecaps I saw the conning tower of a German U-Boat, four men on the deck (the main hull of the boat was submerged), and prepared anti-aircraft guns. Just as I saw them, they saw me. They ran for the guns. I racked the old “Gooney Bird” (C-47) over as tight as I could and headed for the waves and for a southerly return to Maison Blanche. I expected to hear bullets rip into the plane at any moment. I yelled at the radioman to get on “emergency” and call “Sub-Patrol.” I knew there was a Sub-Patrol (RAF) outfit nearby at Blida Airport. He did, and he got them. He reported a German submarine loitering on the North Leg of the Algiers range.

We proceeded on to the airport and landed. All’s well.

Month’s later, when I was Chief Pilot at Cairo’s John B. Payne Air Base my boss, General R.J. Smith received a batch of papers from the RAF. They were addressed, through devious channels, to “Capt Prouty” ... address unknown. They had been to Washington and then back out to Cairo. A miracle in itself considering war time conditions of mail delivery.

The RAF was sending a hearty “Congratulations for the Sub Alert.” They had found the submarine, dropped depth charges, and destroyed the U-Boat. My boss kidded me, “You may be the only Air Transport Command pilot with a confirmed Submarine sinking.”

As I began to fly many different VIPs, each time a separate trip, I was transitioned into a Lockheed Lodestar (we called it a C-57), a very nice little airplane from a pilot’s point of view. It would take six to eight passengers; it had been mahogany-lined; there was a desk and a typewriter in it; there was a bed in it, and it was a real nice plane for a general or some other official and his party. It practically was my own airplane. I just flew it all the time—had a very good co-pilot, radioman and a flight engineer.

In November I was told to get some new tires on the plane because I’d be going on a long trip. We went to Casablanca, picked up a General and his party that were (on the orders) listed as a U.S. Geological Survey team. We had the plane ready for them when they arrived, and I met Brigadier General C.R. Smith. C.R. Smith was the founder and president of American Airlines. He was a brigadier

general on reserve duty with the Air Transport Command—an absolutely magnificent person. So we took off from Casablanca.

He had three men with him who were the Geological Survey team experts and he told me we were going to Teheran. I had been there so it was a trip that I was quite familiar with. By that time the Germans had surrendered at Cape Bon in Tunisia, and Africa was now open: we could fly all the way across North Africa to Cairo and from Cairo on to Teheran.

I don't know if many people realize it, but at the surrender of the Germans in Cape Bon, more German troops surrendered to the British and American armies there than at any other time during World War II. It was an enormous victory when they wrapped up this campaign in North Africa against Rommel and his armies. The old Desert Fox had been the enemy and the opponent of General Montgomery and General Alexander and General Bradley for years.

I should take a minute out to tell you an experience there that I think was rather interesting. At the time of the surrender, I had been flying General Bradley and I was told to get my plane ready for another flight early in the morning. I sat there in the cockpit of the plane and looked out across this big open area of—north of Bizerte in North Africa, and thousands and thousands of German soldiers lined up and marched out to surrender. As they did, they were singing; they sang the Australian marching song *Waltzing Matilda*. The Australians and the British always marched to that song; but at the time of the surrender, the Germans sang that song. You never heard anything so thrilling as tens of thousands of German troops yelling this *Waltzing Matilda* to their adversaries, to whom they were surrendering—the British and the Australians and the Americans who were lined up on the other side of the field. Then the British and the Australians and the Americans came out to accept the surrender of the Germans, and what did they sing? *Lili Marlene*, the German song.

There's something about this hostility of two great armies: it's like the hostility of two great football teams. They're adversaries, but they understand each other. I wouldn't say they had become friends, but you can see just in the way the songs were done and the whole surrender ceremony—which, for the Germans, was a very sad event—and how it was handled. It was really something. I don't think warfare has reached that level since then.

Immediately as the surrender was over—which amounted to their stacking their arms and turning everything over—then finally

the German generals up front, led by a lieutenant general whose name was Von Arnim—six or seven generals—surrendered to General Montgomery and to General Bradley, and that phase of the war was over.

Within minutes, some vehicles came toward my plane, through the dust of the field, and an American officer said, “You are going to take these passengers to Casablanca.” And he put these German generals on my airplane. I didn’t have a gun. I had no weapons on board the plane. I presumed they weren’t armed, but there were seven of them and I got thinking, “You know, I’ll sit up there in this plane, flying along, and they’ll come up front and say, ‘Hey! Fly this across the Mediterranean and take us back to Germany.’—now, how am I going to...?” So, I told the generals I didn’t have much gas and I had to land at Algiers to get some gas and then we’d go on to Casablanca—because they wanted to know where I was going to take them. I found out that the Germans, most of them, spoke English. One of them was a graduate of The City College of New York and another was from another American college. I sat in the back (while my co-pilot flew the plane) talking with them most of the way from Tunis to Casablanca, which in those days took about seven hours in an old DC3. That was very interesting.

For instance, one of the German generals, in talking with me, found out that I had been with armored force. He said, “Oh, then you can tell us about American artillery.” He said, “How does the American automatic artillery work?” He said, “We have been fighting the British for years, and then when we came to the Americans, all of a sudden we were hit with automatic artillery. How does that work?”

I knew that Fort Sill had developed a method of using artillery which would appear to bring down all the guns at once, by firing a single gun off at an angle, and then by using trigonometry, studying the degree of the angle, and by using aerial photographs, the elevation of the land, and they were able then to move all the guns on the target instantly, and the Germans thought it was automatic artillery. So I told him, “I don’t have the slightest idea.” I wasn’t going to tell him.

I took these Germans into Casablanca. I never knew during the war where they went—but I understand they were kept as so-called “prisoners” at the Greenbriar Hotel—down in West Virginia, and that was the end of the war for them.

That was an interesting little incident because, frankly, for an hour or so I was a little concerned about how to handle these German

generals. They were gentlemen, and I'll tell you one thing: I don't think they wanted to go across the Mediterranean. For them the war was over. That was the end of it; they'd had their war.

Air Transport Command Pilot: the Middle East

But as I was telling you earlier, I was ordered to fly a U.S. Geological Survey team across Africa. We could fly that route then because the Germans had surrendered. We flew into Cairo and on from Cairo to Teheran. Teheran in those days was very interesting because of the enormous number of refugees who had slipped across the border of Iran. They were predominantly Russian Jewish people who were fleeing the German armies that were coming into Russia. So, Teheran was a very, very busy place.

After a couple days there, General Smith said we were going down to Bahrain, an island in the Persian Gulf. As we landed at Bahrain, he came over to me and he said, "Here's some money. I want you to go into town and buy some paint and some civilian clothes." And he said, "I want you to paint your airplane. Paint—obscure—the U.S. Air Force markings on it and obscure the numbers on it—all the identification, the visible identification. And I don't want you in uniform tomorrow, I want you to be in civilian clothes, you and your crew." And I said, "What does that mean?" He said, "Just don't have your insignia on, and see if you can get another kind of a shirt or something other than your khaki clothes."

So we did. We went into town and we bought colored shirts and we bought a red necktie and all that sort of thing, so we were civilians. And the sergeant painted over the plane. Then when the general came out he said, "This morning, we're going to fly across the rest of the Persian Gulf—only 15 or 20 miles—into Saudi Arabia." Well, we all knew that we had to avoid Saudi Arabia: it was neutral, and we were not allowed to fly over it. For all the flying we had done in the Middle East, we had avoided Saudi Arabia.

But the general said he had special permission for this flight and that, when I got over the sands of Saudi Arabia, right across the beach, that I should spot a vehicle there and that vehicle would break open a barrel of oil and drive across the desert on an area that was smooth, and I would land in the direction of the line of that oil, which sounded reasonable. I circled the place a few times after I saw them running this line of oil across the sand, and it looked firm and smooth enough,

so I landed on it. It was beautiful—good as any airport I ever landed on.

Well, it turned out that General Smith had been sent there to meet the representatives of the California Standard Oil Company, who were holding their U.S. franchise on the oil fields of Arabia, Saudi Arabia. This was a really very important contact with the Saudi Arabians and with the oil industry.

Ratcliffe: And that was in November of 1943.

Prouty: Yes—November of 1943. And we got out of the plane; and they very kindly took the whole crew, as well as the general's party, and drove us over to an area where there were some oil pipes, that I would say were 10-inch pipes, sticking out of the ground maybe a foot, with caps on them. They'd unlock a cap, spin it off, and oil would just bubble out of the ground by itself—no pump, no nothing. All they said was, "General, come and get it; you can have all you want. There's oil here for years." Now remember, this was 1943. And they've been pumping that oil ever since.

Ratcliffe: They said "General". But the general was the person from Standard Oil?

Prouty: No, the general was Smith. He was the president of American Airlines—he was a Texan; his party were the Geological Survey people, he was just head of the party. So, he represented the U.S. Government for them and they were representatives of California Standard Oil Company, later known as Aramco. They were the founders of Aramco.

They told us that, although they were living comfortably in the sands of Arabia—we couldn't see any buildings, there were no trees, there were no roads, there was nothing in that part of Arabia in those days—they said, "If you don't mind, for lunch we'll get in this little boat we have and go out and see if we can catch a fish or two and we'll eat the fish." Well, that seemed pretty good. So we got in the boat. Not long after that we caught enough fish, we went onshore. They had a Filipino cook who cooked the fish, and I forgot what else we had, but we had our lunch there. We took off that afternoon, went back to Bahrain and spent the night there again.

But that's the first clandestine exercise I was ever involved in. We went in as though we were civilians, just by painting the plane.

Ratcliffe: And that was to avoid the necessity of appearing to violate the neutrality of Saudi Arabia—as opposed to us—as opposed to the Germans?

Prouty: Well, it was purely a formality, so that the Saudi Arabians—if our plane had been detected by anyone in Bahrain or anywhere else—could say that only a civilian plane had visited them, and that it had to do with the oil party that held the franchise in their country, and that would be OK. What we had done is remove our insignia—the general removed his insignia—and it's purely a formality, it's part of the way you do clandestine exercises anywhere: you set up your agreements and you follow them.

That visit to Saudi Arabia was much more important than we realized at the time, because the Cairo Conference between the British, Americans, and Chinese—Churchill, Roosevelt and Chiang Kai-shek—took place only a month later. One of the decisions of that period was to erect—immediately, without delay, right during the war—a 50,000-barrel-a-day refinery right there on that place called Ras Tanura on the coast of Arabia. So, you will see that we were planning on the use of Arabian oil even during WWII, if we needed it. Oil was one of the biggest things we needed in those days: fuel.

That small but important visit, played a key role in the development of the Saudi Arabian oil assets even during WWII, which we didn't realize at the time—at least, I didn't. But I'm sure General Smith knew why he had been sent there.

I took General Smith from there to Karachi, which at that time was in India (it hadn't been divided yet to create Pakistan) and left him there. I then flew back to Casablanca and Colonel Kraigher, who had started me doing the VIP flying, said we were going to fly to Cairo and operate out of Cairo for a while. He didn't say why. But that afternoon I met some American pilots who were civilian employees—civilian pilots—with American Airlines, who had come over from Washington. They told me that they were going to fly President Roosevelt's party from their landing port in North Africa to Cairo at the end of November. And they wanted to know the safest air route from North Africa to Cairo, and so on. So that was when I began to realize that something was beginning to happen, scheduled in Cairo, which later became the Cairo Conference at the end of November.

So Colonel Kraigher and I went to Cairo. And we established an operating base there, because during the Cairo Conference (Cairo

being in the reach of German bombers) we had to be very careful to separate the staffs, and protect them from being all in one place. Much of the British staff stayed up in Palestine (which is called Israel now). The American staff was separated around. And they needed aircraft to fly them back and forth and all that, and they assigned that job to me. So I stayed during the Cairo Conference and did a lot of flying in and out of that area while they were meeting.

One morning, I went out to the plane early and was told I was taking a Chinese group to Teheran. The Chinese had been at the Cairo Conference so I knew they were in the area but I was surprised to find that they were going to Teheran. I think about six or eight men came aboard the plane and I flew them to Habbaniya in Iraq for refueling, and from Habbaniya up to Teheran. When I landed in Teheran I landed right behind a very distinctive plane that Churchill flew in, called a “York.” When we left the airport, which was a few miles out of town, our party with the Chinese was just behind Churchill’s party of British going into Teheran.

During the Teheran Conference the Russians were in control of the security of the City of Teheran. As we approached the city, the center of the city, the entire area was enclosed with about a 12 foot to 15 foot high wall of purple cloth—heavy purple cloth. It was really striking. It encircled the entire city. And the object of it was: anybody inside the purple cloth was cleared for the conference; anyone outside was not cleared; and nobody was allowed through the cloth—a pretty good way of setting up security quickly. And all around that purple cloth there were Russian soldiers carrying automatic weapons.

As our two small caravans of cars approached the gate through this cloth wall, Churchill’s party was stopped for quite a long time. And of course that meant we were stopped. The Chinese were talking with us, and asked if we knew anything about what the delay was and all—and we didn’t know. It turned out that Churchill was traveling in his wartime—what would you call it?

Ratcliffe: Jumpsuit.

Prouty: Jumpsuit. Single-piece suit with a zipper up the front, and had nothing in his pockets -no ID, no nothing. He was smoking his typical cigar, but it wasn’t good enough for the Russians. No matter who he said he was, if he didn’t have his ID, they weren’t going to let him through that gate. Even the British were all laughing; they didn’t know what to do; they couldn’t get through. Finally the Russians got

some other official up to the gate who certified that this was Winston Churchill and let him through. But it seemed kind of strange! At the peak of the war, for the Russians to keep Churchill out of Teheran! That only lasted about 15-20 minutes. Then we got up to the gate, and all our Chinese guests had their adequate ID—we had no trouble—we got through that big purple cloth without any trouble.

The conference lasted for a few days, and it was an extremely significant conference with respect to Asia and the Indochina War. I don't think people have considered that in the context of modern history, and what the decisions of Teheran had to do with later activities in Southeast Asia. Because, one reason that the Chinese had gone to Teheran was to prevail upon Stalin to ask Mao Tse-Tung to withhold attacks against Chiang Kai-shek so that Chiang Kai-shek could use all of his forces against the Japanese and help us get air bases that we needed for the B-29's in China so we could attack Japan directly from air bases in China. It was a very important decision that they were being asked to get Stalin to make. And Mao Tse-Tung did withhold his attack on Chiang Kai-shek.

Now the Teheran Conference, as far as the public and historians are concerned, was primarily a conference between Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin; and it's all a matter of record and doesn't bear repeating here. But there was an additional factor that historians have not dealt with, and that was that the Chinese attended the Teheran conference also. This is very important, because decisions made at Teheran regarding China, impacted very definitely years later upon the Korean and Indochina Wars and conditions in Southeast Asia. As we go on, we'll pursue that.

But the problem was, we were allied with the Soviets during WWII. And we were not allied—or Chiang Kai-shek was certainly not allied—with the Chinese Communists. Which presented a rather fragmented situation when the British and Americans tried to persuade Chiang Kai-shek to attack the Japanese and drive them into the Pacific. He had a problem at his military rear: because every time he would move any troops easterly toward the Japanese Army, Mao Tse-Tung would move his Communist armies against them from the rear. And Chiang Kai-shek was fighting in two directions: one direction against our common enemy, the Japanese, and the other direction against—what could we say?—our Soviet friends, our Soviet allies, and their allies, the Communist Chinese. A bit complex.

What Roosevelt had worked out was: he felt that if he could get the Chinese to talk with Stalin and have Stalin prevail upon Mao Tse-Tung at least to withhold attack during the war against Japan, then he would free a considerable force of Chiang Kai-shek's so that he could use that force against the Japanese—and gain bases in China that we would use then for the new B-29 bombers that were just coming into play to bomb against the homeland of Japan.

Roosevelt was a very thorough person. Just to give you a little idea of how he handled all this: When I got on board that plane of mine—that C-57, that morning in Cairo—I found that there were two or three very large cartons in the plane, that someone had put there. And, since we were just flying passengers, we were going to throw those cartons out. We figured they'd put them on the wrong plane. But a major—a protocol officer who had come from Washington—told me we had to keep them on the plane. Well that was OK with us.

Shortly after we had taken off, I went back to see how my Chinese passengers were doing. They had broken open the cartons. Inside were boxes of cornflakes. Just simple boxes of corn flakes, no sugar and cream, no bowls and spoons, just cornflakes. Roosevelt knew that the Chinese loved cornflakes and that they would eat the cornflakes like we eat popcorn. And every one of the Chinamen back in my plane had an open box of cornflakes and was eating cornflakes as we flew along.

Now, how did Roosevelt know that? How had it happened that he had thought of this whole event so meticulously that he even ordered the cornflakes to be on board? That's one of those events that makes a diplomatic meeting a success. And the success at Teheran at that time enabled Chiang Kai-shek to move his troops and for us to then put much more pressure on the Japanese and to win the war.

It did a lot of things because, in making the agreement with Stalin that we would invade Europe at Normandy, Stalin played his cards close. He talked to Mao Tse-Tung; there's plenty of evidence about that. And exactly one week after we invaded Normandy—on the beaches at Normandy—Mao Tse-Tung publicly allied himself with Chiang as Chiang moved against the Japanese. In other words, they timed it so that we land on the beach and then they'll announce the agreement with Mao Tse-Tung. Pretty clever operation.

Now in that period of time Chiang Kai-shek (who certainly was not any favorite of the Communist Chinese or any other communists) also had as a guest in his country Ho Chi Minh, who was—in his

eyes—a Vietnamese nationalist whose greatest aim in life was to get the French colonialism period ended in Vietnam. Chiang was in favor of that, as were the American generals—General Stilwell and all who were with Chiang—General Chennault. So that the American generals, our OSS, and Chiang Kai-shek supported Ho Chi Minh when, even before the end of the war, they sent Ho Chi Minh down into Indochina and started his action against renegade Japanese there—and greatly influenced his activities in Vietnam, coalesced his people there in armed troops (that we armed)—all as a result of what started in Teheran.

A rather interesting situation—of course we'll talk about that later. But I wanted to emphasize that, because some people have tried to prevail upon the fact that there were no Chinese during the Teheran Conference. I was the pilot of the plane that flew them there, and I know now there are books printed (even by the government printing office) that state that Chiang Kai-shek was in Teheran with Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin.

Air Transport Command Pilot: Eurasia

This VIP pilot business that I got into—I had no idea that I'd be in that kind of work—was rather interesting work. I flew many other people like that. I flew the Turkish ambassador, who had been at the Bretton Woods Conference here in New Hampshire during the war, back to Turkey. A very interesting man. He talked to me about what had been going on at Bretton Woods as we flew north. I had him sit up in the co-pilot's seat. I don't think he'd ever done much flying. We were flying in an area where there were little puffy white clouds up in the sky, and I didn't try to avoid them, I'd just fly through them. Well, I noticed the first time I approached a cloud—at C-57 speed, about 160 miles an hour—he tried to hide under the seat! Because he thought there was going to be a crash! Then after that, he wanted me to go hunt clouds; he wanted to fly through a lot of them. You find interesting little events happen during these details.

As we approached Turkey, he made a statement that was rather interesting. He said, "Fly over by those mountains" (some beautiful mountains at the south of Turkey, near Adana). We went over there and he said, "See that lake?" And I looked down and he said, "That's not a lake; that's oil." He said, "Turkey has an enormous amount of oil. But we have made it national policy that we will not export oil. Oil is Turkey's; it's for us, and we will consume our own oil."

That was in 1944. I have not heard of any commercial development of Turkish oil since then. I think what he said was a true fact and that it still is their policy. But we looked down and saw plenty—of course, there was Turkish oil before WWII; they were in the world oil market then.

This flying into Turkey led to other incidents which were rather interesting. I was called up there another day. I had a passport—Turkey was neutral also—but I didn't have to paint my plane to go into Turkey, because they were very meticulous. If they let my airplane in, they would let a German airplane in. So I got called to fly up to Ankara, Turkey, one day. As I approached the airport in Ankara, I saw another airplane. As I circled to land, I saw the other fellow circle to land. I parked my plane on the ramp and he parked his—I was right beside a German airplane. They picked us up in the same bus. Here are my American crew and the German crew, and we went into the same hotel in town. That's how neutral the Turks were: they kept us on an even keel.

My visit there was rather interesting, because the next morning they got me up early, got the plane ready, and they rushed out to the field with four or five British soldiers. I had been asked to bring a nurse up there, by the way. I didn't know why that was, but then I realized it when we saw those soldiers.

These were the British commandos who had blown up the guns at Navaronne, one of the great undercover incidents of WWII. These British commandos, acting as native fishermen, had started somewhere around Latakia in the Mediterranean, sailed up into the Bosphorus (to the Greek side of the Bosphorus) to where these huge guns were based at Navaronne—they overlooked the Bosphorus to stop any movement or shipping through there up to the Black Sea (or out of the Black Sea). And these five British commandos had blown up those guns.

On their way in, unfortunately, one of the men had stepped on a land mine on the beach. The other fellows told me that he begged them to leave him behind, because he tried to do the best he could, but he was badly wounded (one leg was shattered). But they wouldn't. They dragged him up to the guns; after the guns they escaped. They put him in a boat and went across to Turkey, and they escaped with him. When we got to him, his leg was very bad. Gangrene had set in and the nurse worked with him all the way back. We took him to a big British army hospital that was in Palestine. But this was kind of an

interesting incident, to think of the damage that those five men had done in their own operation.

Another visit to Turkey was equally significant, because we were asked to go to a small air base near the Syrian city of Aleppo. From there we went up north to an open field—there was no air base. And we were asked to decide whether or not we could operate aircraft out of that field, because it was near the railroad track. There's a railroad track that comes down from Turkey on its way across—easterly and, for a few miles, drops a few miles below the Turkish Syrian border; so the track is actually running in Syria at that time (or the train is running in Syria).

I agreed that we could use that as an air base, and I asked, how many planes they wanted and what we were supposed to do. They said, "We're going to have a train come down here in a few days with about 750 men who are American former prisoners of war." As the German Army was retreating out of the Balkans and the Russian Army was coming in, there was a little hiatus there in which our OSS officials were able to liberate many of the American prisoners who had been shot down over the Balkans during the war.

I figured out that for 750 men I would need about 30 airplanes. I could get 30 airplanes up there. We agreed to be there. So we got our orders about three days later to be there. We took off from Cairo. I had ordered every plane coming into Cairo for awhile to be unloaded until I had 30 extra planes. We flew up there, picked up these men and, as soon as we filled each plane, we flew them out. I had taken my commander's airplane—

Ratcliffe: Who was that?

Prouty: My commander was Colonel R.J. Smith. R.J. Smith had been a vice president of Braniff Airlines and was serving in his reserve commission as a colonel (later general) as the commanding officer of the Cairo John B. Payne Air Base. His plane had comfortable seats and we had some cots in there. We picked up the men who had been injured.

Injuries to the prisoners mostly were the result of a very brutal action by the native Balkans. To keep the prisoners from running away, they'd cut a leg off. And here we had these one-legged airmen who had no injuries other than the fact that they'd cut their leg off at the knee, and we had to put them in the plane; we carried them in onto the seats of the plane. Amazingly, I had a full plane for probably 30-

35 men. We had one man who had both legs cut off—just an unfortunate type of thing. They were in fairly good health, but it's a pretty brutal way to keep people prisoners, and certainly not in accordance with the Geneva Agreements on the treatment of prisoners of war.

Ratcliffe: But, as you had also said previously, those people had done that because of their anger at these pilots, these people who had bombed them.

Prouty: Yes. Our bombing attacks on the oil fields in Ploesti in Romania and all, were of course devastating attacks. But we had to limit the supply of oil to the Germans. That was the reason for it—even though we were not specifically at war with some of the people there, the Romanians, the Bulgarians, and so on.

The interesting thing about that was, once we got into the air, I realized that some of my passengers were not these American pilots. They were men from the Balkans. In fact, we were talking, and then later on I learned they were people who had been selected by the OSS in the Balkans for special evacuation before the Soviet armies arrived. Because they were Nazi intelligence officers, and (for some reason) our own OSS wanted to get them out of there. This puzzled us a little bit, but we weren't in the political business so we didn't ask too many questions. But I've done a lot of thinking since then, especially since the publication of this book *Blowback* and others, that shows we exfiltrated thousands of ex-Nazis out of Germany for various reasons after WWII.

Ratcliffe: How did you find out at the time that these people were in fact not allies?

Prouty: One or two things I have never written about, or really never spoken about before today, is that these men very freely gave me an ID. I wanted to know by what right they were on the plane. And I could tell from the IDs, one or two of which I have kept and still have—I have their names and things like that. Then I learned from later associations in my career that this group (some of them) did contain men who had been selected by Frank Wisner of the OSS, who was the chief in Budapest—I should say in Bucharest—and they had come out and were selected for various reasons. At that time I had no way of knowing—they were just my passengers.

But it's an interesting little incident because, as we all know, even before the end of WWII, Allen Dulles, who was in Geneva, was dealing with the Nazi General Gehlen and others for an early surrender of the generals as they revolted against Hitler at the end of the war. So this was a lead by maybe—this was September of '44—this was a lead of eight or nine months before the end of the war in which we were already negotiating with Germans for the surrender of the war and for their own escape from the Soviets who were coming in. Very interesting prelude to things that were coming.

A third episode with this flying into Turkey is also rather interesting. It's hard to contemplate how, during a world war, when millions of forces are against each other, there can be activities through the lines. However our Army Counter-Intelligence Corps learned that the Germans were smuggling enormous amounts of gold from Germany, through the Balkans, into Turkey. And oddly enough (I mean, oddly to me, just a Joe pilot flying around)—through American Air Transport facilities, to Argentina.

Immediately, Army CIC realized that the only going concern that they could have been operating with would be the Air Transport Command (because no one else flew—the commercial airlines weren't in business). So they began to watch the Air Transport Command very closely. And they realized that one or two members (at least one or two) made trips that didn't seem to have anything to do with their normal business. And that these trips included the proximity to Turkey.

They called me in one day, because I had a Turkish passport. I was the only pilot who had a regular Turkish passport. My crew was selected for each flight—they didn't need a passport because I had one—at least for wartime, that sufficed. But I could go to Turkey without raising eyebrows, without having somebody observe it.

So they wanted me to go to Adana, Turkey—go to certain restaurants and look to see if I saw any people that weren't Turks, or Germans, or whatever—Americans—just keep an eye on what was going on while I was having dinner, and that sort of thing. A very simple requirement, but it meant somebody had to go there to observe what was going on.

And sure enough, I did see some people who looked as though they were our military. I told the Army CIC officials in Cairo.

About a month later, this same Colonel Kraigher, whom I'd worked with so much, called me one day and said, "I want you to

meet me at Shepheards Hotel.” So I went down there in the afternoon and we sat on the veranda of the marvelous old Shepheards Hotel. (Unfortunately, it was destroyed in some riots later on, but it was just a grand old hotel—and during WWII it was quite the social meeting place for the coming and going of the military traveling through Cairo.)

I met him there, and he said, “I want you to stay here with me and we’ll just sit out on the veranda and watch what goes on.” He said, “I expect that a taxicab (or maybe two) will pull up and certain people will get out of the cab; and if, by any chance, you see someone you saw in Turkey, just nod your head.” He said, “On the veranda there are a number of CIC people and they’ll do the rest. All you have to do is just nod your head.”

We sat there and sipped our drinks for awhile and watched the crowds. Sure enough, up came a taxi and out of the cab popped an American in uniform. He was a man I had seen in Adana. I nodded my head, and immediately about ten CIC men got up, surrounded him, and off he went. I didn’t see him again—at least for awhile. He was tried for working with the Germans. It broke the whole gold-smuggling ring by trying him and finding out who the other people were, and it really was quite something. The CIC did a magnificent job; that ended it.

But what interested me was that the man they captured was a very famous Hollywood movie actor named Bruce Cabot—a very close friend of Errol Flynn’s. You know about the many allegations that Errol Flynn was closely connected with Nazis, and so on. I assume Cabot must have been, because he was in the gold-smuggling ring. Cabot’s regular base for us—he was the Air Transport Command Operations Officer in Tunis. He was a first lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force, and he was running our end of the gold-smuggling ring. He’d see that the gold got to Brazil labeled as “spare parts” or things like that. And then from Brazil it would get down to Argentina by other devices. It was an interesting little interlude in the wartime.

VIP-flying opened doors to people and to incidents that, as just an ordinary transport pilot, I never would have even conceived of. I didn’t realize it, but apparently some of this is kept on a record. Because, when they want someone to do things somewhat similar to that later, rather than train a person, they’d use one that’s already had the training. And it limits the knowledge of these things down to a few people. Things like this occurred again.

I had been in Africa then for 19 months. I'd been up in the Soviet Union. We had interesting shuttle-bombing flights into the Soviet Union from England at the same time. Before I came back, we went up there. At one of the conferences it was agreed that we could do shuttle bombing. Bombers would take off from England, go deep over Germany, and then rather than return back across the length of Germany, they would just continue a few more miles into Russia and land there. Then they would fly around the battle areas into Italy, and from Italy back to England. They figured there would be much less loss of bombers if they could run shuttle bombing.

They did that without figuring that the Soviets were not as operationally efficient against aerial attack as we thought they were. The Germans followed our bombers and saw that they had gone into an airfield near Poltava. They sent bombers over that same night and destroyed almost every single B-17. I think there were 77 destroyed out of 80 bombers—a terrific loss of planes. We didn't have much loss of life; the crewmen had been moved to some other place.

We got an emergency call in Cairo again to come up immediately to evacuate over 700 B-17 crewmen. So it was the old deal again: get 30 or 40 planes together and off we go! From Cairo we took about 40 airplanes to Teheran, and then from Teheran, up over the Caspian Sea, across the Ukraine to Rostov. From Rostov we used the railroad track for navigation up to Poltava and landed there. We flew supplies up, but then we flew these American crewmen back out. We set up operations there until we got them all out. From my base in Cairo, where I was Chief Pilot, I left quite a few air crews up there, because we opened up regular transport runs into the Soviet Union from that time on.

Our relationship with the Soviets was very, very close: we were treated hospitably. One thing we noticed was that there were no—you might say—"combat-age Russians" in the whole area. There were young folks there. The air base where we stayed was nothing but a field. There was no construction on it at all. This base was guarded by 13 and 14 year-old girls armed with automatic weapons. You never saw any 20 year-olds, 30 or 40 year-old people, men or women. They were all in the battlefield. From that base we could hear the guns over toward Kiev where the heavy fighting was going on.

I saw much of the war—Italy and Europe and Japan; but I never saw devastation equal to what I saw in the Soviet Union. The city of Rostov was just rubble. It had been laid waste for so long that the

seedlings of trees were growing up in the cellars and in the streets and the city was going back to being a forest. It was just unbelievable to see things like that. I saw Hiroshima. Now, Hiroshima was horrible, of course. But you could see that it was a temporary act and it had happened only a couple weeks before we saw it. Rostov had laid bare for years while the Battle of Stalingrad was going on.

The Soviet experience was very interesting. We had Russian maps. But, as you may have read, the Russians didn't make accurate maps of their country—on purpose. At least, that was what they used to do. We knew our maps weren't good. But our Air Force operations office in Cairo had one set of maps that was pretty good. They were the maps that had been used by the crew that flew Wendell Willkie when he made a round-the-world trip in about 1940. And they had made copies of those maps for Teheran.

I was briefed on the flight from Willkie's maps, but they wouldn't let me take them. But they did give me the crude copies. And they said, "Now, as you fly, mark in as many things as you can, to try to get a little more accurate mapping definition." And we needed it badly, because we had no alternative air bases up there. If we had bad weather or something, we had to go to the bases we were sent to—there were no electronic aids to land by, and that sort of thing.

Then they gave me a camera. On this kind of flight I didn't know whether I should be taking a camera because, although the Soviets were our allies, they might not appreciate that. But anyway, I took the camera, and took an awful lot of pictures for our headquarters use. And it shows that, even though in July of 1944 we were strongly allied with the Soviets, there was always this idea that we needed to know a little bit more, and that what they were telling us wasn't exactly accurate. It's interesting to see what things like that meant from the peak of the war period to modern times. It was a forecast of things to come when you see little bits of it like that, such as being asked by our officials to take a camera on that trip. I don't think any of our other crews took cameras.

Air Transport Command Pilot: the West Pacific

After 19 months of that rather interesting work in Africa and the Middle East, I was transferred back to the States and checked out in a four-engine aircraft for oceanic flying. In January of '45 I began flying the Pacific, and doing the same work—heavy, four-engine

transport work. In those days we would fly by way of Hawaii and Kwajalein or Tarawa to New Guinea; from New Guinea to Biak Island over to Leyte (Leyte had just been invaded in the Philippines) and a place called Tacloban.

Here we were close to combat. We'd landed at some air bases that were themselves under bomber attack almost every day. Or, at Tacloban, the airfield was simply a part of the beach. We hadn't been able to get inland at all, and the fighting was going on in the hills just over the beach. We could hear the fighting there, so we stayed on the ground only long enough to pick up a plane-load of wounded men.

The day I arrived at Tacloban for the first time, we were just approaching the beach when we got a call to circle for a while. An aircraft carrier had been sunk, or at least damaged, and its aircraft—all that they could get in the air—were flying to Tacloban to land there. They came in like a swarm of bees! The base wasn't equipped—it wasn't the kind of a base that could handle a lot of airplanes. Some of them had trouble on the runway. They had flat tires or something—and they took a bulldozer and pushed those planes into the ocean. Then they called on me and said, "OK, this strip is cleared. Come in and land."

I'd seen quite a bit of warfare, but had never seen this kind where, when you're right up into the combat situation, anything goes. You just do what you have to do. Here were these perfectly good fighter planes (except maybe for a flat tire) and they simply pushed them into the ocean and then cleared the base and called you in.

Most of our flying out of the Philippines was with wounded men. They had not been able to build hospitals, and we had to get them back to Hawaii to the big hospital. We did a lot of flying in those days just for that purpose.

Later we got into Manila. One aspect about Manila that hasn't been emphasized enough in history is that city was horribly destroyed by the approach of MacArthur's armies and the bombing—the artillery and the bombing. There was terrible destruction in Manila. It was not an easy battle to recapture Manila. Some people think that once we got into the Philippines, we re-took the Philippines easily; that's not so.

After that, I was on a flight to Okinawa. The battle was still going on in Okinawa when we arrived there. It was near to ending—they were wrapping up the battle. We had heard that the atom bomb had been used about a week before and had heard that the Japanese

Emperor had ordered the Japanese to surrender. Of course, that's what we were all waiting for. This was mid-August. The Japanese had quit. Our operations officers on Okinawa held us until they were able to open an air base in Japan, adequate for four-engine aircraft, the Douglas C-54.

There was a typhoon—a terrible typhoon came up the coast and hit Okinawa very hard. In fact, I think it is still believed by meteorologists that the highest winds ever recorded were recorded on Okinawa that day. I know we sat in our airplanes (155 four-engine transport planes) all night long with the engines running, as though we were flying, so we could stay pointed into the wind but stay on the ground. And with all kinds of trash flying through the air and everything—some of the planes were hit pretty hard—but I kept four engines running all night long, actually flying into the wind and staying on the ground.

In the morning, surprisingly, all our planes had been turned 180 degrees around. As the storm progressed, we had to follow the winds, and the storm blew us around. We had been facing I think to the south at night and in the morning we were facing the north. It was an enormous storm—unbelievable. But the plane wasn't damaged, and the next day we flew up to Tokyo over the top of that same storm.

Ratcliffe: Do you remember what day that was?

Prouty: That was on September 1st, 1945. It was a memorable date because we approached in the aftermath of the storm. We didn't see anything of Japan as we approached, but miraculously—well, not miraculously, I had a good navigator, I had a very good navigator—I saw through the top of the clouds the tip of Mount Fujiyama. If you know one peak to use as a positive fix, and have a reliable map, you can make a let-down in the clouds. So we let-down into Tokyo Bay, which is a large body of water and we knew it would be safe to let-down. What we saw there was a line of U.S. Navy ships and the battleship *Missouri* at the apex of the Navy group. We circled over the fleet—near the fleet—we wouldn't circle over them.

Military Experiences

Part II: 1945-1961

On Okinawa: The Surrender of Japan, and a 500,000 manpack Re-Routed to Korea and Indochina

Prouty: On September 1st, 1945 we left Okinawa after an enormous hurricane and flew north to Tokyo over the storm, which meant we had to fly at about 14,000 feet. We never saw any of the islands as we approached, but our navigator got us directly up there so that we looked down in the clouds and right in the top of the clouds we saw the top of Mt. Fuji. With that as a fix we went down through the clouds into Tokyo Bay. We had no electronic navigation aides, but of course Mt. Fuji was a good fix.

We broke out of the clouds at about 1100 feet in heavy rain. There, almost right under us, was the U.S. Navy anchored almost in a big crescent of ships with the battleship *Missouri* as a centerpiece. September 2nd, the day after we made this first flight into Japan, was the day the Japanese surrendered on the U.S. Navy Battleship *Missouri* to General MacArthur.

We followed a small river to an air base called Atsugi and landed there. We found out after we had landed that, out of about fifty airplanes that had taken off that morning, only three of us had arrived there—because the weather was severe. It was just the luck we had of seeing that little tip of Fuji that made it possible for us to get in. But it turned the tables on us. Because here we were: we were the second plane—there was one plane there and shortly after we landed a third plane came. And Atsugi was surrounded by several hundred thousand Japanese. And we thought: we were in a deathly war only a few days before; we'd hit them with atom bombs—what's our reception going to be? And here we were just in an unarmed transport plane.

Our cargo, interestingly enough, was 44 Marines. The other airplanes had equal numbers but, with only three planes we had about 130 Marines. They were going to become the elite guard for MacArthur as he set up his headquarters in Tokyo. So with 140 Marines I don't know how long we could have lasted. But, the Japanese had been told by the Emperor that the war was over. They made no hostile moves. In fact, they came forward and by hand off-loaded our airplane. We had three jeeps on that plane. And by standing on the flatbed of a truck, they lifted the jeep from the plane onto the truck and then lifted the jeep onto the ground. And these were our enemies the week before.

It's unbelievable, to think of how wartime emotions can shift immediately. Of course we need to think more of that, because our wartime alliance with the Soviet Union ended in the same way. When the hostile battles against the Germans and the Japanese ended, they became our friends immediately; and the Russians became our enemies. It's a very strange thing. I don't think that historians have dealt properly with the enormous differences that took place—even before the end of the war (I was going to say at the end of World War II)—even before the end of World War II.

I'd like to recap a few months. The Germans surrendered on May 8th, I believe, 1945. Before their surrender the German foreign minister, Count Lutz Schwerin Von Krosigk made the Iron Curtain speech in Berlin. Not Winston Churchill. A Nazi made that speech. You can read it in the *London Times* of May 3, 1945. He stated that the Russians were going to lower an Iron Curtain over Eastern Europe. Churchill read that and was impressed by it. He had yet to meet Truman officially. (Truman had just become President after the death of Roosevelt.) He wrote Truman a letter in which he spoke about this Iron Curtain being dropped over Eastern Europe. Truman was fascinated with the letter, invited Churchill (later, 1946 I believe) to come to the States, and it resulted in the famous Iron Curtain speech at Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri.

Churchill did not originate the Iron Curtain concept; the Germans did. And the Germans that did were the ones who were in contact with our OSS and who had been led to believe there would be life after war if they allied themselves again with the Americans. Even the Iron Curtain speech had its origins during the war instead of after the war. These are interesting events when you think back to them.

I couldn't help but think, as we rolled this airplane on Atsugi air base in front of the hundreds of thousands of Japanese, that here were our enemies—and immediately they were not. They came over and helped us unload the plane. And they've been our friends ever since. I've lived in Japan for three years since then and never was a victim of any kind of unfriendly act in Japan, under any circumstances, over the years.

Incidentally, Atsugi became the Japanese and Far Eastern headquarters for our CIA in later years and is a very active base for that purpose. So a lot of these things that we date September 2, 1945, need to be carefully analyzed for their impact upon events that have happened since then—the Cold War and all that sort of thing.

There was also another important event: on the day we left Okinawa to go to Japan, I noticed that our Navy was loading ships in Naha harbor at Okinawa. When I came back from the flight—we were living very close to the harbor—I went down to the harbor and happened to run into a Navy captain who was the harbormaster.

Ratcliffe: You came back from the flight on the same day?

Prouty: Same day. It was a short flight. Four hours up and four hours back. We couldn't stay; there was no place to stay. In fact, we couldn't even get fuel. We had to carry enough fuel up to get back. That caused us quite a bit of trouble. We lost quite a few planes that way—they didn't have enough fuel to get back. And we didn't have enough experience with that operation. But we got back that day.

The next day I went down to the harbor and met the harbormaster. Okinawa had been absolutely loaded with supplies for the invasion of Japan. It had been planned that 500,000 men would invade Japan and we had stock-piled what we call a "500,000 Manpack." That's enough equipment, medicine, radios, everything, for 500,000 men for a certain fixed period of time. I wish I could tell you, but it's probably a month, or two months, something like that.

Ratcliffe: 500,000 men.

Prouty: A "500,000 Manpack" of supplies had been stacked up there on Okinawa. Now of course that wasn't all that would go into the invasion, because ships that had been preloaded for the invasion would also come in. But anyway, on Okinawa there was an enormous

amount of equipment. And all of a sudden it was being reloaded on trucks, put back on transport ships, and sailing out to sea.

The first thing I asked the commander was, “Is this all going back to the United States?” He said, “No. We don’t want any of that back. Anything that isn’t going to be used is going to be junked.” He said, “This is going to Hanoi in Indochina.” And he said, “Actually about half is going to Indochina.”

At that time, that didn’t have the same impact on me that it would have today. I’ve since learned that when it got to Hanoi—to the harbor of Haiphong—it was turned over to the representatives of Ho Chi Minh. We gave this equipment to Ho Chi Minh, who was with our own Army, with General Gallagher of the U.S. Army. We were equipping his people so they could help us round up renegade Japanese—and this would be their way of arming and putting together their original army in North Vietnam.

Now this was September 2, 1945. Also on that date, by another coincidence, with the American Army General Gallagher standing beside him and OSS representative Lou Conein there, Ho Chi Minh read the Declaration of Independence of Vietnam. He established the national independence of that country on that same date that the Japanese signed the surrender.

It’s an historic date, because it marks the beginning of our entry on the ground in Vietnamese affairs, which lasted from 45 until ’75. Most historians don’t use that 20-year period from ’45 to ’65, when our Marines finally landed on the shores of Vietnam. They forget that we were there for 20 years before that. We’ll say more about that as we go along, but this is an important date.

We went into Japan three or four times after that, generally picking up American prisoners of war, who had been very quickly released by the Japanese, and we got them all out of there. In one of those flights, I flew along the coast of Japan and flew right over Hiroshima.

Having seen many cities that had been devastated by the war (Tokyo really worse than any of them), Hiroshima was quite an unusual sight. Because you could see that whatever had happened to Hiroshima happened instantly. All of the destruction was in one direction. The wind blew one way. The bomb burst and phum!, the whole city just burst outwards like that. Much of it looked like powder-grey; everything was burned and broken, and steel buildings were bent over.

I flew very low over the area and had a good look at it. It was something that we had to learn a lot about. Because a lot of people have no concept really of what this thing called an atom bomb, or hydrogen bomb, can do to a target. And one bomb wiped it out, totally.

1946-1948: Inaugurating the Air Force's ROTC Program at Yale

While I was on Okinawa we were continuing this postwar cleanup of our prisoners and people that needed medical care from Japan. After a few months in California, I received orders to transfer me to a training program and then to Yale University to inaugurate the Air Force's ROTC program in 1946.

Ratcliffe: This would have been in 1946?

Prouty: This was in September, '46. We—the Air Force had not had ROTC before the war. The Air Corps was part of the Army then and Army ROTC covered Air Force and everything else, so we hadn't had a distinct ROTC. But the decision had been made to establish an Air Force ROTC. So we transferred from San Francisco, where we were living then, to New Haven. I taught there through the scholastic years of '46, '47, and '48.

Those were very interesting years in the campuses and very interesting years for the ROTC program. For example: I would have, say, 35 students enrolled in the course and I might have 200 auditing the course. They were very, very interested in the military in those days. They were very interested in what you might call “postwar studies of World War II” by all of us that were teaching.

There were three of us with the Air Force ROTC program; we were all veterans of the war and we could speak firsthand. There was a Navy program there and an Army program. So ROTC was a pretty strong course. But the student interest amazed me. I was there when President Bush was a student. I remember William Buckley as the editor of the *Yale Daily News*. In fact, I wrote for him several times. Many of the other people of that era now have become rather prominent people in the United States.

When you start a course like that, you have no antecedent. We didn't even have offices. Our offices at first were in a corridor. You don't have books, you don't have textbooks. You don't have the

lesson guides. So we were authorized by the Air Force to teach certain subjects. They gave us a list of including Aeronautics (obviously), Meteorology, Comptrollership (which the Air Force was very strong in—it was a new subject in the military in those days), Personnel, and Logistics. The obvious.

I taught a very interesting course called “The Evolution of Warfare” that went way back to throwing stones and using clubs and on up to jet planes and atom bombs. That’s the course where the crowd of students used to come to.

**1949-1950: Writing the First USAF ROTC text book on
*Aeronautics and a Major Portion of
Rockets and Guided Missiles***

After three years of that work I was asked to transfer to New York City and write textbooks, because we had to get textbooks onto the campuses. I wrote the first textbook for the Air Force on the subject of *Aeronautics*, and I wrote a major portion of another textbook on the subject of Munitions that was the text on *Rockets and Guided Missiles* regarding this entirely new area that was coming in after World War II—rockets and missiles.

It was a very interesting task to be asked to do because we had very little reference material on the subject. My orders authorized me to visit anyone, anywhere in the United States (like at a factory or a university or any other place) that knew anything about rockets and missiles in order to write the book. So I visited Werner Von Braun, Walter Dornberger, the German experts from Pennemunde, and the other big names in the rocket business because there was no one else to see.

Ratcliffe: What was your impression of someone like Von Braun?—personal impression?

Prouty: A remarkable individual. In those days he seemed absolutely dedicated to rocketry. That was everything for him—rockets. He told me about building a rocket that would go to the moon—which, of course, he did. I don’t think we can say that anyone else had as dominant a part in sending a rocket to the moon as he did. But even in those days he would tell me how he was going to do it. And I know, from my inexperienced view of things, that I used to wonder how he meant to do it—because he said he would fire a rocket to the moon,

and then it would orbit the moon, and then another rocket would drop down to the moon—a lander. Well, it's exactly what they did. But I used to think back at that—in fact, I wrote about it. I had to write about how this was going to work. I would have a little trouble visualizing what this man could plan. He was an absolutely dedicated genius. I had no way (or reason) to discuss any of his politics. I didn't even think about that, I was so busy picking up ideas from him.

I remember another thing: I asked him about the benefits of the propulsion systems, whether solid propellants or liquid propellants were preferred. As far as he was concerned, liquid propellant was the only way. His argument for that was, first of all, there is much more specific impulse—much more rocket power—in the liquid-propellant chemicals (the fuels) than there is in solid-propellant chemicals.

I thought of that when we lost the "Challenger" shuttle rocket off Florida, because the trouble was with the solid-propellant component. I still believe they should not be using the solid propellant for that kind of flight. They use them for smaller ones but not for that kind of flight, because the liquid propellant system is much better. I don't know whether you recall or not, but the rockets that went to the moon, the Apollo ship—those were all liquid propellants designed by Von Braun. All the Soviet flights are with liquid propellant.

On subjects like that you couldn't have talked to a more competent, more able man than Von Braun. That was the impression I had. For his years, he was a very youngish man—vigorous, young. Of course, his English was heavily coated with a German accent but I could understand what he said.

On the other hand, Dr. Dornberger, who had been Von Braun's mentor at Pennemunde.

Ratcliffe: —and his military superior,

Prouty: Yes, his superior—was a completely different person. You had to draw him out a little to get him to talk. He was more the manager, he was more the operator. And he was working for a private corporation then—the Bell Aircraft Company in Buffalo. He was a very impressive individual. For the purposes of my book, I had no reason to talk with him at much length. I saw right away that he was just going to talk about administrative things and I didn't need that. I wanted to write about the technical side. So I don't have a very distinct impression of him, as I do of Von Braun.

They were both interesting and they were both, you might say, removed from Germany under this program of bringing German scientists and specialists—and they’re probably two of the most famous that were brought out. I didn’t realize—that was 1949—that in 1955 I would be in the Pentagon, and responsible for scheduling many of those “Deep Water”, covert flights out of Germany. But we’ll talk about that when we get to it.

1950-1951: A New Air Defense Command

After I completed these textbooks and some of the lesson-guide material and all that we needed, the Korean War broke out in June of 1950. My military base at the time (although I was working in New York) was at the Mitchel Field on Long Island, in the headquarters of the Air Force’s Continental Air Command. A decision had been made to create a new Air Defense Command. And for reasons that aren’t clear to me, I was one of five officers selected to go to Colorado Springs and initiate that new command. It was a very interesting situation, because we were developing radars that could cover the North American continent, and that gave us the capability to track any oncoming aircraft and, later on, missiles. We had developed interceptor fighter aircraft that were capable of handling any bombers that might come in.

So we visualized the creation of an adequate defense system at that time—1950. As rocket and missile technology came in, things haven’t changed appreciably and, effectively, today we do not have an air defense system. We talk about it; but we don’t have one. But we thought we could build a good one in those days.

I stayed with the Air Defense Command—I was Director of Personnel Planning for this command of 77,000 people. We were the first ones, in our office, to use computers in such a thing as personnel records, all that management of records. It was a very interesting time. We hadn’t had computers. Everything was done with typewriters and paper and pencil. And we were able to keep the records of 77,000 people up to date in real-time on computers. Of course, they were the old-style computers. I remember the biggest problem we had was getting rid of the excess heat generated by all these computers. But they did a good job. And we learned how to use them.

Ratcliffe: This was for 77,000 government Air Force personnel?

Prouty: Air Force military people. We handled all their records. Actually it became a very important system because we could order full-size units to Korea, to the Korean War, without any trouble at all—because we had all the data right there in the computer. It had never been done before. Immediately, of course, it spread throughout the entire military system. But I believe we had the first office that did that.

Ratcliffe: And that was in Colorado Springs.

Prouty: Colorado Springs, in 1950-51. Then at the end of '51, I was sent to several nuclear schools. A lot of us in the military had absolutely no idea about handling nuclear weapons, the effect of nuclear weapons, what they were, and all that sort of thing. There was no intention to make us nuclear physicists. What they were trying to do was teach us something about the weapons.

The military was going through a very difficult period at that time, because only a few military people knew the technology of the enormous devastation power of the atom bomb. Hydrogen bombs came a little later. It was difficult, tactically, to work that into a military plan because: you get your forces lined up as we did in Germany, and start moving them, and you get hit by nuclear weapons and your forces are all knocked to pieces. Plus the fact that there is this residual radioactivity which is even worse than the explosion.

So I went to three different nuclear schools. And was very glad I did, because I learned early in the business to have enormous respect for their power and what they could do, and really, what they could not do. I'm still convinced that what they cannot do is be used in warfare—not used successfully. They can be used for what you might call in warfare “mass suicide”, world suicide. But not for victory in a war. That's why they weren't used in Korea and in Vietnam. We didn't think of it that way in those days, but that's what happened.

From those schools I was then sent to the Air Command and Staff School at Montgomery, Alabama. This was a six-month course—and it was a very interesting course. Because I had been writing for the ROTC textbooks, I was asked to do some writing there. I wrote the first statement of Air Power and its effectiveness for the new Air Force. It was just a four-page paper but it was reproduced in hundreds of thousands of copies so people could get an idea what this new nuclear-age air power was all about. It interested me an awful lot, and I think it interested everybody in the Air Force.

1952-1954: Managing Tokyo International Airport And Heavy-Transport Flying

Prouty: That was in the spring of '52. I received orders from the Air Command Staff School to go to Korea. This was at the height of the Korean War. I left my family in Montgomery, and when I arrived in Tokyo, as I stepped off the plane, a colonel was there at the foot of the stairs and asked if I was Colonel Prouty. I said yes, and he said, "Your orders have been changed. You're going to stay at this base."

That was the Haneda, Tokyo International Airport. The plane I had arrived on was going through to Korea. They had to find my baggage and unload it. I went in to see the commanding officer of the base and he said: "Because of your background experience" (primarily, the experience I had as "Chief Pilot" at Cairo in the Air Transport Command), "We've just had a man have a heart attack who was managing Tokyo International Airport." This was the period of the occupation of Japan, so almost any major activity was actually run by Americans with Japanese in backup positions.

Before too long I was the Military Manager of Tokyo International Airport, the third busiest airport in the world. However, not as busy as Cairo was during the war—it was not all that much of a surprise. But it was a very interesting period and I enjoyed working with the Japanese, who were planning to take over the field as soon as our occupation ended. I got to know many of them in those days and worked with a lot of them who eventually formed Japanese Air Lines (JAL) and some of the others, manufacturers that were in the business.

All that time I was flying. I'd kept up my active heavy-transport flying. This brought me into the Philippines—Manila; into Saigon, Bangkok, New Delhi, India, and even back to Saudi Arabia.

I arrived in Saudi Arabia exactly 10 years to the date (in the month) that I had gone there with General C.R. Smith when I went to visit the people from California Standard Oil, when we painted our airplane and went into Saudi Arabia back in 1943. And—an interesting little note—I arrived in Saudi Arabia and here it was built up like a modern state, with all this oil money and all the oil people. What a difference it was. When I was there in 1943, it was absolutely barren.

I got out of the airplane, got cleared with all the paperwork (from bringing our plane and passengers in there), and went quickly to a telephone, and opened the telephone book. I looked for the name of

the man we met when we landed on the beach that day (or on the sand that day in 1943) when General Smith got out of the plane and shook his hand. His name was Floyd Ohliger. He was a long-time engineering employee of California Standard Oil and one of the founders of Aramco. Aramco is the most profitable corporation ever made by man.

I found his name and just for the fun of it, dialed his telephone number. Some man at his house answered the phone and said, "Mr. Ohliger is very busy right now." It was in the evening. He was having a big party at his house, an official party. And he said, "But may I ask your name?" I said, "I'm Colonel Prouty." I said, "I visited Mr. Ohliger here in Dhahran in October, 1943." The man said, "Just a minute please Colonel." And in no time I hear, "Prouty, what are you doing?" He remembered me of course, and we had quite a reunion there. But now, I couldn't believe what had happened to the sands of Dhahran in Saudi Arabia in 10 years.

Out of Tokyo we ran a regularly scheduled heavy-transport run from Tokyo to Okinawa to the Philippines to Saigon to Bangkok to Calcutta, New Delhi, to Karachi and then to Dhahran. It was called the Embassy Run. We served the embassies back and forth through South Asia. Again, as I learned later, a certain amount of that activity had to do with the CIA. So you see, once again, we're in this little fringe area of work that goes on all the time, beginning with the OSS and the OPC and the CIA and the rest of it.

In 1953, probably about May or June, the commander of the heavy-transport squadron at Tokyo was being rotated back to the States and they asked me to transfer from managing the airport to being commander of the squadron. We had turned the airport over to the Japanese; they now were operating the field. I became squadron commander, responsible for flights every day to Korea (mostly for the evacuation of the sick and wounded), flights every day to Hawaii, some to San Francisco, and flights two or three times a week to Manila and Saigon and that sort of thing. We were running a major service over more than one-half of the Earth. I also continued the Embassy Run that went all the way to Saudi Arabia.

Ratcliffe: When was that, in 1953?

Prouty: That was in about—oh, let's say about June of '53. I stayed in that job until December of '54. It was very interesting in that period

because, although none of us out there realized it, we were gradually stepping up American influence in Indochina.

One of the first things we realized was that a lot of C-119 heavy transport planes (we used to call them “flying boxcars”) were operating under an airline we knew as CAT, Civil Air Transport Airline, with American pilots. They were delivering supplies to the French, who were deeply involved in fighting Ho Chi Minh’s Viet Minh forces and especially in trying to extricate the French army out of Dien Bien Phu. The first American airplane and crew shot down in Indochina was shot down trying to supply Dien Bien Phu at that time, in 1954.

Other flights that we were operating from Manila served the logistics needs back and forth between Manila and Saigon for the Saigon Military Mission (which we’ll talk about later). I met then-Colonel Lansdale (and Bohannon and many of his people who were connected with that). And in that long five-and-a-half-hour flight between Manila and Saigon we spent many an hour talking about his activities in support of the election of President Magsaysay and the planned activities of his organization in Vietnam—which at that time was just beginning. The White House approval for that took place in early 1954, when we were still flying that run regularly.

Some of these practical, everyday working experiences in the Far East played a strong role in my work later in the Pentagon between 1955 and 1963. The rest of the transport flying was rather pedestrian. We had a very busy time, we all were doing quite a lot of flying in that period.

1955: Attending the Armed Forces Staff College

At the end of 1954 I was selected to attend the school run by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, called the Armed Forces Staff College. That’s in Norfolk, Virginia, at the Norfolk Navy Base. It’s a six-month school—an excellent, excellent military course. I happened to be there for the first half of 1955.

One part of the curriculum is quite outstanding for that period. One of the courses the school gave was to set up a NATO-type combat operation. They would divide the school into two forces: one would be Red and one would be Blue. And obviously, the Reds were the communists. So they were the ones that were attacking the West. They were the ones that began—or initiated the attack. Those of us in

the Blue forces would defend against the attack. It would be the hypothetical NATO confrontation through Europe.

In the assignment of forces—very interesting how the school did that—they assigned each student a role—like a commanding general, like Patton, like Bradley, like Montgomery—and you're in charge of what goes on through the area, as though you were a regular top general in the command. It's very, very good experience. And the school staff had quite a lot of experience in running these courses—each class—that's twice a year.

But in '55, for the first time, they assigned a student commander of nuclear forces. This was new. They gave the Soviet army nuclear capability. So it was the first time that two large forces (NATO and Warsaw Pact) would confront each other, potentially, with nuclear weapons.

I was made the Commander of the Nuclear Force on the Blue team—and had no—I'll admit it frankly—I had no idea what you would do with nuclear weapons in that kind of a war. But I figured: if they can hit as hard as I know they can hit, then, when I see the Soviets breaking through here or breaking through there, I'm going to hit them with everything we've got and wipe them out. Whether we could use the territory afterwards or not, that was someone else's business—the other general's job. I took care of that one.

The way this plan broke loose is rather interesting. The Red forces attacked through the Balkans, and into Turkey, and made very fast gains into Turkey—because they surprised the Blue forces in the main part of Europe, where they thought the main attack would be. And they made this flank run through Turkey and the Balkans, down into Greece.

Within about three days, the Red forces had taken Greece, had about half of Turkey, and were obviously heading for the Middle East and the oil and the routes to the world through the Middle East. It was a clever maneuver. Those of us on the Blue team had no idea that it would happen this way, so we didn't have enough forces on hand in Greece and Turkey to stop them.

So I presented the idea for a nuclear counter-attack. What I had done was, I measured how many miles were on the Soviet front—in that area. I divided it up into a certain number of nuclear weapons. And I decided that, if I set these nuclear weapons down like fenceposts along a fence, I'd completely stop them. So I asked for the permission to drop nuclear weapons that way. There was no way they

could refuse me, so they gave the OK. So we dropped them. And when we saw what happened—of course on paper, but—when we saw what happened, I went to the chief umpire of the war game, a “Three-star” Vice Admiral, and I said, “Admiral, the war is over.” He said, “On what grounds?” I said, “We have wiped out all of these forces. We have destroyed all of their routes. We have destroyed all of their communications and their supplies with atomic bombs in a line from the Bosphorus to the Black Sea. The entire territory is radioactive, so nobody can go through there. The war is over.”

It just shocked the whole group—because, they knew that too. They knew that nuclear weapons had that capability. It took them about a day; and after that day they called off the rest of the exercise. It was supposed to run for a month. And this happened—we did it about the fourth day.

This is very important—because I don’t know of any other time when our military have actually confronted on the ground, on military maps, the force structures that would be used for such a defensive action, and then the impact of what nuclear weapons could do. One of the reasons I declared the war to be over was because I would have used my other nuclear weapons against any other outbreak exactly in the same way. And they agreed; they agreed the war was over.

But what they really agreed to, what we spent the rest of the month talking about as a review of that, was: “What are we going to do in war plans?” How on earth are we going to fight a war? We had fought the Korean War to a standstill—no nuclear weapons. When General MacArthur had tried to cross the Yalu River into China he had been stopped for procedural reasons, but mainly because our administration thought that the response against his attack would be nuclear. So we didn’t do it.

The Vietnam War had not heated up at that time—the Vietnam War was underway but it was all covert. This was just a school exercise, but done seriously and with many senior officers there. We had probably as many as twelve admirals and generals who were the umpires of the whole thing. I know from my point of view, it was a very convincing activity.

**1955: Assignment to New Position of “Focal Point” Officer
for Air Force Support of
U.S. Government Clandestine Operations**

I had been told when I went to the school that my assignment from the Armed Forces Staff College would be to go back to Colorado Springs to the Air Defense Command where I already had experience. I was quite surprised at the end of the course to find out that I was being sent to the Pentagon.

Ratcliffe: Let me stop for just a second. In this course, then, it sounds as if they were learning from the experiences of you and the others participating in these classes about the limitations inherent with nuclear weapons.

Prouty: This is the way those schools are run. They're excellent schools; they really are—like Army War College, National War College. They are all run that way. And the senior officers are intelligently selected to do that—to let the people who have the roles in these exercises carry out the roles just the way General Patton did—just have the run of the Army.

It's a good point you make, because there was no contest between anybody about the things we said we did or could do, as long as it was valid. The others recognized it right away. This is quite true of the way these schools are run, and it's what makes them good. They're really good military schools.

However, in modern-day clothes they have a very serious problem that they cannot handle. Because we were talking about atom bombs. Now the hydrogen bomb—every American should be required to read about the destruction created—the power, the force of the Bravo Shot at Eniwetok on March 1, 1954—that was above 15 megatons. It would be unbelievable. It would wipe out any city—Los Angeles, Washington—and not only wipe it out but move the debris that's lethal hundreds of miles downwind. You cannot fight war with that.

So, admittedly, today there are enormous problems in trying to visualize a real war. I personally am willing to go off the deep end and say we'll never fight another all-out war. War will be fought economically or by terrorists—one end of the scale or the other.

But you see, that little battle we had in '55, was a very significant step in the development of overall military planning. I went to the Pentagon from that school and was sent to the Air Force Plans Office. This was in July of 1955.

I had been there about, oh I don't know, three or four weeks when I received a call to go to the office of the Chief of Staff of the

Air Force, General Thomas D. White. General White's career had been in intelligence. He'd had many other duties and was a very well-trained and experienced intelligence officer.

He told me that the National Security Council had published a Directive—#5412, in 1954—and that Directive defined “Covert Operations” and established how the United States government would perform and support covert operations.¹ It required that the Department of Defense provide the material support, the personnel support, the bases, the equipment for clandestine operations, whether they were to be run by the CIA or by the Defense Department or both. Whatever the clandestine operation, we would provide the manpower and the logistic support. This would require special techniques and special procedures to keep it secret, to pay the bills, and all that sort of thing—handle people who were killed, and so on.

He said to me, “We have no policy on this. This is new. And you are going to be the ‘Focal Point’ Officer. You’ll be given an office and responsibilities in which you will draw up this policy in conjunction with all of the air staff experts that are needed and in conjunction with the CIA.”

I had never (other than in peripheral day-to-day work) had anything to do with CIA. But I found out that in that period—1955—a great number of those people in the CIA were ex-military people, who had the same ideas about combat that I had, and clandestine operations, and things like that. So I sat down and for at least six months worked to draw up the paper, a formal paper, for the “Military Support of the Clandestine Operations of the United States Government.”

Ratcliffe: Now what was your title?

Prouty: I was the “Chief of Team B.” That is a euphemism for being in charge of special operations, or clandestine operations, for the Air Force. I established the “Focal Point” office and ran its staff. We had staff all over the world, a rather large office, and special communications. I stayed in that job (precisely the same work, same office) until 1960, when I was assigned to the office of the Secretary of Defense, in the Office of Special Operations under a retired U.S. Marine Corps General Graves B. Erskine.

1. See “Appendix C” on page 330.

Now, in getting this work done, I did a lot of work with our general counsel in the Air Force. In other words, we needed a lot of legal help. Because for clandestine work, in order to be effective, the bills have to be paid without leaving a trail. You can't go to Congress and say, "We need \$10 million because we're going to run some covert operation." You have to have the money available all the time. It has to be ready and we have to know how to use it. Or, if we used twenty airplanes in some covert work and we lost three of them, we have to account for the loss. Just like you'd have to account any loss you had in a business or in the military—and on and on.

We've seen in the recent publicity surrounding Colonel North and General Secord and all those people, what a difficult time they had accounting for Hawk missiles and T.O.W. missiles for delivery to Iran. It's not easy. The aspect that intrigued me was: many of the words they used in their testimony (which apparently weren't noticed by either Congress or the press) are the code words we had in our original plan back in 1955.

Ratcliffe: What were some of those typical words?

Prouty: One of them that is a really key code word is that Mr. Weinberger one day said that: "We didn't do anything out of the ordinary. We just used the Economy Act principles and went ahead and provided what was needed for the Contras and for Iran." Well, The Economy Act of 1932 became the heart of the covert program.

I don't think this is the place to elaborate on that, but that's a code word which he used. And if Mr. Weinberger says "we used that," then he must have known what he was doing was covert. But the press and the Congress didn't notice that and it went through. That was repeated many a time. Other people repeated the same terms and others fabricated terms like that.

When I finished with this "Team B" document it was approved by the Air Force. We had no trouble with that. We told the Army (what we call "coordinated"), we coordinated with the Army and Navy, who had developed their own documents—very much like ours. We got it approved by the Secretary of Defense and his special counsel for this, and arranged support primarily with a special office in the Comptroller's Office, so that all the money and everything else could be taken care of.

Then I was told to go over and see Allen Dulles, who was Director of Central Intelligence at that time, and his general counsel,

an absolutely wonderful person named Larry Houston. Larry Houston and I worked on this for several weeks together. I was not there for their approval; the Department of Defense doesn't need the approval of the Central Intelligence Agency. We were there just to be sure that we could cooperate on the same programs and procedures effectively.

Coordination of the CIA: How Covert Operations Are Run

Prouty: The really interesting point about this coordination with the CIA is that it gets you into the hot core of how covert operations really are managed. You try to run them as much like an ordinary military operation as you can. So one of the things we did was we created literally hundreds of false military organizations.

We could take rifles out of a Marine storage facility—say a thousand rifles—and have the Marines transfer them to the Air Force. Now that's a perfectly legitimate action within the military. The Air Force credits the Marine Corps with a certain amount of money and the Marines are happy. They can go buy more rifles if they need them, and if they don't they just put the money in their own account. The Air Force has these rifles. So the Marine Corps's not going to say anything. It was simply a regular transaction. There's nothing going on to raise eyebrows there.

Now the Air Force has a thousand rifles. So the Air Force has a unit we'll call the 1234 Logistics Squadron at the Fort Meyer base, where we have many other special units. And we assign these thousand rifles to that 1234 Logistics unit. But that unit has nobody, or it has one man, and he has a telephone listed under that 1234 Logistics unit. But that unit really belongs to CIA. Now, nobody knows that except this clandestine system we established, which we called "Tab-6".

The transfer mechanisms are made in accordance with the National Economy Act of 1932 (believe it or not, '32) as amended—as it's amended currently. That act permits us to do this easily and without any raised eyebrows. It's a perfectly normal financial transaction within the Department of Defense, given the fact that the Defense Department people don't know that this phony unit is not a real Air Force unit.

By transferring it to that unit, we have now put it in the hands of the CIA. That unit, though, is given a fiscal account. And we transfer enough money now to cover the cost of those rifles back to the Air Force's account. So the Marine Corps came out even, now the Air

Force comes out even, and now the CIA is charged for the cost of this transaction.

By the way, it's this system that proves how ridiculous some of the defense in this "Iran Contra" thing was. The Contras don't need money for their support. You don't transfer money—but that's another story. But you can see, we were avoiding this—that we knew what happened when you're talking about the money for the Contras. It's ridiculous. We didn't transfer money for the Bay of Pigs people. We didn't transfer money for the big rebellion that we supported in Indonesia. It cost hundreds of millions of dollars; we didn't transfer a penny. Nobody knew about the money. We didn't raise money from the Sheik of Borneo or from the King of Saudi Arabia. The money was transferred quietly on paper in the government. And nobody saw it because of the Economy Act principles—which Weinberger talked about anyway! There's something very much mixed-up in this Iran/Contra thing, because they didn't need the money to transfer in the first place ... unless someone was stealing it.

Ratcliffe: But no one else would know that who was just in civilian life.

Prouty: That's right. Nobody in the newspapers, apparently, or Congress, apparently, knew it. But anyway, this is how we do it. Then the Agency has a thousand rifles. Now they could put them in use on whatever project they had that had been approved for the use of those rifles. And nobody knows they're being used—with another exception: it's Military people that use rifles, not Agency people.

So we would have—I think in my day we had about 5,000 military people within the CIA who were there for the benefit of the Agency and may or may not have been paid by the Agency, depending on how we shared the benefits.

Again, that gets into the intricacies of Colonel North and his case. Was Colonel North really working for the National Security Council? Or was he just another Marine officer doing what the Marines wanted to do? And is he paid by the Marine Corps, therefore would be under the Marine Corps's jurisdiction? He wasn't under the jurisdiction of NSC; he just had an office there.

We used to do the same thing with about 5,000 people. And we had both ways of doing it, but the majority of the way was: Military would pay their own men and would retain control over their own people.

This is the kind of coordination that we carried out during the early part of '56 with Larry Houston and some of his people. Until finally, about the summer of '56, the entire "Tab-6" coded program was approved. Then Mr. Dulles called me in one day and said that he was going to send me around the world to many of his stations—I think 40 or 42—to meet his "Chiefs of Station" around the world, with one of his selected people and then with others in the different regions, like European region, or Middle East region, and so on.

So in the fall of 1956 I traveled, by way of Tokyo, and Manila, and India, and Teheran, and Istanbul and so on, around the world to all the CIA stations. By that time, our program was in effect. Myself and my staff had been properly brought into all this work. We understood how it was going to work, We had the bases established; we had many people and a lot of airplanes assigned to the program. The work became effective (as we now know it) by the end of 1956.

Ratcliffe: What was the purpose of your trip around the world, in seeing these stations?

Prouty: The Agency runs its business around the world under certain very important people known as the "Chief of Station:" Chief of Station, Paris, Chief of Station, Saigon, Chief of Station, Manila. Well, I met 40 or 42 of them on this round-the-world trip. A lot of what you do in clandestine work has to be done on a secure phone call basis. You understand each other, you have to know the person. It was a very good move. And I got to meet these people and meet some of their staff. I knew what buildings they were working in.

For example, in Athens: They were working in what's called the MAAG, the Military Aid and Assistance Group. That was a military staff, I think, of about 15 people, supposedly. I walked into a building with four floors crowded with people. CIA was using the MAAG for cover. So if you know that, it helps you to do your business with that office. Same thing like that all over the world.

The Suez Crisis of 1956

Most of this trip that we made in 1956 had been carefully planned ahead of time, but there were two rather significant events which arose during the trip that we all know about that sometimes need a little more understanding. One was the Suez crisis in 1956. At that time the British and French, planning together for a major covert operation, wanted to invade Egypt and overthrow Nasser, the President of Egypt. And helping them were the army of the Israelis under their famous general, Moshe Dayan.

Just as we arrived from Teheran into Istanbul, Turkey, we noticed something quite unusual. We were booked into a hotel that had not opened publicly up till that time: it was the new Hilton Hotel in Istanbul. And we had been told that. We were told we had rooms, but the hotel was going to open, in something like the next week. But the night we got there, the hotel all of a sudden filled up. All the people were wives and children of prominent, wealthy Egyptians.

We couldn't figure out the reason for this until the next day when we learned of this attack on Egypt by the British and French and by Moshe Dayan's fast attack across the Sinai toward Egypt. This turned out to be a very historic event because, if you'll remember, the British and French were successful with their landings and probably within a few days could have reached Cairo. Because, in the planning of their attack, they took care of something that was absolutely essential.

A clandestine force of British and French fighter aircraft destroyed every single combat aircraft that the Egyptian air force had. So that, in their attack on Egypt, there was no air attack. They didn't have to worry about air cover. In modern warfare, that is so important. We learned a lot from that plan. So Dayan's move across the Sinai was uninterrupted by any air attack—he just moved across. And he approached Ismailia on the top of the Red Sea almost without opposition.

Due to the political situation, John Foster Dulles, the Secretary of State, "acted" as though he was amazed by this action of the British and French and the Israelis, and spoke worldwide that they must stop, that they must recall their forces. This shook the British something awful—and the French. But they did, they stopped the forces. Then from Moscow, Khrushchev issued another long-range threat. He said: "If the forces aren't withdrawn, I will fire rockets on the capitols of Europe"—meaning nuclear rockets (we assumed). Without any delay, the British and French backed off the shores, and Dayan's army stopped where it was.

This had a long, long-term effect. Because it's quite clear that had the British and French captured Egypt and controlled the Suez again, there might not have been a major war, or an escalation of the war in Vietnam, or the loss of Algiers to France. They felt very bad about this opposition from Dulles. And Dulles' claim was that he had not been told that they were going to do this. There's a lot of controversy about that. But we can add, from our side, that we knew everything they were doing, because we had U-2's flying over their forces and we knew exactly what they were doing. So, Dulles' comments were not exactly accurate in this regard. The Department of State may not have been told, but they knew what was going on.

The other side of it was the threat from Khrushchev—coming at that time, early in the rocket age, this was '56—had us going to the drawing boards immediately. We found that a missile fired from the area of Moscow to the furthest capital in Europe would have to go about seventeen hundred miles. This magic seventeen hundred-mile figure led to the design of what was called the “intermediate range missile.” People used to wonder: why would we establish this “intermediate-range missile”? Well we figured, if the Soviets have missiles that can go that far, we ought to have missiles that can go that far. Just like, if the Soviets had a Sputnik in space, we ought to have a Sputnik in space, and so on. It's the old typical mirror-image game: if they have it, we need it. But these things grew out of this attack on the Suez, which is still very controversial. You can scarcely talk with an English—or French man who knows about this subject without him becoming very, very emotional about the negative American role in it.

The other side of it that's quite interesting, is that the French have perfected an underground service (such as we were developing during our trip and before) for clandestine activities that was very effective. It was a commando unit under the French navy. The leader of this was an admiral named Ponchardier, the youngest admiral in the French fleet. Admiral Ponchardier and his underground commandoes were actually in Cairo—and actually at the palace.

Had they been given a few more hours, they obviously would have captured Nasser. In fact, Ponchardier said to me later in Paris that the object of their attack was to put Nasser's head on a plate. They were there. They were in Arab costume, Arab clothes, those French Foreign Legionnaires were a professional underground organization. They melted back into the crowds and they left Cairo, one by one,

down different trails, and rejoined the Foreign Legion and disappeared.

That was another lesson we learned from that period. We were developing our clandestine forces at this time—in fact, that's why we were on this trip. And we were learning lessons from these more experienced people as we did.

The CIA in Europe

Shortly after that we left Istanbul, and the next stop was in Athens, which also provided a bit of information. I guess enough has been said, these days to go into it in some detail: In the vicinity of Athens there was a camp for people we called “stateless people.” They were from various countries—they were volunteers. But they were the people who were used in what we call, euphemistically, “mechanics” (hit men, gunmen).

Even people in that insidious trade have to have families—the families have to go to school. They need a certain amount of training and equipment and education and control. And what they do is, they develop a little community; and these people live in that community. Then, when they are called upon for their jobs, they do their job professionally—are brought out quickly and back into the camp—and they fade back into the community.

It's something that most people have no idea that we have. However, it was President Lyndon Johnson himself who said: “The CIA runs a ‘Murder, Incorporated’” and President Johnson knew what he was talking about. I was there, and I knew what he was talking about. He had been in the procession at Dealey Plaza, in Dallas, on November 22, 1963; and he had experienced it.

After Athens we went to Frankfurt, Germany, with a landing in Vienna, by commercial air. As we were leaving Vienna, it was early in the evening, they delayed our plane. And delayed it and delayed it—we couldn't leave. Without any announcement, they just delayed the plane. Finally, they called to us and said we could get on the plane. No sooner had the regular commercial passengers gotten on the plane than 10 or 12 people rushed onto the plane and down the aisles. They were heavily bandaged. Some of the bandages were covered with blood. Some of the people were very badly injured. They were all very, very emotional—men and women—and were from Hungary.

They had been taking part in the Hungarian revolution which was so terrible at that time—in 1956. I have no idea how that group

was singled out to fly on that plane, except they all needed hospitalization. And they all needed to get away from Hungary. Apparently they were some of the leaders and they were being searched for by the communists. So the plane flew to Frankfurt. Immediately when we got to Frankfurt there were ambulances there that took these people off to the hospital.

Our reason for going to Frankfurt was because that is the CIA headquarters for Europe. It was my first visit to the I.G. Farben building, where they had their headquarters. We arrived on the evening of Thanksgiving. I was pleasantly surprised to find a note on my door in the hotel where I was staying that said: “Here is your ticket on a train. Get on the train immediately and we’ll all have Thanksgiving dinner in Garmisch in the Bavarian Alps.” I didn’t expect that at all. But it was some of the Agency people there who had decided to spend Thanksgiving down in the very beautiful Alps.

So this man who made the trip with me around the world and I jumped on the train, down the Rhine, into Bavaria and to Garmisch. We arrived at maybe 10 or 11 o’clock at night and we spent the Thanksgiving weekend in the Alps with people we’d come over to work with.

The Frankfurt headquarters is very interesting. It had been the headquarters (and still was in those days) for interviewing what they called “defectors”—people from East Europe—no matter how they got there, whether they were from Poland or the Ukraine or from any other Eastern European country, including Germany. They were all interrogated against their backgrounds to determine whether or not they were true defectors, whether they might be underground plants by the communists, what their skills were and what their use in this country might be (in America), or where they should be sent to from that area. There were tens of thousands of these people.

Among them were (we now learn) thousands of ex-Nazis, or Nazi sympathizers from the area, who were being brought to the United States for their various skills and so on—like engineers, or doctors, or psychiatrists.

In fact, it would be interesting to a lot of people to note that in a register such as the public register of the American Psychiatric Association, dated 1957, over 7,000 people listed are from Europe and a great number of them are Germans who were in the World War II age group—so they were out of the ex-Nazi psychiatry growth patterns—professional community growth patterns. It’s amazing that

so many of them were absorbed into that community in this country, along with engineers, rocket experts, and all the rest.

We also learned while we were there that Frankfurt was the European base for the border flying and other aerial surveillance activities. This was before the U-2 started operating; it later became the European base for U-2's. We had aircraft flying the borders, doing surveillance with either radar or photography in that period. They were quite effective. We also had an enormous balloon program. We would launch large balloons, loaded with leaflets or loaded with instrumentation, that would provide various propaganda information throughout Eastern Europe. (The predominant wind is west to east there.)

It was an interesting program. You'd think that just random balloons wouldn't accomplish much, but they apparently did. This program was being run from that area. There was a base at Wiesbaden which was entirely operated under what we called "Air Force cover," but was for the operation of CIA aircraft. And they were very active all over Europe.

So that stop was a big business stop for our trip; and my work with the Agency centered on that group for the next five years. They were the most active participants we had in our global covert operations network.

Ratcliffe: Out of Frankfurt.

Prouty: Out of Frankfurt and Wiesbaden. From there we went to Paris, and this was the SHAPE headquarters, European headquarters.

Nuclear Warfare: the CIA becomes a Fourth Force

Here we found another interesting fact: in the postwar thinking of what we call a "nuclear exchange"—the same thing I was talking about when I said we did some of this nuclear exchange work in the JCS school that I went to—the current war plan of the United States projected that we could set aside "safe areas" in the Soviet Union where neither the bombs themselves nor the radioactivity—due to weather patterns, hoped-for weather patterns—would leave a certain area free. We could paratroop people in there following a massive nuclear attack to try to immediately create an organization which could run the Soviet Union after the tremendous slaughter of the

people in a nuclear attack region. It was wishful thinking. But, it was in the war plan—the best we could do.

This was the original role of Special Forces. “Special Forces” were created for that post-strike purpose; that’s why they existed. That’s why Special Forces was so close to the CIA. Because the CIA had the responsibility, in the war plan, for opening up the contacts with people in these selected areas through agent networks—which were quite precarious. The agent networks were built on the old “Gehlen” organization from World War II.

People have wondered what the pattern was for CIA to take over so much of the old Nazi intelligence organization, under General Gehlen, and then turn right around and use it. This was one of its major uses. It was immediately turned back on the Soviet Union, and that’s where Gehlen’s Nazi intelligence was the best anyway. Gehlen had perfected Eastern bloc intelligence for the Nazis when he was the chief of East European intelligence for Hitler. And now he was very much a part of the American intelligence system, but focused on the same people: the Ukraine and Eastern Europe.

It is quite an amazing event in history, to think that Hitler’s chief of intelligence, Reinhardt Gehlen, became a U.S. Army general by act of Congress and his job was intelligence for the United States. And almost no break in service—he was a German general right up to a certain day and then all of a sudden he was an American general. But this is all on the record and this is what he was doing. American Army Special Forces troops were designed for this “safe area, stay behind area” concept within our war plans. A War Plan is the Number 1 objective of the military, so this is a very, very strong function.

The Air Force parallel to this was some very large Air Force wings called the Air Communications and Resupply wings—ARC wings. Their function was to link with Special Forces—in fact, to transport the Special Forces. Their aircraft—big B-50 bombers—had even had printing presses on board, and they had leaflet capability on board. It was an enormous organization, quite important from this concept of a post-strike residual.

In the discussions of how this would work, it became clear that the CIA was becoming rather dominant in the military service structure, in the spectrum: the Army, Navy, Air Force, and then the CIA. All of a sudden the European command began looking on the CIA as a “Fourth Force” in nuclear warfare, which is quite a different role than anybody had ever planned for the CIA. But you see, this was

1956, '57 on in those periods, '58—and the CIA was deeply involved in Vietnam and it was playing the “Fourth-Force” role there.

It was only natural for the CIA to see itself working with Special Forces. They rotated Special Forces from the post-strike function to its counterinsurgency function, or its civic action function, because it was planned when they went into the Russian zones they would be rebuilding city governments and all that sort of thing. They could move them into the pattern in Vietnam, and they thought: “They can do pacification, They can do the strategic hamlets.”

You see how the philosophy went: the CIA took this European pattern of Special Forces—Bad Toltz was their headquarters—and rolled it over, through the schooling at Fort Bragg, and began using Special Forces in Vietnam. It's not as strange a cycle as you would think, if you see it on both sides—if you see where it originated and where it went. It was not just some random effort, that Special Forces all of a sudden showed up in Vietnam as the Green Berets. There was an antecedent to it, a very strong antecedent, with the CIA as the catalytic command force. So they were then the fourth-force function. From about 1945 until 1965, the CIA was actually the operating command for the military forces in Vietnam. Not the Army. Not the military. A lot of people haven't gone back to look at that, but that's the way things went.

Ratcliffe: It's still classified as a covert operation during those years.

Prouty: That's right. And there was a reason for it. We'll go on a little further and I'll explain how we changed that. But this brings us up to the period of about '58. By '58 the Agency, as its fourth-force function, had gathered quite a bit of military paraphernalia. They had aircraft; they had guns; they had other things that weren't originally planned for an intelligence organization.

Due to one of its intelligence agent “pickups,” they made a decision that they would try to overthrow the government of Sukarno in Indonesia. We actually supplied, by air, a force of over 42,000 troops in Indonesia. We had over-the-beach activities from submarines of the U.S. Navy. We used bombers flown by American pilots. We used World War II fighter aircraft—F-51 planes with Air Force pilots. And we had an enormous military campaign, much bigger than you would ever imagine as a clandestine operation. It was far from clandestine! But it was put together as a “clandestine op”—people didn't know we were there.

We operated out of the Philippines and we even reactivated World War II island bases in the Pacific. It was a massive program that a lot of people don't even know about. And it was headed by the famous OSS agent that I mentioned earlier (when I was talking about the troops coming out of Romania), Frank Wisner. Wisner set up his headquarters in Singapore to run this operation. In the Air Force, we even modified World War II bombers, B-26's with eight guns in the nose, to make them a good fighter bomber for this entire operation. We modified lots of them—I don't know, 40 or 50 planes. They showed up later in Vietnam; they showed up later in the Cuban activities.

This big attack on Indonesia was a major operation under CIA control. CIA was going way beyond the small covert operation to now, a real fourth military force within the complete structure of the Department of Defense. This is why, as the Vietnam war escalated, the role of the CIA became more dominant: they were ready for it. They were prepared for it.

With the failure of the Indonesian campaign (and it was a gross failure—we lost everything, we accomplished nothing), these aircraft were in the Philippines. There was no place to put them, so they flew them to Vietnam. Here they had these B-26's, F-51's, T-28's, L-28's, C-123's, a lot of C-54's. In other words, the CIA had quite an air force, operated and maintained under "Air America," its proprietary air company, in Vietnam in 1958 and ready for whatever action they could be used in.

We must keep these things in perspective. The warfare in Vietnam in 1958 was negligible. In fact, we used to fly transport planes back and forth over any part of Vietnam and had no fear of it. I myself have flown unarmed aircraft over Vietnam many times in that era, because there was nothing to worry about. The warfare, if there was much, was up in Laos, against the "Pathet Lao."

As we moved this program along, it became evident that the assets of CIA were spread too much over the world and were spread rather thin. So in about the period of '58 or '59, we opened a major CIA air base, operational base, in the middle of Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. Eglin Air Force Base is the largest piece of military property in the country and there was plenty of room to add CIA's assets to that. We could keep them there secretly without people realizing they were there. We created this big base—we took planes from Europe and planes from Vietnam—all this stuff went back into

Eglin in the period of '58-'59. I think that I won't use this part of my commentary to go back and take a look at Vietnam. We'll be talking about that later. But we must keep in mind that, as the years go by (especially from 1954), the CIA's role—rather active role—in Vietnam was very dominant. But that's really another story. I'm talking about a chronology now of things that were being run from the Pentagon.

Cuba, 1959-1960: From Over-The-Beach Work to Invasion

In 1959, we inherited Fidel Castro. On the 1st of January, 1959, he marched down the streets of Havana, Cuba, and took over the reins of government in Cuba. This didn't happen lightly. I know we were watching his moves as he came up through the country to assume this power. The U.S. government debated very seriously whether to invade and keep him out of Havana or to just stay quiet.

On New Year's Eve of 1958-59, I slept on a canvas cot in a temporary office building in Washington, waiting for CIA orders to go into Cuba—or not. We didn't know whether we were going to go or not. I actually moved into a temporary quarters in Washington, and I saw the clock go by New Year's Eve while I was sitting there waiting to find out whether we were going to strike Castro or let him go into Havana. That's how indecisive we were up to the point Castro came in. Sometime about 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning, one of my old friends in the CIA came in and said: "Well, you can either go home or spend the rest of the night here. Castro's in Havana; we're going to let him go." And that was the 1st of January, 1959.

As the year went on and as Castro assumed his very thorough control of Cuba, one atrocity after another caught our attention. By March of 1960, President Eisenhower approved a CIA plan that would permit us to organize the exiles who were here in the United States. He felt it was easier for us to keep them in our Army structure instead of letting them wander around the streets in the United States. We created more or less of an Army unit for them, a brigade. We enlisted these people, we paid them, and kept them in camps. And so we got hundreds and hundreds of these Cuban exiles of military age.

The idea of this proposal was to use parachute drops, to use logistics drops of supplies to rebels on the ground in Cuba, and to use a lot of over-the-beach activity. We'd use Navy ships, and then pontoon boats and all, over-the-beach. And Eisenhower would hear nothing about an invasion. He would not listen to anybody that

proposed an invasion. Anybody who thinks that this plan that was approved in March of 1960 by Eisenhower forecast the Bay of Pigs invasion, doesn't know Mr. Eisenhower—General Eisenhower. The man who invaded Normandy is not going to invade Cuba with a few kids. He was against it.

But we did a lot of air drops and we did a lot of over-the-beach work, hit-and-run attacks, various attempts on Castro's life (it's all been recorded, one after the other). Frankly, from being quite close to it, I really think that nothing effective was accomplished except to increase Castro's grasp on the people of Cuba. Because anybody that raised his head against Castro lost his head. And Castro just tightened his grip on the country. He instituted what is called the "block system." The block system is a control: they had somebody that was responsible for every block in Cuba. And if somebody wasn't in that block at night, the next morning his children would be asked in school: "Where was your father last night?" You couldn't move in Cuba. Castro's foot was dominant. And, if anything, we brought him up to that level with our sporadic attacks on him.

During this time Senator Kennedy—who had been in Congress ever since the end of World War II and was much more alert to what was going on than people want to credit him with being. He thoroughly understood events like the Hungarian uprising, the Suez crisis, and what was going on in Vietnam and Laos and in Cuba. He was right there in Congress all those years. He was not off somewhere as a stranger to all these things.

Furthermore, he had grown up as the son of the British Ambassador to the Court of St. James in England. He was familiar with the diplomatic world—very familiar with it. And, through that, very familiar with the secret world of secret intelligence, from the British side.

Kennedy had rare training and experience in the things that were going on. People seem to think, because this young man became President in a rather freaky election, that he didn't have the experience. It's not true at all. He had a tremendous amount of experience before he decided to run for the nomination for President. He was nominated and, as you will recall, he was elected by the thinnest margin of any election we ever had. But he became President.

Something interesting happened. Within a week of the time that Kennedy was elected President, we in the Pentagon—and I mean in

my office where we had the responsibility for this clandestine work—and by that time I was working for the Secretary of Defense—I had been transferred from the Air Force to the office of the Secretary of Defense, where I worked in the office headed by General Graves Erskine, a retired Marine general with enormous World War II experience and a lot of diplomatic experience—

Ratcliffe: When was that?

Prouty: This was in May of 1960. General Lansdale was a member of that office, and a few others who had been very active in this clandestine work. By the fall of 1960 we had decided that the Cuban exile training program was either going to stop or would remain as nothing but a hit-and-run-type operation.

But, a week after the election of President Kennedy (and for reasons that I must say remain unclear even to me today), the CIA gave a briefing on the basis that what was going on with the Cuban exiles was going to be an invasion of Cuba. And that, whereas we had been operating with a Cuban-exile base of about 300 Cubans, this briefing began to talk about 3,000 Cubans.

We found out that, when President Kennedy first was briefed on the Cuban program, the numbers that he heard (in November, 1960) were the numbers 3,000 instead of 300—and that an invasion was planned, and so on. An interesting little bit of gamesmanship—lame-duck gamesmanship, you might say—because I know from many meetings, Eisenhower never approved an invasion.

The Agency created the idea of the invasion and then sold President Kennedy and his intimate staff that the invasion was part of the plan—and more or less didn't give him a chance to say no. They said, "Hey, this is ongoing. What are you going to do with these people if you don't do it?" That kind of thing. It was a pretty ingenious little bit of gamesmanship. And it succeeded as far as getting the men on the beach. That was November, 1960.

In the first week of December, I believe, General Lansdale, who was right there in our office, took off for a quick trip to Vietnam. And of course we haven't said much about this here but, as many of you know, he was instrumental in bringing President Diem into power in Vietnam. He had gone to Vietnam in December to meet with Diem and get completely up-to date about the situation in Vietnam as of 1960.

Lansdale had a high regard for Diem and I think it was reciprocated by Diem. In fact, a few days before Lansdale left for Saigon on this quite sudden, and unannounced trip, he asked me to go into the city and buy a gift to be given to Diem from the people of the United States. So I went in and I bought the biggest desk set I could find—a great big beautiful piece of carved wood with a place to put a fountain pen and a ballpoint pen and a clock and maybe a barometer, the whole works—a great big thing to go on his desk. It had a plaque on the front of it—big brass plaque on there—but no wording, because I didn't know what he wanted to say.

I brought it back to the Pentagon and Lansdale liked it very much. He said: “but, take it back (we unscrewed the plaque) and have them put on the plaque, ‘To President Ngo Dinh Diem, Father of His Country’”—like George Washington—”Father of His Country.” So I ran into town and had the plaque lettered and brought it back to Lansdale. The next day he took off for Saigon. He gave it to Diem. Diem had it on his desk; in fact, it was on his desk the day he died. It's kind of interesting, a little anecdote about the relationship between Lansdale and Diem.

Lansdale came back in January, and by that time we had had the inauguration of President Kennedy. And Mr. McNamara was the new Secretary of Defense. Mr. McNamara was fascinated with Lansdale's stories about Vietnam and he brought Lansdale to the White House, where Lansdale told his current stories about Vietnam and his little anecdotes about Diem and all the rest. And Kennedy was fascinated, as the record will show. He apparently more or less promised Lansdale that he was going to send him to Vietnam as ambassador—which is, of course, what Lansdale wanted.

But, as cooler heads looked the situation over, by about April that year Kennedy let that pass by, and by July that didn't come up at all. In fact, he had turned the other way. He wouldn't even let Lansdale go to Vietnam—for various internecine reasons that were relatively important, one of them being the failure of the Bay of Pigs exercise.

During the time of Kennedy's inaugural period the Bay of Pigs program was the biggest item on the burner, from the clandestine operations side anyway (there were others in the wings just as important such as the TFX fighter plane purchases and things like that). President Kennedy was confronted regularly with briefings about this invasion of Cuba. He was reluctant to give an approval.

This went on, briefing after briefing, and yet the program kept operating. I had planes all over Central America. We had a bigger air force for the Cuban exiles than any country in Latin America had.

By that time the Agency had called in a very experienced Marine colonel to prepare the plan for the invasion—to make it a good plan, an effective plan. This Colonel, Jack Hawkins, and his associates had taken a page out of the book of the Suez plan in 1956. Beginning the Suez plan, the British and the French destroyed every aircraft Nasser had, as I said earlier. For the Bay of Pigs, they had decided that every combat aircraft that Castro had must be destroyed before the exiles land on the beach.

Now that was the first objective for the program: they must destroy the aircraft. So we used U-2's to take pictures of Cuba. And we discovered—we knew pretty well what Castro's air force was anyway—but we discovered that he had about ten combat-capable aircraft. I call them "combat capable" because—mainly what we would have just called "training aircraft"—but they had guns and they could fight. Because some of them were jets, they were superior to any aircraft we had given the exiles—meaning, we hadn't given them any jets. We gave them B-26 bombers and that was about their best combat plane. But of course a jet can outrun a bomber—simple—and shoot it down—easy. So we had to destroy Castro's aircraft on the ground before we could invade. That was a premise of the tactical plan.

But by the middle of April the Agency was beginning to say: Look. We cannot contain this force any longer. We've got all these people trained, we've got the aircraft, we've got the ships, and we're ready to invade. We've got to go. And if we don't go, what are we going to do with all these Cubans? I mean, we have to do it. It put Kennedy in quite a position. When I say they had the ships, I'd like to tell you something that I consider a pure coincidence.

Military Experiences

Part III: 1961-1963

Experiences of and Perspectives on the Bay of Pigs

Prouty: Some time before we were ready to actually launch the Bay of Pigs invasion, there had been so much training and detonation of various explosive devices at the Agency's training camp down at what we call The Farm, in Virginia, that we had to close The Farm and move all this training to Elizabeth City, North Carolina, where there's a harbor and a lot of open spaces, and an airbase.

They asked me to see if we could find—purchase—a couple of transport ships. We got some people that were in that business, and they went along the coast and they found two old ships that we purchased and sent down to Elizabeth City and began to load with an awful lot of trucks that the Army was sending down there. We deck-loaded the trucks, and got all of their supplies on board. Everything that they needed was on two ships.

It was rather interesting to note, looking back these days, that one of the ships was called the *Houston*, and the other ship was called the *Barbara J*. Colonel Hawkins had renamed the program as we selected a name for the Bay of Pigs operation. The code name was “Zapata.”

I was thinking a few months ago of what a coincidence that is. When Mr. Bush graduated from Yale, back there in the days when I was a professor at Yale, he formed an oil company, called “Zapata,” with a man, Lieddke, who later on became president of Pennzoil. But the company that Lieddke and Mr. Bush formed was the Zapata Oil Company. Mr. Bush's wife's name is Barbara J. And Mr. Bush claims as his hometown Houston, Texas. Now the triple coincidence there is strange; but I think it's interesting. I know nothing about its meaning.

But these invasion ships were the *Barbara J* and the *Houston*, and the program was "Zapata." George Bush must have been somewhere around.

With the ships loaded and ready to go, the Agency went in to brief the President one more time. Actually, the ships were at sea, the troops were at sea. And finally, on a Sunday afternoon—well, we'll go back a few days. On Saturday morning, April 15th 1961, three B-26 bombers flew over Cuba, and hit the military base near Havana, and destroyed all but three of Castro's combat-capable aircraft. It was a pretty successful trip.

We knew that the odds of getting them all in one shot would be a slim chance, so we were ready again to strike a second time. And we had already had briefings on two strikes, one earlier and then one to follow up. We had to follow it up. So we had U-2's fly all over Cuba and we found the three planes that were missing. They were three of what we call T-birds, T-33 jets. They were just training planes, but each one had two 50-caliber machine guns. They were fast little airplanes, easy to maneuver, and they were a great threat to the B-26's of our Cuban-exile air force. We had to destroy them. We found them down in the southern part of Cuba, all in the same little base, sitting on the ground, wingtip to wingtip.

The plan for the second attack was that we would hit them just before sunrise with four B-26 bombers. One bomber could have destroyed them, but we would go with four: right at sunrise, because the brigade was due to land on the beach at sunrise. And if we were bringing the brigade in, certainly that would alert their aircraft, and their planes would be in the air. We had to hit them just before sunrise or everything was gone. So this was approved when we briefed the President on Sunday afternoon, which was April 16th, 1961.

He approved the whole plan. And he approved the strike with the Cuban-exile's bombers for the morning of the 17th which was absolutely necessary. Without that we could not have hit the beach. Nobody had any problem with that whatsoever. In fact, a very good friend of mine (an old Agency friend) was the base commander for this operation at Puerto Cabezas in Nicaragua where we had the four B-26 bombers just ready to go.

That was about 3:30 on Sunday afternoon. The ships were at sea; the President said OK—that was the first time he approved it, by the way. Here we were a few hours before the attack, before he even

approved, that he first said they could go. You could see how reluctant he was, really, to approve this program.

At one o'clock in the morning (Monday) my telephone rang, right here in Washington. On the phone was my old friend in Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua. He was saying, "Fletch, you have got to get approval for my bombers to leave. Somebody canceled the strike." I said, "That's impossible. We got the approval this afternoon from the President. Who can cancel that strike?" He said, "I don't know. But I've been told I can't let the bombers go." And he said, "Listen." He was living in a little tent and he had a field telephone, and he held the telephone out and I could hear the engines on the bombers going. And I said, jokingly, "Let them go!" And he said, "No, they gave me orders. I can't let them go." I said, "OK, I'll call the city and see what I can get."

So I called into this control center (that I'd been working with every day since that New Year's Day of 1959) and I said, "Listen. Why aren't the bombers going?" And they said, "General Cabell got a call saying he cannot let them go unless he can talk to Secretary Rusk and get Secretary Rusk to approve, and he's trying to find Secretary Rusk now." And I said, "Yes, but we've got a sunrise attack and the sun is going to come up." It'd take the bombers four hours to fly from Puerto Cabezas to the base where the T-33's were in Cuba, and any time we lost there would put the arrival of the bombers after sunrise. The B-26's wouldn't be there, and the brigade would be attacking the beach—which is what they did, of course.

I called as many as I could and all I found was that everybody was in an uproar. Everything was in a shambles. After all this careful planning, the whole CIA section in there was just distraught with the developments. General Cabell was off trying to make some arrangements—trying to find Mr. Rusk, I guess, or make arrangements with him. And—in a strange little side episode—Allen Dulles, who was in charge of the whole thing, was out of the United States. He wasn't even in the country. He'd gone out to a speaking engagement in Puerto Rico. In other words, he's out of the cycle. We had to use General Cabell or nothing. (General Cabell was his deputy, as you will recall.)

I had done what I could do. I was not that close to the program in a command sense; I couldn't order them to go. I had called everybody I knew to alert them. I went to sleep. I went to the office the next morning and found out that the bombers had not gone. And I

found out that already those jets had been attacking the ships. One ship had pulled offshore, trying to escape; the other ship had been sunk. The men had landed on the beach. The beach landing was pretty good, but we knew the effort was lost.

In that first day, we lost 16 B-26s. The jets just chopped them up. And all due to this call to Cabell saying, "You can't go unless you can get Mr. Rusk or unless you want to confront the President." The President was out of Washington; he was in Glen Ora, Virginia, his home in Northern Virginia. General Cabell had been with the Agency for years. He was an Air Force lieutenant general. He had a lot of administrative experience, but not combat experience. He was not exactly the man you'd want to have fight his way through this kind of a situation, especially when somebody like the President was involved.

During the latter part of this same month of April, after the failure of the Bay of Pigs, President Kennedy appointed a board to investigate what had happened and why things went wrong and what he should know about this whole operation. He was very wise about the appointment, because the first man he put on was Allen Dulles himself. The second man was Admiral Arleigh Burke, who was the Chief of Naval Operations and was the closest man of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the daily operations of this planning. General Lemnitzer was the chairman, but Burke had handled all the details because the Navy command had the ships and all that. So Burke was on it. The third man was a man Kennedy had never met until 1961: General Maxwell Taylor, who had been Chief of Staff of the Army under Eisenhower. And the fourth man was Bobby Kennedy. I cannot imagine a more able, competent and—what would you say?—cleverly devised group than those four. Kennedy did it right, because they came from different circles.

And they sat in there, in an office that was only two doors from mine. I talked with almost everybody going in and out of there as they went, because they were all old friends I'd been working with for a long time. And they combed this operation from one end to the other. When they were done, Maxwell Taylor wrote a long, long letter to the President that had the full approval of the other three members—Dulles, Arleigh Burke and Bobby Kennedy. In this, they came to the conclusion that the reason for the failure was because of the phone call that came from McGeorge Bundy to General Cabell.

People have looked at this with a lot of different views. McGeorge Bundy was a Special Assistant to the President; he was in the White House. He and his brother, Bill Bundy, had been very close to the CIA (in fact, Bill Bundy worked for the CIA for years) and they also were acquainted with President Kennedy. McGeorge Bundy for some reason called Cabell.

What the Taylor committee found out was that he had been talking with Adlai Stevenson, our Ambassador to the UN. And Ambassador Stevenson had been seriously embarrassed when he was asked to tell the UN that the bombers that struck Cuba on the first attack (Saturday morning) did not have anything to do with America; that they were Cubans who were defecting, and as they defected they shot up the air force. He showed pictures. He showed the front page of the *New York Times* with a picture of one of the defector's planes on the ground in Miami: it had Cuban markings on it and everything.

Within an hour after Stevenson had held that picture up to show the UN, Castro had proved, beyond doubt, that that airplane was not one of his. He didn't have an airplane with eight guns in the nose and all that sort of thing, and he blew Stevenson's argument out of the water. And that seriously embarrassed Stevenson, who had been our ambassador to the UN only recently having been appointed by Kennedy (a month or two at the most). He was irate to think that his own government would set him up for that.

So Stevenson had reason to want to talk to McGeorge Bundy and to say: "No more air attacks. We're not going to get into this business", without ever thinking about the landing on the beach. He didn't know about the landing on the beach. He just didn't want another "air attack." And McGeorge Bundy may have (may have, this is conjecture, but he may have) been sufficiently convinced by Stevenson of "no more air attacks," without realizing the enormous significance of that air attack, that last strike to wipe out the last airplanes of Castro's force. So you can make an allowance for how that happened.

But the record is perfectly clear that, at 9:30 that Sunday night, McGeorge Bundy reversed the President's decision and called Cabell and said "no air strike tomorrow." That doomed the whole affair, because the airplanes destroyed the mission.

Now, people have said: "OK. Bundy was Kennedy's Assistant, right in the White House. Why didn't Kennedy straighten this out?" That's a good question. But let's go one step further. That is true; but

within weeks Bobby Kennedy, Maxwell Taylor, Admiral Burke and Allen Dulles were writing this in a letter to the President to tell the President this was their finding. Why would they have to tell him, in an official letter, that this was the reason it failed, if he had been the man that called McGeorge Bundy?

You see, Bobby Kennedy could have told them right there in the meeting: "OK, I know Jack called him. Let's drop it right now. We'll say that it was Jack Kennedy's problem." Or the others could have said it because Allen Dulles was being fired, he could have said it out of spite. But they didn't. They knew that McGeorge Bundy had made a serious mistake, or had made a decision that looked like a mistake later on. It could have been an honest decision—he could have thought that Stevenson was making a good point ("no more air attacks"), without thinking about the effect of that. They weren't military tacticians. Jack Hawkins had designed the plan, but not these people.

It's a very mixed-up thing. As a result, people later on have argued that Kennedy destroyed his own plan by not sending over U.S. Military air cover for the beach landing. Air cover was no part of the beach landing, any more than it was for the British and the French in Cairo in 1956, because there were supposed to be no airplanes. You don't need air cover if there are no airplanes. You don't need an umbrella if it isn't raining.

It's a shame that through the years the literature has been filled up with partial information, none of which explains this all the way from the fact that I got that phone call from Nicaragua explaining what that man was up against. I could hear the planes running, and I jokingly told him, "Let them roll!" He knew I was joking, I didn't have the authority.

And then people have written that the problem with the Bay of Pigs was: Kennedy didn't provide U.S. Military air cover. They didn't need air cover. And General Cabell never did tell Kennedy that the call had been made. Kennedy woke up in the morning thinking there had been more than adequate air cover by the brigade's own B-26's. That was the plan as he had approved it on Sunday afternoon.

Ratcliffe: What do you mean by "air cover"?

Prouty: The distinction lies between the brigade's own B-26's that Bundy had grounded, and U.S. Military Air Cover that the National Security Council Directive 5412 prohibits. This is why the public has

been led to believe “Air Cover” meant that Kennedy should have sent fighters from the aircraft carriers (Navy fighters) and wiped out those jets; in other words, wiped out any opposition. But we didn’t need air cover. Those Cuban jets were supposed to be rubble by sunrise.

Ratcliffe: We didn’t need air cover *if* the plan had been allowed to proceed as it had been approved by JFK on Sunday afternoon.

Prouty: And the plan had said that if they didn’t destroy those planes, don’t land on the beach. You can’t stop a snowball once it’s going downhill. But the difference was the levels between the military tacticians and the political tacticians, which didn’t meet. This was a new Kennedy team. They didn’t have—even Maxwell Taylor had never met Kennedy. He wasn’t an advisor to him until afterwards. Kennedy kept Taylor in the White House to be his military advisor to guard against this again. He didn’t want it to happen again. This is very complicated.

But you can see how, if we think about it realistically, it makes sense that it could have happened. It’s the unfortunate (I believe it is unfortunate, “the unfortunate call”—I don’t think it was malicious)—the unfortunate call that Bundy made, that the Taylor Report clearly states “Bundy made.”

There’s a very good book out called *Operation Zapata*, which explains this word by word, signed by Maxwell Taylor—not by some author—this was Maxwell Taylor. *Operation Zapata* did nothing but translate the government records into a book cover. There’s no editorializing whatsoever. The Bay of Pigs operation plan itself was much more effective than most people think.

Ratcliffe: Why do you think Bundy didn’t think to confirm with Kennedy that this was OK before he simply called Cabell and said “no air strike”?

Prouty: I think that he and Stevenson discussed this carefully during the evening. Stevenson, wrathful after being embarrassed the day before; Stevenson not knowing about the invasion; Bundy not knowing about the tactical significance of this—you see, there’s plenty of room to give each man his own thoughts.

**A Result of CIA Covert Military Commanders in Vietnam:
The League of Families for the Prisoners of War
in Southeast Asia**

A good example: I was in the Pentagon (of course, I had been there for years) when the whole Kennedy team came in. Well, they were great guys, but: of all these people coming in to run the Department of Defense (Bob McNamara and on down through Ed Katzenbach, Alan Einhoven and, oh, you can go on and on, Paul Nitze—Nitze's made a great record since, Bill Bundy), not a one of them with a day of military service, and they were running the Department of Defense. That doesn't mean they didn't know how; it meant they needed some experience. Let them stay there awhile, and they were going to do all right.

If you put yourself back to that era: Eisenhower had been in the White House for eight years. The Pentagon was run by Eisenhower people who had the vast experience of World War II behind them: they knew warfare; they knew the Defense Department. All of a sudden, in comes the Kennedy team. That didn't change the bureaucracy, but it changed the top. And every one of these top jobs went to people who had little or no military experience. It was very noticeable to me. I was one of the few current military officers at that level, at that time, and I'd go to lunch with these fellows. I remember Ed Katzenbach: He had been Dean at Princeton (I believe I'm correct by saying Princeton)—a terrific fellow. I mean, just the most enjoyable, experienced, intelligent guy you'd ever met. I'd go to lunch with him. (In the Pentagon he couldn't find the dining room, he couldn't find the bathroom! The Pentagon's a helluva place!)

So Ed would come down to my office and he'd say, "Hey, let's go to lunch." And we'd talk about everything. He had no military experience. And the same with a lot of these people. But they had a tremendous capability. And if they had stayed in the Pentagon for a full eight years, this country would be much different than it is today. I'm not taking anything off their capability. I'm simply saying that, the Bay of Pigs came too early; it was too much, and a little bit too crafty for them to understand at that stage of the game. It became a disaster, and then it has never been explained properly. The words of *Operation Zapata* explain it, but you have to know what it's all about to read it properly. But it's on the record. I'm not creating a record here, I'm simply stating what is in the record there.

So that influenced Kennedy's view of Vietnam. When Kennedy was briefed by President Eisenhower in January of 1961, President Eisenhower told him about the hotspots around the world. He didn't use the word "Vietnam" at all, he talked about Laos. *Time Magazine*, in all of 1960, mentioned Vietnam only six times, and four of them had nothing to do with the war. You know, Vietnam was not a hot button. Cuba was, Laos was, Berlin was, and so on. So it's easy to forget the preface to Vietnam when you don't remember these things.

These events led up to the Vietnam scene much more significantly than most people want to remember. Of course, the generation gap is coming and the people coming of age now don't remember this at all. They just know that 25 years ago Kennedy was killed. But they don't remember the antecedents to the decisions he made about the Bay of Pigs and about Vietnam.

This was a very interesting period. When we got this Bay of Pigs thing behind us (much to our disgust), we did move toward Vietnam. For instance, C-123 aircraft that we were using in these operations were flown to Vietnam. They became the Agent Orange spray planes, they played that part. The B-26's that had been converted with the eight guns in the nose (what was left of them), were flown to Vietnam and became the first heavy combat aircraft over there. Helicopters that had been used in different operations in Laos were moved to Vietnam and they became the air patrol capability in Vietnam. The P-51 fighters that we had fixed up for Indonesia: they went into Vietnam. They were available—all these aircraft were available, and they scraped them all together and parked them in Vietnam. In other words, the war was going to happen whether anybody planned it or not. Everything was moving in that direction.

So we saw the years from 1960 into '61 and '62 as years when a certain amount of momentum kept going. And the only command structure in Vietnam at that time was CIA. The military were in the position of being the logistics staff. We provided the equipment, we provided certain training.

For instance, people don't think about helicopters. In those days, for every hour a helicopter flew (a military helicopter), it had to receive 24 hours of maintenance. That was just a general rule: twenty-four hours of maintenance. Which meant we had to cover Vietnam with helicopter maintenance people. They were called soldiers. And it looked like the troop size was growing, because they were soldiers or marines or whoever—air force people—but they were maintaining

helicopters. Anytime you get a helicopter squadron together, you have to get a helicopter supply unit together.

If you have a supply unit, you have to get a maintenance unit. So what was 400 men becomes 1200 men. You get 1200 men together, you have to have a PX, you have to have a hospital, and so on. We were creating a structure in Vietnam built upon the operation of helicopters. And all they did was to fly the Vietnamese soldiers around more or less like a police activity—transporting the Vietnamese military. The next thing you know, we had 3,000 men in Vietnam, then we had 6,000. By the end of 1963, at about the time of Kennedy's death, there were somewhere between thirteen and sixteen thousand military (so-called military) in Vietnam.

What was strange was that a great number of those military were really not military. They were cover military; they were involved with the CIA or other covert programs. That has a great significance. Has it ever occurred to you why, of all the wars the United States ever fought, that at the end of this war we created a League of Families for the Prisoners of War in Southeast Asia? Why did we turn the Prisoners of War program over to wives, mothers, sisters of soldiers in Vietnam? Do you know why? I was a founding advisor of that organization, by request of a general. I was retired by that time, but I was asked to come back and work on it because I knew Vietnam so well and I knew the situation so well.

The reason I was asked to be an advisor was that we had so many men who were called "Captain So-and-so" but really were civilians with the CIA. When one got shot down, the people that captured him found his records: "Captain So-and-so." But the U.S. Army wasn't missing a captain, so nobody declared him a prisoner. Their records were so messed up because of the way these people were lost: out of "Air America," the CIA airline, out of helicopter support units, out of all these other contrived units that we were putting in there which were not military. So that insurance programs, mortgage payments, all the normal things people have to take care of, were tumbling down on this group of people called Prisoners of War over there. And our own Army, Navy and Air Force couldn't account for them. We didn't even know they were missing.

I talked at great length to the father of a Navy pilot who went down. He was telling me about all the abnormal things that had happened in his dealings with the Navy since his son went down somewhere in Indochina—he didn't even know where. So I turned to

the father and I said, “Do you know if your son was flying for the Navy?” He said, “Of course he was, he —” “No,” I said, “do you know for sure? Or was he flying for CIA or Air America?” That poor man was totally shocked. He went over to the Pentagon immediately and demanded an answer. He found out his son was flying for CIA, and he never knew that. You see, what are you going to do with a situation like that?

So we created this unusual organization called the League of Families for the Prisoners of War in Southeast Asia. And I was there at the first meeting. I was there years after that—many, many, many meetings—because we had a very serious job to perform. For instance, we had to see if something as simple as their military insurance coverage would be acknowledged by the insurance companies. We had a big re-insurance organization we used for this. We tried to put across the Geneva Accords to protect these men. And a lot of other things that were necessary (that we could not normally do for prisoners of war) with this kind of a covert war. It was really a screwed-up mess. But you see, it grew that way and we had to do something. This is what had confronted Kennedy and his people as the war moved on into 1963.

JFK Prepares To Get Out Of Vietnam: The Taylor/McNamara Trip Report of October 1963 and NSAM 263

By the summer of '63 Kennedy had made up his mind to get out of Vietnam. By that time I had been transferred from the Office of Secretary of Defense to the Office of Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Ratcliffe: In 1963?

Prouty: In '62. But I'm talking about the summer of '63; by that time I had been transferred. I was transferred in '62. Mr. McNamara had approved the plan submitted by General Erskine to create the Defense Intelligence Agency. With that approval General Erskine (who had been on service for an awful long time) retired, and his office (the Office of Special Operations, where I had worked and where Lansdale was working) was abolished. Mr. McNamara suggested that the office that I was in (the Military Support of Clandestine Operations) be transferred to the JCS. We established the office there;

it was the Office of Special Operations. I created it. I was its chief for the first two years, until I retired in 1964.

During that period we watched this rise of increasingly effective military in Vietnam. At the same time, the Kennedy administration could find no real reason to continue a war there. They gradually began to rationalize that: 'Look, this is a Vietnamese war, it's not an American war. We should provide support to them but let them fight their war.'

This rationale began to snowball into the latter part of 1963. At that time Kennedy did something that I think was quite typical of him and quite clever. General Krulak was my boss in the JCS, he was an experienced combat-trained Marine, and he was probably the closest military officer to the Kennedy family—very close to Bobby Kennedy and quite close to Jack Kennedy. He went to meetings in the White House frequently. I know because I worked right in his office.

Kennedy sent General Krulak to Vietnam. This was more or less a nominal visit. Krulak knew an awful lot about Vietnam; he didn't need to go. But it brought him up to date; it let him hear some briefings that were current, let him talk with some people, so that when he came back he could write, 'I've just come from Vietnam; here's the story.'

Ratcliffe: And when was that?

Prouty: That was in September of 1963. By that time General Krulak knew what Kennedy's plans were. So that when he came back he sat down and he started writing what became NSAM 263—otherwise known as the Taylor/McNamara Trip Report of October '63.¹ They both are the same, although some people don't realize that the numbered memoranda simply covers the Taylor/McNamara Report.

But they're the same document, and they bear the same authority coming from the White House as a National Security Action Memorandum. So Krulak was engaged writing this major report—and I was one of his principal writers—I wrote probably as much or more of that document than anybody else did. It was a very large report, profusely illustrated; we had pictures in it, we had maps in it. When it was all done, they bound it in a big leather cover that said

1. Copies of NSAM 263, the "Report of the McNamara-Taylor Mission to South Vietnam," NSAM 273, as well as some of their primary supporting documents, are included together in Appendix B, starting on page 279.

“President John F. Kennedy from Robert McNamara and Maxwell Taylor.”

We flew the finished report to Hawaii in a jet, gave it to Taylor and McNamara so they could read it on their way back, so that when they gave it to Kennedy they at least would know it existed. But what the report was really, was Kennedy’s own views on the Vietnam War—not anybody else’s. All Krulak did (and all I did) was write what Kennedy had told us to do.

The agent in that was Bobby Kennedy. Krulak would see Bobby Kennedy, I guess, every day. We even slept in the office for awhile. We were working right around the clock. We had something like 16 secretaries, four every four hours, just going right around the clock like that, getting this huge report prepared. (It was before the days of word processors and things like that.)

But when Taylor and McNamara came back and landed in a helicopter on the lawn of the White House, they gave the President this big report. The President knew exactly what was in the report because it was what he had dictated to Krulak. What Krulak had written and given to them had made the circle; it was back in Kennedy’s hands and now he could declare it to be national policy.

About two days later, on October 11th, 1963, he signed this NSAM 263 which, among other things, said that by Christmas time a thousand military men are coming out of Vietnam, coming home. And by the end of 1965 all U.S. personnel will be out of Vietnam.

That was very important. For instance, in the Pacific at that time we had a military publication called the *Stars and Stripes*. It was the old newspaper from WWII. The headline of the *Stars and Stripes* that day (great big headline) said: “One thousand troops being withdrawn from Vietnam by Christmas and the remainder by ’65.” Nobody missed the point. It was right there in big letters. And this is what Kennedy planned.

Privately, Kennedy had told some of his confidants that “As soon as I am reelected, I am going to get people out of Vietnam and we’re going to Vietnamize that war; we’ll just provide support for them;” and “I’m going to break the CIA into a thousand pieces.” Those are quotables you can get from Senator Mansfield and from other intimates of the President (and that those of us working on those things day-by-day knew were exactly the sentiments of John F. Kennedy).

The Murders of President Diem and Kennedy

About three weeks after JFK had published NSAM 263 as an official document from the White House, President Diem was killed in Vietnam. General Krulak knew about the plans for the removal of the Diems from Vietnam. It did not include killing anybody. The wife of Diem's brother, Nhu, had left Vietnam ahead of time. She was in the United States on a speaking tour—and a very prominent speaking tour because she was called the Dragon Lady. Everybody knew where she was. Nhu was supposed to leave and meet her—I think in Rome, because the other brother (who was a cardinal in the Catholic Church) had gone to Rome also. And that left Nhu and Ngo Dinh Diem to leave: they were going to a Parliamentary Union meeting in Belgrade and Diem had been asked to be a speaker there.

So his departure from Vietnam was supposed to be the same departure any chief of state would make who was going somewhere else to deliver a lecture and make a visit. So a special airplane (a commercial airplane, not military) was being flown into Saigon that day to take him to Belgrade, with his brother. (The other brother had already left and Nhu's wife had already left.)

For reasons that none of us have ever known, the two Diem brothers went to the airport, went up the stairs to the airplane and got in it, and came out again. And, to the surprise of the few people there that knew they were leaving (among them the people we had spotting this affair, that Krulak had), saw them get back into their car and go speeding back into town (where they went into the palace, the presidential palace), and suddenly realized they were alone.

They were in some sense incompetent—they didn't understand political government. Their people had been so repressive that they knew as soon as the Diems left they would be killed. The people would attack them. They hated that guard that was around Diem. So they had all run. And when the Diems went back into the palace it was empty. There was nobody there.

They immediately realized what was going on, and they went into a tunnel (that had been dug for this purpose beforehand) that went under the river, over to the suburb of Saigon called Cholon. Unfortunately, at the other end of the tunnel, there were some soldiers there who had been ordered to be there, and they put them in a van and they killed them in the van. And that's how they were killed. It had nothing to do with the plan that had been laid on for them.

I was in my office that afternoon and General Krulak came in and he was absolutely blanched. He said, “The Diems have been killed.” He said, “I can’t believe that they wouldn’t follow the program we had lined up for them.” He said, “But we just had a call saying that they went in the plane, came out of the plane, and went back to the city. Later it was discovered that they’d been killed.”

To the people that had carefully planned their movement out of the country—and of course it was going to be a *coup d’état*—maybe Diem felt that it was and didn’t want to leave, or something. But he was going to be out. He was never going to come back. And maybe he sensed that, or maybe somebody had tipped him off. We can’t account for it. In fact, when Krulak turned to me and talked to me about it, he said, “We’ll never know what went through their heads. They should’ve been smarter. They should’ve just kept going and they’d have been out and they wouldn’t have...”

If you remember, in the time of Watergate it was discovered that the Nixon presidential advisor named Charles (Chuck) Colson had employed Allen Dulles’ old-time biographer Howard Hunt (and Bay of Pigs expert) to go into the files in the White House (the confidential presidential files in the White House) and doctor those files to make it appear that Kennedy had ordered the death of Diem. That will show you how imperative it was to certain interests in Washington to make it appear that Kennedy had ordered the death of Diem. That’s looking back: that was in ’72, wasn’t it?

Ratcliffe: ’71 or ’72.

Prouty: Looking back a decade, we find that kind of retroactive work was going on. It’s quite insidious when you think about it. But, the facts are much, much different. Kennedy did not plan the death of Diem. And it was stupid, it was unfortunate. But I was right where I could hear these principals talking. I was writing documents for them, I know exactly what happened.

And I think this business of being that close to the things that were going on actually played an interesting part in my own life. Because, at just about that same time, Ed Lansdale (whom I’d known since 1952 and who I’d been working with since he came back to the Pentagon in 1956, every day) came to me one day. He was still up in Mr. McNamara’s office, and I was in the JCS area then. I wasn’t working right in his immediate office then. But he came to me one day and he said, “Fletch, you’ve been working pretty hard and I’ve got an

approval to something that might be a nice paid vacation. How would you like to go to the South Pole?" And I thought, I wouldn't mind a paid vacation—I don't know about the South Pole—but if someone is going to fly me down to the South Pole and all. So OK, I'd be glad to go. Then he said, "Go over to the South Pole Office on Jackson Court near the White House and talk to Mr. So-and-So." I went over there and I found out that they were planning to fly a VIP party to the South Pole and they did need a military escort officer. And I was being nominated for that, and I went to the South Pole. Actually, I had been working for that Antarctic Office since 1958-1959. I possess a Commendation, dated 1959, from them.

I was out of Washington from, I think, the 10th of November until November 28th, after President Kennedy was killed—so that I was intimate with the things that had to do with the death of Mr. Diem, but I was completely out of the scene for the things that happened in the death of President Kennedy. And it has occurred to me in the 25 years since that period that, in some way, that spells some of the pressures that were going on in Washington at that time: that it was better that I—and people like me who were very intimate with affairs in Washington—had to be out of the way. I was sent there as the Escort Officer for an industrial group who set in operation a nuclear power plant at McMurdo Navy Base. It was an interesting interlude.

I came back from the South Pole on November 28th, 1963 and one month later I retired from the service. I went in to General Krulak and said, "General, I am through." I had been in the Pentagon nine years. The General was a bit upset. He told me he had received information from the Air Force that they were going to send me to Vietnam as the Chief of Intelligence in Saigon. I have never tried to corroborate it, but that is what he told me. He said that I was slated to become a general if I would stay on and take that job. And I have never corroborated that; it is simply what he told me. I said, "I thank you very much, General, I'm going to retire." And I retired on the 1st of January and I went to work for a private company on the 2nd of January.

But that period of time, in those nine years that I have described (from 1955 until 1964), I think, are unequaled in history, at least in modern times. Because I saw unfold all of these different actions that became the Vietnam War, the death of Kennedy, and many other

strange events that have never been duplicated in the United States of America. It's really very interesting.

Explanation of the Office of Special Operations— Military Services Providing Support to Government Clandestine Activities

Ratcliffe: In Appendix I of your book, *The Secret Team*, you included a job description you said was typical for you, regardless of whether you were in the headquarters of the Air Force, the Office of the Secretary of Defense or the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff². I'd like you to read this for us and comment on the types of activities this generalizable job description covered for you in any of the three positions you held that were somewhat interchangeable.

Prouty: From time to time, people have wondered and asked about this business that we euphemistically call "special operations" that is the military services providing support to the clandestine activities of the government, usually clandestine activities that are at least nominally under the control of the CIA. There are official papers on this, and I as said earlier that we derive the authority from the NSC Directive No. 5412.³

In the process, the Secretary of Defense established an office called the Office of Special Operations. And I'd like to read to you verbatim really, and then describe parts of it—what the Government felt about this kind of work; because this was a perfectly public paper in the days when I first acquired it, and it says quite a bit about the kind of activities that go on in covert operations.

I believe that, at least from a policy guidance line, this would apply even to the recent things that we call the Iran hostage/Contra affair. The people were working along the same lines as this paper here. So we'll take a careful look at it.

The following job description is taken from the *U.S. Government Organization Manual, 1959-1960*, page 143. It's a typical government definition of the term "special operations." It defines quite well the work that I was in from 1955 through 1963,

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2. *The Secret Team*, Appendix I,
<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STappendix1.html>
 3. See "Appendix C" on page 330.

whether it was with the Headquarters, U.S. Air Force, the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, or the Office of Secretary of Defense.

Now, I will read the next words as direct quotations from this government operations manual.

The Assistant to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (Special Operations) [who was General Graves B. Erskine of the Marine Corps, Retired; he was Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, Special Operations] is the principal staff assistant to the Secretary of Defense in the functional fields of intelligence, counterintelligence (except as otherwise specifically assigned), communications security, Central Intelligence Agency relationship and special operations, and psychological warfare actions. He performs functions in his assigned fields of responsibility such as: (1) recommending policies and guidance, governing the Department of Defense planning and program development; (2) reviewing plans and programs of the military departments for carrying out approved policies and evaluating the administration and management of approved plans and programs as a basis on which to recommend to the Secretary of Defense necessary actions to provide for more effective, efficient, and economical administration and operation and the elimination of duplication; (3) reviewing the development and execution of plans and programs of the National Security Agency

I'll break there for a moment. Most people don't realize that the two are that closely allied: that Defense/CIA and the National Security Agency work together. And that it was this Office of Special Operations that was responsible for the reviewing, the development, and the execution of plans and programs of the National Security Agency

and related activities of the Department of Defense; and (4) developing Department of Defense positions and providing for Department of Defense support in connection with special operations activities of the United States Government.

And I'll break there. That means that the Department of Defense operated as effectively in clandestine operations as did any other part of the government, or even more so. It wasn't CIA all the time, or NSA all the time; actually the Department of Defense is the leader in all this work. This is what this statement is underscoring.

In the performance of his functions, he [this Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations] coordinates actions, as appropriate, with the military departments and other Department of Defense agencies having collateral or related functions and maintains liaison with the Department of State, the Director of Central Intelligence and the Central Intelligence Agency, the United States Information Agency, and other United States and foreign government organizations on matters in his assigned fields of responsibility. In the course of exercising full staff functions, he is authorized to issue instructions appropriate to carrying out policies approved by the Secretary of Defense for his assigned fields of responsibility.

And I'll break there. You see, that is what I was asked to do by General White when I was asked to write the instructions and policies under NSC 5412. And General White's authority was derived from the Secretary of Defense and we're reading that here you see, the entire military establishment. So you can see that this statement here covered everybody in the Department of Defense, which would include the Air Force and all the others, and that's why I was doing that work in 1955.

In the course of exercising full staff functions, he is authorized to issue instructions appropriate to carrying out policies approved by the Secretary of Defense for his assigned fields of responsibility. He also exercises the authority vested in the Secretary of Defense relating to the direction and control of the National Security Agency and related activities of the Department of Defense. The Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Special Operations) is appointed by the Secretary of Defense.

Very important: he works for the Secretary of Defense. He is not there to do the job of someone else (such as the CIA or any other group). He is a full-time employee of the Secretary of Defense.

I would cite that last line to those people who have been reading the record recently about the trial of Colonel North. Colonel North was working for the Secretary of Defense when he worked for the NSC. And people shouldn't mix that up. It's too bad that the courts and the congressional committees didn't understand that distinction. But they should read this same paper: because the military work under the Secretary of Defense when they're doing covert activities—not for some other office. Even though they might have a desk in some other office, they are members of the military. Colonel North

was paid by the Marine Corps, not by the National Security Council—that's very important and they should keep this in mind.

This is a formal statement that describes what the Office of Special Operations was doing and what it was responsible for. That's where I worked for two years, that's where General Lansdale worked for two-and-half or three years. It was the key office for the development of the DIA (Defense Intelligence Agency) and it was the number one office for all relationships on covert activities with the CIA, with the NSC, with the White House, and with anybody else involved in this action.

It isn't explained there, but in the pursuit of this kind of business, many other departments are involved. We had to work with the Treasury Department. We had to work with FAA about the movement of aircraft. Sometimes we had to work with Customs people regarding flights coming in when we could not allow Customs to board the plane. They understood, but they had to know about it. We had to have cleared people (what we called "cleared staff") there. There were thousands and thousands of people involved in the network that's described in this paper.

Most people, I think, feel that the clandestine activities are 10 or 15 people running around the world performing tricks, "fun and games." It's a very large organization. In many respects all this talk about the closeness between the Office of Special Operations and the National Security Agency—this gave us effective communications all over the world.

Just like we heard during Colonel North's trial: he knew immediately when things were being done (after they had given orders to have these things done—NSA can do that, NSA can listen in on anything, they know what's going on). That's why the direction of NSA was put under this office—so that we would have a uniform, worldwide system for clandestine operations. It's a very formal program.

The only area that isn't stated in that paper (and when I used to work there I used to feel rather strongly that it wasn't really omitted but it wasn't specifically cited) was the intricacies we had in handling money. If you're going to steal money from a bank, you have to know where you're going to put it afterwards. Money is very hard to hide. Money is very hard to steal.

When you're working in an organization like the Defense Department or the U.S. government, it is extremely difficult to move

sums of money because the bureaucrats all know where that money ought to be. You don't take money that is in the Department of Agriculture and spend it in the Department of Commerce. You just don't do it. Well you don't take money that was ostensibly appropriated for the CIA and spend it in the Defense Department or vice versa.

The Economy Act of 1932: Handling The Money To Run Covert Operations

As intricate as anything we did in the days we were in this kind of work was handling money. I spent more time, on these papers that I prepared for the methodology of handling covert operations,⁴ in devising the money trails as anything else.

That's why I feel in this current business about the Iran-hostage exchange, when you hear these top people talking about the use of the Economy Act of 1932— they don't say the year—they just say the Economy Act, what they are really talking about is this very secret money channel that we established for actual covert operations. It works all right. It's not described in this document⁵ at all. But it was a key to how this whole business of covert operations worked. You've got to pay people all the time.

For example, you've got to buy helicopters. One of the situations we had: we had planes going all over the world all the time. The usual system when you're flying an aircraft all over the world is to use a credit card just like the airlines do. The pilot buys thousands of gallons of fuel and puts it on the credit card. But how do you put a credit card on an "Air America" CIA airplane that really belonged to the Air Force? And, in the end, how do you pay the bills?

We created a system for this. We created a system where every single credit card turned in on these planes in the clandestine business around the world would arrive at a certain computer center at Dayton, Ohio. From that computer center in Dayton, it would fall into a certain box and we'd pay those bills. Then we'd turn right around and charge CIA—but we'd do it on internal U.S. Air Force books so nobody knew it. Thus we could follow the movement of every single airplane. If you can't do that, you can't run covert operations. As you heard

4. "Military Support of the Clandestine Operations of the United States Government" written in 1955. See *Military Experiences*, Part II, page 42.

5. *U.S. Government Organization Manual, 1959-1960*, page 143. See page 76.

Colonel North trying to explain what they did, and he can't do it—it's because the system broke down. They had trouble with the system, they need to go back and rethink the system. A very intricate system.

Ratcliffe: In other words, that level of indirection was essential to cover what the money was really being used to pay for.

Prouty: Yes. The money we're talking about is nothing but numbers: so many dollars in the Defense budget that moved into the CIA budget, or vice versa and so many dollars from another budget moving into this budget. We never touched a dollar, we never asked the Sultan of Brunei or anyone else for a couple of million bucks as they say the "Iran-Contra" operators did—that's utterly ridiculous! If you're going to help some young kids in Honduras that are called the "Contras," you don't go around borrowing millions of dollars to give to some ex-Nicaraguan in a villa in Palm Beach! That's what the Iran-Contra scheme was doing.

Those "cover story" operators were millionaires under the Somoza regime. They'd like to be back again being millionaires under another regime. You don't send them millions of dollars in checks and say, "Hey, spend this money buying grenades." The ridiculous thing about all this—how do you take grenades out of an Army supply depot? How do you get some Army supply sergeant to give you a truckload of grenades? You can't say to him, 'Hey, I'm going to take these down and give them to the Contras.' The Army supply sergeant won't give you anything. You have to have a letter of authority and it has to look like every other letter he's ever seen. You don't sell them for \$3 a piece to the Contras! You see how ridiculous all this stuff is?

During that Iran-Contra fiasco, if we just had a chance to take this one directive, and explain it to Judge Gesell or to Prosecutor Walsh and let them know what the facts of life are, they would have ended that problem in a few days. They wouldn't even need the jury. It's just ridiculous the way this has grown.

Ratcliffe: Isn't it also true that the whole scam of that trial is that, if there was to be any trial at all that was correct, it would have been a military trial?—since he was in the Operations as a—

Prouty: We have to look at it several ways. If they reached the point in coming down the levels, the first thing to know is to find out who

really made the decision and whether he had that authority. It wasn't Ollie North; it wasn't Poindexter; it wasn't McFarland. They all worked for people. So you have to go to the people they worked for and say, "Who made the decision?"

The man who said this Iran-Contra operation was done under the Economy Act made the decision. Because, by saying it was done under the Economy Act, what he is doing is opening the doors of the secret supply channel, which is worth tens of millions of dollars. He had to have the money for it—meaning the money in the federal budget—not cash on the barrel, and not cash he got from the King of Saudi Arabia.

He made the decision to release the missiles, and not to sell them to somebody—in exchange for hostages. When you exchange the missiles for hostages, you don't get any money; the hostages are the money, you exchange for hostages. If somebody kidnapped my dog and said he wanted \$100, I'd give them the money and I'd take the dog. That's the deal!

The whole situation in this contrived Iran-Contra situation—from the point when McFarlane went over to Teheran with a cake and a Bible, the whole thing, right there, was explaining itself as a weird, mixed-up exercise. You don't do clandestine exercises that way. There was something terribly wrong with it when it started with a cake and a Bible.

I bought that present for Diem that we mentioned earlier to put on his desk because Lansdale was the guy that was going there; well even that felt pretty strange, to be using U.S. money to put a trinket on President Diem's desk. But it wasn't going to hurt anybody. But this Iran-Contra deal is the biggest aberration on covert operation I've ever heard of. It simply is not a covert operation at all. Somebody was just handling a lot of money, and Meese created the meaningless name for that game, "Iran-Contra", that was just contrived.

Ratcliffe: What's your sense of the most likely explanation for how things have gone so awry?

Prouty: It's simple. The Iraqis have fought the Iranians since 1981. And in that period the Iraqis have released data that this warfare cost them \$60 billion. I'm sure the Iranians fought as hard as the Iraqis did. The Iranians were using U.S. military hardware, because most of their army and navy are supplied with things made in the United States. When the equipment is made in the United States—like engines or

parts—you have to buy them from the United States; nobody else makes that specific military equipment, at least not identical. So you have to buy it from the United States.

So, I believe (without too much concern about the exact record, or the figures) that it must have cost the Iranians about \$60 billion to fight the Iraqis. If it did, it means the Iranians purchased (from somebody) parts made in the United States that belonged to the U.S. military (or the military suppliers) worth \$60 billion. Not a few million. Not a cake and a bible. Sixty billion dollars. They don't want to talk about it.

So they'd rather talk about the cake and the bible and the Contras. That's the role Mr. Meese created to divert the people from the \$60 billion and talk about the Contras. When you're talking about the Contras, everything that happened in Iran is quiet. One was supposed to balance the other.

If you go back and look at the newspapers, the Iranian/Contra problem began with a little newspaper saying that weapons from the United States had been exchanged for hostages. That was the problem—only that. Then, when Mr. Meese went poking around in the papers in the White House, he says he found a memo that the money from that exchange was going to the Contras. He made some funny statements. There's no money from the exchange—not from that exchange—and there was no need of giving money to the Contras. But every eye and ear of the members of the Congressional hearings turned to the Contras, and they forgot Iran from that time on. Mr. Meese's gambit succeeded. As simple as that.

Then we get people who have other interests—and I make no brief for them; but people like the Christic Institute—who amplified on this deal. The next thing you know, everybody's looking at Nicaragua instead of Teheran. Well, that covers up the \$60 billion deal we played with Iran. There's your problem.

Clarifying the Role of the National Security Agency (NSA)

Ratcliffe: Regarding a statement in what you quoted: you were saying the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Special Operations was in charge of reviewing the plans and activities of the NSA—the NSA being the electronic eyes and ears of the world for the U.S. Did this mean you would review plans of the NSA of where they would be listening or what they would be looking for?

Prouty: Let's keep something in mind here: there is a lot of misunderstanding about the role of the National Security Agency (NSA). It is eyes and ears—as a purely technical or mechanical job. It's like the water company. You have to have a lot of pipes and then the water can come in your house or somebody else's house. But the pipes have to be there first. If they want to meter the water coming into your house, they put a meter out there and they read the meter. Communications is a flow of information something like that.

There are communications channels existent all over the world. It's all floating around out there in space, all vibrating away in space, perfectly normal and in accordance with the laws of physics. If you want to listen in, you use a radio, or you improve radios to all kinds of capabilities by using computers. And that equipment can monitor any emission that's in the air, or even in the ground. There are programs that count the vibrations in the earth. They have things sunk near roads that can count the number of trucks that pass down that road every day. They can tell you the weight of the truck by the way it bounces, and so on.

The NSA is so good at all of this emission business, whether it's radio waves or whatever kind of waves; they can tell you when a power transmission line is carrying the normal load of electricity or an increased load or when it's turned off. They can tell you when a nuclear power plant far out in the back of Western China near the Mongolian border is operating or not operating.

The NSA can do that. These are purely physical things that they do with instrumentation and enhanced with computers. But they're not covert activities. There's a difference. They're in the pipes, somebody tells them what to do and they do it.

The other side of it is, they do so damn much that you can't read it out. They've got warehouses of data. So they learn to rotate it, and reuse it, and all that. But they let the computers scan it, and the computers pull stuff off by signature devices that can read voices, read numbers—all kinds of things—until they get the data they are seeking.

But even then, they need direction. They need to be told: 'You heard so-and-so talk on the phone last week. Find that voice again and let us know what he says next time he makes a phone call'. And whether he's in Tokyo or whether he's in Singapore, they'll find that voice again and the computer will identify it by its code signatures, voice signatures, and they'll put the message out. That's NSA.

So NSA needs direction. General Erskine was charged with the responsibility for giving them that direction when required. It makes a lot of sense. But it is entirely different from the kind of direction you might have working with CIA, where the CIA is an independent agency and able to do any and all kinds of activities that human beings can devise which are not the sorts of tasks you can put under direction. So the CIA activities are much different from the NSA activities. One is sort of a numbers game, and the other is akin to dealing with poetry—you never know what's going to be next. It's an art. It's a skill. As Mr. Dulles wrote in his own biography, it's *The Craft of Intelligence*. It's much different.

Abolishing the OSO and Moving Special Operations Into the JCS

Things came together in this Office of Special Operations, where the CIA and the NSA enhanced each other. As such, it was a real fine structure—that OSO Office should never have been abolished. It was a very important office; they made a big mistake. That's when control over our foremost intelligence agencies began to go downhill, when they abolished OSO. The Defense Intelligence Agency was established at the same time in early 1961.

Ratcliffe: OSO was run by General Erskine?

Prouty: Yes, Erskine. He had been in that assignment for nine years. I was his Chief Air Force Officer for Special Operations. He had an Army Officer and a Navy Officer in similar functions. His Deputy was Lansdale, who was with CIA. And he had other people from CIA—a fellow named Frank Hand and some others. But I was his Chief Air Force Officer and I had headed a similar Office of Special Operations in the Air Force for the previous five years.

Ratcliffe: Then, when you went in 1962 through 1963 into the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, your title and position was still dealing with Special Operations.

Prouty: Yes. I set up that new office to retain that capability of dealing with the CIA and its covert operations when they closed down OSO. When they closed down the OSO, other work, like the NSA, was managed through other offices after that. McNamara dispersed

them into different offices. The Office of Special Operations, the covert support, was put into JCS, and I worked under the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. But it stayed—the role was identical, as far as that part was concerned.

Ratcliffe: I thought there was some point when you were involved with doing for the other branches of the Defense Department what you had done for the Air Force, in terms of acting as this liaison.

Prouty: That was with JCS. Then I had a senior Army man, a senior Navy man and I acted as a senior Air Force man so we had all the services. I had a Marine General, and I worked for a Marine, so we had all the services covered by being in the JCS. I think that was the proper way to run that. I agreed very much with General Wheeler and Mr. McNamara when they asked me to go there, because I felt that really was—at certain times in my work with the Air Force, we would collide with the other services. The Agency would, in effect, bargain with us.

Take the beginning of the Bay of Pigs: the Agency went to the Navy and asked for initial support in Panama for the Bay of Pigs operation. The Navy wouldn't do it. So they came to the Air Force, and we did it. We did the Navy's role really. That's not good—that kind of colliding on these jobs. If the Navy had a good reason not to do it, we should have dropped it right there. In the JCS we'd put it all on the same desk and we wouldn't have that kind of a mix-up. That was a better way to run this operation.

Ratcliffe: But you also said you felt it was a mistake to have abolished the office as it stood in the Office of the Secretary of Defense?

Prouty: Yes. In the Office of the Secretary of Defense, where they were higher, he also had DIA and NSA. And that was very important; they should have kept those together. And he also had the State Department liaison and the White House liaison.

Ratcliffe: Alright. You were just commenting about this paper.

Prouty: Yes. It's very good to talk from this government publication. It describes the roles and the function and the policy of this Office of

Special Operations. If you divide those functions, then some central authority is not operating to go from one line across the other line.

For example, if we wanted to work with the NSA. NSA knew we had the same function with CIA, or that we had the same functions with the State Department, the same responsibilities in the White House. So that we could bridge all of these organizations together. And from the dominant position of the Secretary of Defense, we could make sure that NSA and CIA—and when necessary, the State Department and the White House—all knew the same things. We were not working at cross-purposes. It was a very effective build up that began again with this NSC 5412 paper back in 1954, and placed under General Erskine's control and supervision.

Now if that same policy was being performed today—by what we see again in the Iran hearings—I don't think they would have had all this misunderstanding about who was doing what. Because this was very clear. All we had to do was, if I ever had a question about whether or not I should do something that the CIA asked me to do, I had a very simple answer to that myself. I would go to the Secretary of Defense, who kept a record of his NSC actions, and I would say: 'Mr. Gates, did the NSC approve this operation (the CIA had just called me to perform)?' He'd look at his record and he'd say, 'Yes. Day before yesterday we approved it. Go ahead.' I wouldn't be in the quandary that Ollie North and his associates find themselves in.

There was no ambiguity. We knew. If something came up that involved the support of NSA, NSA could say, 'Why are you asking us to do that?' I would say, 'Well, we have had a meeting with the CIA. The Secretary of Defense says we'll do this.' And then we would do it.

When we needed coordination with the ambassador in India, or the ambassador in Thailand, we could go to the State Department as the legal representative of the Secretary of Defense and say: 'We have an operation that involves CIA, that involves NSA, that's going to take place in India, and we just want to let you know.' Fine. Then we don't have anybody stumbling over each other's toes. Right now, this question of whether Mr. Bush, when he went to Honduras, did this or did that—we didn't get into that kind of problem, because it had been decided by everybody before we did it. This was a very good system for this kind of secret operation.

The other way to say it is: the lack of it leads to the problems that we have seen now. I think that it was a serious mistake for the

Secretary of Defense to abolish the OSO and let these responsibilities go separately on their own, as they appear to be doing now. In order to create another OSO, President Reagan brought that responsibility up into the White House under the NSC. Well, they're not staffed to do any of this. In fact, Poindexter, North, McFarlane, and Earl are all military officers on duty. They all belong in the Pentagon. They don't belong over there in the White House. They made a bad mistake when they failed to see the necessity to keep this team work working as it was between '54 and '64 and probably for several years after that.

Ratcliffe: Who abolished the OSO—McNamara?

Prouty: McNamara. It happened almost inadvertently because, again, McNamara was new. He'd only been there a few months. And General Erskine, who had been in that job longer than any person had ever been Assistant Secretary—it was time for him to retire. He was an elderly man at the time. I think just because Erskine was leaving, McNamara had not had the experience with the system—and I think there was no suitable successor—Lansdale wasn't the type of man to be the boss.

Lansdale was a good operator, but not the man to be the boss. First of all, Lansdale was a CIA agent. They also were setting up DIA at the same time—I think a little bit overwhelmed by all these things—and they didn't think that losing this whole package was going to be so important. I fought pretty hard to keep my package together, and I was successful. I was glad to get it into JCS. But I severely missed the ability to go to the NSA people, or to the State Department or the White House, to coordinate all this. I still coordinated with the CIA but, you see, not with the others. So the system began to break down when it was divided.

Ratcliffe: You were unable to because it wasn't within your scope of contacts as easily as it had previously been?

Prouty: The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff did not get these functions when he got the function of Special Operations. He did not get these other functions. He only got Special Operations. And personalities have a tremendous impact. General Lemnitzer, was, as far as I'm concerned, an ideal Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and was not interested in Special Operations. He thought the military

should be military: no fun and games. It was just that way—it's his military strength, just the way he'd act.

CHAPTER 2

Understanding The Secret Team in the Post-World War II Era

Understanding The Secret Team

Part I

Ratcliffe: We're here with Fletcher Prouty. The date is May 6, 1989 and we now begin an interview regarding his book *The Secret Team, The CIA and Its Allies in Control of the United States and the World*, published by Prentice Hall in 1973.

In The Context of Its Time: The National Security Act of 1947

Much of post-World War II American political history and agendas seems to hinge on events that occurred immediately after World War II. With the passage of the National Security Act of 1947, can you discuss the original intent of Congress regarding the role of the CIA as specified in this law.

Prouty: It's very important while discussing the National Security Act of 1947 to be sure we go back into the spirit and the thinking of the time. We had just ended the greatest world war ever fought in late 1945, with the surrender of the Japanese on September 2, 1945.

During 1945 and early in 1946, President Truman abolished the OSS. There was no longer a need for an operational organization of that type now that the war was over. But there were assets of the OSS, primarily things such as agents, agents lists, who the agents worked with, and other activities like that, that you just can't abandon. They have to be taken care of. These were placed in an office which was concealed in the State Department for quite a while. President Truman also, by presidential directive, created the National Intelligence Group and placed it under General Vandenberg, an army

officer and later Chief of Staff of the Air Force, who had considerable experience with intelligence matters.

Both of these acts by President Truman were more or less standby. He knew there would have to be some change in the law to act on these intelligence matters. At that time also, you will remember, the Soviet Union had been our ally during the war. It was not “the” enemy as it became during the Cold War. So the National Security Act of 1947, the language of the law was written during 1946, was based pretty much on the reality of World War II, and not upon the Cold War realities.

For those of us looking back, that is difficult to think about because we have so ingrained in us now the fact that the Soviet Union is the enemy, communism is the enemy, and that the Germans, Japanese, and Italians who were our enemy in World War II are all now friends. So you must go back into that era and begin there when you talk about the origins of the CIA and the passage of this very important law, the National Security Act of 1947.

I was teaching a major year-long course, at Yale called The Evolution of Warfare. Of necessity I was very interested in these activities of 1946 and 1947 as part of my course. So I read everything I could get from the congressional hearings, from the newspapers, everything that was going in those years regarding the creation of this new law. What you could see were some rather practical things, and then some indications of things that were going to come.

First of all the Army and Navy had to share their aviation interests with a new branch of the service: the Air Force. That was one of the facts that the public recognized about this new law. We created then a single Department of Defense—we hadn’t had one before. Many of the officers, especially senior officers, who had fought World War II did not like this term, Department of Defense. There’s a very basic distinction, especially in warfare, but also in athletics, in sports, in any competition between being on the offense and being on the defense. On the offense, you know what you’re doing. On the offense, you’re planning something. If you’re on the offense with a Department of War, as we used to have, it doesn’t mean you’re planning to fight, but it means you’re ready to fight. And you let everybody know that. If you’re on the Department of Defense, you’re waiting for somebody else to make a move, and then you react.

The philosophy of the entire military structure of this country changed with this business of the Department of Defense. And

coming as it did, right when we were the most powerful nation in the world, with an enormous army, navy, and air force, and the nuclear weapon which nobody else had in that period—to put all of that on the defense was an enormous oversight. Those of us who were close to all that felt it that way.

There was no way to say that the World War II armies of the United States were to go on the defense. That really destroyed the structure of the Army and a lot of people on active service felt that at that time. I say that because this business of the communists/anti-communists bit, and the idea of a Department of War or Department of Navy as against a Department of Defense—another major shift—was then joined by this new idea of a Central Intelligence Agency.

One of the problems during World War II was not that we did not have enough intelligence. Rather it was that it wasn't coordinated. The intelligence that General MacArthur and Admiral Nimitz had in the Pacific was not always coordinated with the intelligence that General Eisenhower and General Bradley and their allies had in the European theater. There were a lot of times when Washington had different intelligence from different sources and didn't have the means to coordinate it properly for the overall benefit of our military forces who were fighting all over the world.

We had new ways of gathering intelligence. We had new electronic means. Radar was used to gather intelligence. We had aerial photography. We had all kinds of devices that were not in the ordinary James Bond intelligence of pre-war days. Congress understood from a lot of testimony from experienced military leaders that one of the greatest shortages and one of the greatest mistakes in the war was that we did not have coordinated intelligence.

So when Congress wrote the language of this legislation for the CIA—and I printed this literally in the book so that anyone who wants to read it will see exactly what the law says¹—it said that the CIA is created to coordinate the intelligence of the rest of the government. That was why it was created. With that as a primary duty of CIA, then the other little tasks and things they were supposed to do come forward and it is a clearer explanation—in fact, it is the only explanation when it is put that way. There was not a single word, for example, in the law that said that the CIA should collect intelligence. There wasn't a single word in the law that said the CIA should get

1. *The Secret Team*, Appendix II,
<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STappendix2.html>

involved in covert operations, and this is the same law that exists today by the way. We haven't changed it.

But gradually things changed, whether they were written into the law or not. But we're talking about the law of 1947, how it was written and what it meant. The people that first became members of this new CIA knew that their job was the coordination of intelligence. They had no doubt about that. The enormous move toward Cold War, anti-communism and all that—all the buzz words that we've lived on for the last 30 or 40 years—did not exist then, at least not strongly. It was coming over the horizon.

While the National Security Act of 1947 was being written, primarily by men like the great lawyer Clark Clifford, a close friend of President Truman's, and an enormously influential man in this period—while that was being done, Churchill had made his speech in Missouri about the Iron Curtain and the Cold War and those things. The country was beginning to move in that direction. That era, the strange McCarthy era had not come, but it was inevitable, it was on the way.

What to do with nuclear weapons was underway at the time. For instance, our military had never had a weapon as dynamic as the atom bomb. What is important about an atom bomb, as it is with a barrel of oil, is that it has no real value until it's been delivered. The organization most able to deliver the atom bomb was the Air Force. And immediately war planners saw that to use atom bombs, we would have to have an enormous fleet of very large aircraft. One of the first things they did was they began to build a bigger and better B-29, which was the largest plane we had during the war, and finally even the B-36 and then the B-52 to carry the atom bomb. They needed an enormous plane to do that. It was a monster of a device in those days.

These things began to shape strategy. Then as they began to think about this, if atomic bombs were going to be used as the primary weapon, how were you going to put a navy and an army into the battleground that atom bombs had devastated or could devastate, either way, because the enemy then did not possess the atom bomb and its delivery capability. This would be interesting.

If you went to a military school in the forties, you could talk about an enemy, but we were a Department of Defense; we weren't supposed to be talking about a particular enemy and gradually over time "enemy" became synonymous with Russia. If we had opposing forces in a combat situation, we'd have the blue forces and the red

forces. We always knew we were the blue ones and so gradually this thinking about the Soviet Enemy came about.

While we were predominant with the nuclear weapon, it almost was ridiculous to think of any other country as possessing an equal and opposite force to ours. That furthermore underscored the enormous mistake made in calling this military the Department of Defense, because if ever we were strong on the offense, it was immediately after World War II. We weren't a defensive nation at that time, but we were made a defensive nation by the Department of Defense. I haven't heard many people discuss that in so many words; I did in Yale when I was teaching. I used to talk about that a lot because I had hoped then that that was not really what was going to be the end of all this planning.

As the CIA started late in '47, it was primarily a roll-over of World War II, militarily trained people. The head of it was an admiral, Admiral Hillenkotter. I think out of the number of personnel that they had, over 5,000 were military people—they weren't reservists—they were active duty people. Gradually, people from the World War II OSS and new recruitment began to fill up the agency, but that took years. That got us into the Allen Dulles era and the Eisenhower administration.

During the late forties, the number of civilians that rolled into the agency gradually was a relatively small number. I say "relatively small" with respect to today. Among them though were some very strong OSS residual members who were well-trained in covert work that involves clandestine operations. And despite the fact that covert operations were totally overlooked in the law, even so much as to suppress that kind of activity by not putting it in the law and not creating a budget basis for that kind of expenditure of funds, the people with that specific type of training came into the CIA.

Certainly the military wasn't going to get into that business, nor was the State Department, so it was a question of where do you keep this new capability in a peacetime infrastructure. In this way the residual OSS capability fell into the lap of the CIA. But even then, that took years. It didn't happen until General Walter Bedell Smith came home from Russia (where he had been Ambassador to Russia) and became the Director of Central Intelligence in October, 1950.

At that time he brought Allen Dulles into the CIA as his Deputy Director of Plans, which means that he was put in charge of covert operations. Dulles had been with the OSS. Bedell Smith announced

to the President that if he was going to be in charge as the Director of Central Intelligence, he was going to have OPC (Office of Policy Coordination) under him and not scattered around with responsibilities in the State Department and the Defense Department.

A lot has been said about OPC in the sense of how could such an organization have been created without law, and how was this ingenious little device created of appointing its senior officer so that he would be nominated by one secretary, either State or Defense, and seconded by the other. He would be approved as though he didn't have a single commander. Everybody knew that was temporary and it had no real significance, because what OPC was doing was to preserve certain assets, certain highly classified assets of World War II. It was not initiating operations.

Now I don't mean to disregard some of the very practical things that were being done. For instance, we had clandestine operations underway in Greece as a result of the Greek civil war right after World War II and these spilled over into Bulgaria and nearby countries across the Greek border. We had other operations going on in China, but relatively speaking they were small and they were again residuals of World War II. They were not planned operations against some communist nation or that kind of thing. But they existed and this was there.

The Chief of OPC at the time was Frank Wisner who had been a very dominant OSS leader in Eastern Europe during World War II. Later he directed the massive campaign against Indonesia in 1958. So Wisner was very active in the covert activities. But when General Smith became the DCI, he insisted upon bringing that group into the agency. Now strictly speaking, that was not supported by law. It was simply an expedient.

The Creation of the National Security Council

One of the most important facets of this National Security Act of 1947 was the creation of the National Security Council. We had not had an organization like that in peace time in other years; not under Roosevelt, not before and I don't even recall anything like that in the World War I period. What was decided was that there are times, when for purposes of national security, there must be top-level decisions made and that the President needed assistance in making those decisions. So the National Security Council, by law, consists of the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary of State, and the

Secretary of Defense—and no others. They can invite others and others do attend the meetings. But there are no other statutory members.

If we relate that to today's affairs in all these questions about the Iran and Contra hearings and all those related problems, there could not have been a decision about covert operations involving the Contras, or Iran, or an exchange of hostages, or any of that without a decision from the National Security Council—that's by law. There's no other way to do it. Other than an illegal way, and I don't think that's ever even been assumed. There had to be decisions from the National Security Council.

From my own experience and background, I simply cannot believe that the members of the National Security Council during this Iran-Contra period have removed themselves from the whole situation as though they had nothing to do with it. That's preposterous—by law they had to participate. If they didn't do it, they were derelict in their duty and they should be tried for that. That's what the National Security Council was created to do.

In the forties, the National Security Council met and created a directive which I believe was called "10-slant-2" [10/2]. 10/2 recognized that the U.S. government might from time to time be involved, or involve itself, in covert action. Generally this would mean relatively small activities. Not major warfare like the Korean War or the Vietnam War. Not even large operations such as the invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. These were small operations and were truly clandestine, covert actions. And there were many of them, many of them highly classified and still secret, because they were small. Later on, when I got into this business in the fifties, we had things like that going all the time, but they were small.

The decision to involve the United States in covert action had to be made by this National Security Council—no one else; no one else had the authority. Even the DCI, the head of the intelligence agency, was not part of the National Security Council. Therefore, he was not involved in the decision. He would be told about the decision. During the forties and early fifties, things worked that way.

The Dulles-Jackson-Correa Report

In 1948, a rather important event happened: President Truman wanted to have a highly qualified group study how the CIA was moving along; how it was progressing, and whether or not it was becoming effective. So he established a committee, headed by Allen Dulles, a New York lawyer with the most prominent, largest law firm in New York City, Sullivan and Cromwell; a man named Mathias Correa, who I believe was also a lawyer, although I don't recall his career that closely; and then a man named William H. Jackson. Jackson had a lot of OSS experience. I think Correa did, and I certainly know that Dulles did.

This committee of three men—primarily Allen Dulles—made an extensive study of the activities of the CIA, and in their report to the President, they recommended a move more into the clandestine operations area, and more into the traditional deep intelligence area than the law had visualized.

There was a very interesting aspect about this committee. It was appointed by President Truman in his final year as president, as the successor to Roosevelt. Roosevelt died in '45 and Truman was the Vice-President, so he hadn't won an election yet. He was going to run for re election in late '48 for a new term beginning in '49. His opponent was Thomas E. Dewey.

Interestingly, Thomas Dewey's speech writer during the 1948 campaign against Truman was Allen Dulles. So you see Dulles was riding two horses across this stream. He was technically Truman's advisor with respect to intelligence matters—he and Jackson and Correa while at the same time he was writing speeches for Thomas E. Dewey strongly opposing the re-election of Truman.

I don't know whether Truman knew he was writing speeches for Dewey or whether Dewey knew he was working for Truman. I have no way to solve that little problem. But it's important to understand the effect of that, and it helps you understand the mind of this man Dulles. Dulles would see nothing wrong in that sort of thing. He would see nothing wrong in working for Truman and trying to undercut him by helping Dewey or vice versa.

This had an influence on the report. Because (of course) Dulles was absolutely convinced, as were Jackson and Correa, along with most of the country, that Dewey was going to be elected president. So

as he wrote this report, he saw that report as, you might say, his own *Mein Kampf*. It was his own idea of what CIA was going to become because he was positive that Dewey would make him the Director of Central Intelligence when Dewey became president. That designed and shaped the report.

As we know, Truman turned around and beat Dewey in a great surprise. And without much ado, the Dulles-Jackson-Correa report was slid under the White House door on the first of January, 1949, and we never heard much of it after that. Many of the elements within the report did appear years later, because when Eisenhower became President, John Foster Dulles became Secretary of State and General Walter Bedell Smith became his Deputy Secretary of State. In doing so, he stepped down from the CIA, and Allen Dulles became the Director of Central Intelligence. At that time Dulles pulled out his own Dulles-Jackson-Correa report and began to put it in effect. He remained the DCI for the next 9 years.

The single primary character of the CIA is Mr. Dulles. There's no question about it, it was his agency. Nobody else has left any mark like his. But you need to see that background to understand what the passage of the National Security Act really meant in 1947. What it says in law is what creates many of these controversies about intelligence today. Because there still is no law that says that the CIA is an intelligence organization—it says that it is a coordinating agency. There is no law that says it is a covert operations agency.

So that's a fairly good summary as I've seen it through my own lifetime of the law itself, the effect of the law, and particularly how the CIA was an outgrowth of the law. It's important to understand what the CIA was trying to do, what the National Security Council was trying to do, and what the Congress was trying to do. This eventually led to the remarkable statement by President Truman, I believe in December 1963 when he wrote, as a columnist for a newspaper, that the greatest mistake he made in his entire career as President was to sign the National Security Act of 1947, and that portion of law which created the Central Intelligence Agency.²

Ratcliffe: Even though at the time it could be argued that he could not have seen the effect of his signing into law something which over time, would change by degree into something else.

Prouty: It's true that he never did sign the law that would come to encompass all these things. The law he signed was limited. If they had stayed within its parameters the agency would have been much different. But he recognized that by setting this up, he initiated it. He got the ball rolling, right or wrong.

Ratcliffe: I suppose this is already explained by what you've just said, but could you comment briefly on what you wrote on page 138 of *The Secret Team*:

Congress had been so certain that the Agency would not become operational and policy-making that it was content to place it under the control of a committee. Congress knew that the Agency would never be permitted to become involved in clandestine operations and therefore that the NSC would never have to direct it in an operational sense.³

At that time, how do you feel Congress felt so unequivocal about this?

Prouty: That's not a hard statement to understand in the time of the 1940's. It is today in the eighties or in the seventies or in the sixties. In the late 1940's, Congress and its Congressmen, many of whom were veterans of World War II, knew very well that the United States government was not going to have covert operations, a covert establishment running around the world. They also knew they had not even created a new major intelligence organization. Congress, in other words, believed the words of the law that it had just written and passed.

Furthermore, we weren't in the buzz-word period, or the Pavlovian period, of anti-communism at that time. It was coming, but it didn't exist then. And we were sitting on top of the atom bomb capability, which meant that we were the absolute power in the world.

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2. "For some time I have been disturbed by the way the CIA has been diverted from its original assignment. It has become an operational and at times a policy-making arm of the government.... I never had any thought that when I set up the CIA that it would be injected into peacetime cloak-and-dagger operations. Some of the complications and embarrassment that I think we have experienced are in part attributable to the fact that this quiet intelligence arm of the President has been so removed from its intended role that it is being interpreted as a symbol of sinister and mysterious foreign intrigue and a subject for cold war enemy propaganda." *Washington Post*, December 21, 1963.

3. *Ibid*, p. 138,
<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp5.html#p138>

Things were so different in the late forties that you can't take those statements without a lot of care and understanding, and transpose them to either the sixties, seventies or eighties; it's just ridiculous. You have to read them in terms of the forties. And that's a pretty true statement of the forties.

But of course you'd change it if you were writing it today, and I'm sure Congress' view of the CIA today is nothing like that. But that is an important commentary on what has changed. What has really changed is in people's minds, but not actually in the language of the law. The language of the law—that same law exists today—but it is people's minds that have changed. It's our concept of the world that has changed. That's a very important statement.

Opening the Door to CIA Clandestine Operations: Shifting NSC Oversight from *Directing* to *Approving* Plans

Ratcliffe: You describe, in a multitude of examples, Allen Dulles' ability to subvert the watchdog role of the NSC (to prevent the CIA from carrying out clandestine operations) by such moves as engineering the creation of the Special Group 5412/2 that effectively neutralized the oversight functions carried out under the authority of the Operations Coordinating Board.

This was one of the major steps forward taken by Allen Dulles as a result of his report. It looked like a small thing, and it was applied bit by bit; but once the NSC found itself in the position of doing no more than "authorizing" activities of the CIA rather than "directing" them, the roles began to turn 180 degrees, and the ST became the active party. When the NSC was established, it was realized that if such an eminent body of men made decisions and then directed that they be carried out, they would not necessarily be in a position to see that someone actually did carry them out. Therefore, provision was made for an Operations Coordinating Board, (OCB), which would see that the decisions of the President and his Council were carried out. This was effective only as long as the NSC was directing activity. The OCB would require that the NSC staff keep a record of decisions in duplicate, and the Board would ride herd on these decisions and see that they were done. It had trouble doing this when CIA was just getting its proposals "authorized".

When the NSC was divided into a small and elite Special Group for the purpose of working with the CIA on matters that were from time to time clandestine, the task of the OCB became more difficult because of the cloak of security. Still, the OCB

tried to keep up with such decisions, if by no other means than to require “blind” progress reports. But when the NSC, through the Special Group, simply sat and listened to outside proposals and then permitted or authorized actions that were highly classified and highly limited by need to know, the role of the OCB became impossible to perform. This was exactly what Allen Dulles wanted. His report had stated that he should be able to initiate operations and to take his proposals directly to the President, and that the President or an authorized representative would then approve what the DCI brought to him. He had not been given that authority by the law, and he could not have done it under Truman because Truman used the NSC and OCB differently from what Dulles visualized. But year by year during the Eisenhower Administration he worked to erode the NSC-OCB pattern until he was able to work through the Special Group 5412/2 almost without interference. Part of his success was due to his effective control of communications, which made it appear all the time that projects had been thoroughly staffed in all parts of the Government concerned and that the approval of the NSC (Special Group) was merely a formality.

By the time Kennedy became President, he was led to believe that the NSC was unimportant, one of those Eisenhower idiosyncrasies, and that he could do without it. If he could do without the NSC, he certainly could do without the OCB. (Since it could be shown that the OCB was not able to perform its job properly because it was unable to find out what the Special Group had approved, there was no reason for OCB either.) Without either of these bodies in session, the DCI was able to move in as he desired, with very little effective control from any Council member. This was a major change brought about by a kind of evolution and erosion. It was certainly a downgrading process; but the trouble was that all too few people had any realization of what had taken place, and those who had were either with the CIA or the ST, and they were not about to tell anyone.⁴

Now you just mentioned how the OCB was originally set up to have some supposed authority given to it by the Secretaries of Defense and State, and how Walter Bedell Smith, in late 1950, succeeded in making that position subordinate to himself⁵ as DCI. Can you

4. *Ibid*, pp. 291-2,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp13.html#p291-2>

(While this excerpt was not explicitly read out loud during the interview, it is included here since its content is so essential to the discussion at this point.)

5. “that position” meaning OPC. Although OPC is not being explicitly mentioned here, it is what was being referred at this point, as discussed back on page 96.

explain how, particularly Dulles, who was so central to this, was able to redefine this watchdog role of the NSC over clandestine operations?

Prouty: First of all, let me make a technical correction to your question. The OCB was the Operations Coordinating Board, which was a part of NSC by law. OCB was composed of a group of senior individuals who would follow the decisions made by the National Security Council and make sure the bureaucracy carried them out. That was the function of the OCB, a different organization.

The Office of Policy Coordination (OPC) was no more than a cover name for the residual OSS organization that was under Frank Wisner and an extremely distinct organization from OCB. It came from World War II; it was a necessary function. It was like sweeping up things left on the floor after the war. We had to keep alive the records from the OSS, and it was agreed to put this organization only notionally⁶ within the State Department, but to control its chief by

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6. During the period we were trading hand edits back-and-forth to make the raw transcript of the tape recordings readable as the text format of this book, there was a point when Fletcher replaced the word he had used in the interview, “structurally,” with “notionally”. Because of the small handwriting, I was not sure I had this term spelled correctly and asked him about it when I passed my next round of edits back. He responded with the following:

I just noticed one small item on a page here. It has intrigued me since you first brought it up. You want to know what this word “notionally” is. That is a better question than you may have thought. In the CIA there are many words, phrases and codes that have special meaning in the trade. So “notion” is an idea. In the CIA a “notional” assignment is one that is acted upon as a logical “idea” but the “idea” itself is used to cover the real job, or concept. For example: the CIA runs a big airline in the Western Pacific region. It is based in Taiwan and flies to most major cities in the Rim areas. So it is a real airline. That’s the “idea” but that “notion” covers the fact that its primary business is to have aircraft available all over the area for the CIA’s covert work. So it is a “notional” airline. The CIA crowd use that special meaning of the word quite frequently. I’ve been pleased to have you pick up on that, because it serves to show how effective such “codes”, “Concepts”, etc., can be in the real world. They are a gang of characters. That’s why I called my work “Team B”. We certainly made no attempt to be thought of as “Team A” in the eyes of the public; but with the CIA we did the job of an “A” class team.

making the new Secretary of Defense and his counterpart the Secretary of State responsible for the leader of the organization. Giving him some control that way. The budgetary function was minimal. It was just a matter of paying people—that's about all—and taking care of the records. A lot of people have misinterpreted the OPC, although when it gradually worked its way into the CIA under Bedell Smith, it did become dominant again. It became rather strong and it became the main clandestine operation sector of the agency later known as the Deputy Director of Plans. (So I'd like to correct the two letters which are somewhat similar but the jobs are entirely different.)

Now we'll go back to Mr. Dulles and how he was able to circumvent the law. The best way is to say again that the report that he had written with Correa and with Jackson outlined his vision of how the CIA ought to be. He believed that. He thought that it ought to have a full intelligence power, including secret intelligence, and that it ought to have clandestine capability to carry out any operation directed by the National Security Council. He thought that could be started in '49. By the time he got to be the DCI in 1953, things hadn't worked that way.

The CIA had been kept rather quiet. It was coordinating intelligence, and it was doing very little in the covert activities field. He felt that should change, but he didn't have any lawful way to do it. So what he did was he would take a plan that they had made up because of some input from a foreign country or from one of his station chiefs around the world that was in response to some action. Then he would go to the National Security Council. They didn't direct him to go to X country and do something; they were approving something that he felt he ought to do in response to an action that some of his operators, some of his agents, had seen in a foreign country. That device enabled him to create activities that most of the time were reactions or responses.

So the NSC found itself not directing covert operations, but approving reactive covert operations. There's quite a bit of difference. When you're doing that with an organization like the CIA, under an ambitious leader like Allen Dulles, it's pretty hard to tell the difference because sometimes you can create a response by kicking somebody under the table and they pound you in the nose and then you point to your partner and say, 'Look at that guy—he just hit me!'

But your partner didn't know that you kicked the other person from under the table.

The best example of that tactic—the absolute best example I know—was the Gulf of Tonkin incident. The North Vietnamese that came out in the vicinity of the destroyers—which the Navy now admits were never even hit by anything fired at them, probably not even fired at—those very high-speed North Vietnamese Komar ships came out there was because they had been hit clandestinely. So the first act was by our own forces aided with South Vietnamese. Then when the North Vietnamese came out in response, they had been provoked. They did not initiate the attack. But in the discussion of that, both by President Johnson and in the Congress when they were discussing the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, they were only told that the attack had been made by the North Vietnamese upon our Navy without provocation.

So you can control covert activities by using that same device—the kick under the table—and then you can say, 'Hey now, look what happened in the Congo,' or 'Look what happened in Indonesia,' or 'Look what happened in Tibet—we've got to do something about it.' This was the Dulles technique. He tried to have the agency ready to be responsive anywhere in the world. And of course he had to do it that way because there were no plans. They didn't sit here and say, 'Well, here's what we see happening in such-and-such a country, and here's what we think ought to be done, and here's how the United States should get in there with a covert operation to perform this or that.' There was none of that.

There was no planning shop. In fact, I've always thought—and I worked very closely with them—that one of the strangest devices they used was to call their covert operations the Deputy Director Plans, because there were no plans. I worked with them intimately for nine years. I never saw a single plan come out of the Deputy Director Plans. They would simply smile and say, 'Well, that's just our euphemism for covert operations.' They could have used some other word than "plan".

But this is how Dulles worked. He was very effective. He had a lot of experience with OSS and the other side of it is that his brother was the Secretary of State and the dominant vote in the National Security Council. I don't think this would have been the same if he had been an individual with some neutral or objective Secretary of State. It made quite a bit of difference under the Eisenhower era to

have the two Dulles' working together in the development of covert operations.

Ratcliffe: So we see this key revising of the word, as specified in the law, that the NSC would direct the CIA, and the agency in effect was turning this into the NSC approving measures brought to it by the CIA.

Prouty: Precisely. I remember one example—only one out of nine years' work with clandestine operations—when I knew that the NSC had directed the CIA to involve itself in something and that was Tibet. When the Chinese Communists started overrunning Tibet, it was the NSC that put the CIA into that operation. And I must confess that in all those years, '55 to '64—pretty active years—I never saw another one come by direction. They were all responsive and reactive operations to things where Mr. Dulles, or people that followed him, would go in to brief the NSC from their own papers and say, 'Here's what's been happening in country A; we propose an operation to oppose that.' That's why we got into what's called "counterinsurgency." We countered the insurgency. Almost everything we were doing was a reactive response, but that was the Dulles method. That was his characteristic.

The Function of the Director of Central Intelligence: Coordinating Intelligence of the Government Intelligence Community

Ratcliffe: I'd like to quote a part here regarding the intelligence community as a whole. You wrote that

Over the years it has become customary to speak of the various intelligence organizations within the Government as members of "the community". This word is quite proper, because there is little cohesion and homogeneity within this vast infrastructure which has cost so much and which performs so many varied and separate functions. The members of the community are the CIA; the Army, Navy, and Air Force as separate divisions; the Defense Intelligence Agency; the FBI; the Atomic Energy Commission; the State Department; and the National Security Agency. All are by law brought together by the Director of Central Intelligence, or DCI. His title is not "the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency"—although he does head that Agency for the purpose of "advising the NSC in matters

concerning such intelligence activities of the Government departments and agencies as relate to National Security.” (National Security Act of 1947) This is the DCI’s first duty as prescribed by law. He is to advise the NSC of the activities of the other departments and agencies.⁷

Please discuss the importance of the fact that all of the above listed members of the intelligence community “are by law brought together by the Director of Central Intelligence,” and the implications of such an all-encompassing position.

Prouty: The law established—created, it didn’t establish—establish means something else in government—the law created the CIA to coordinate intelligence of the other branches of the government, as I listed them above. The law specifically deals with the function of the Director of Central Intelligence; he is different from his organization. He is the Director of Intelligence over the other intelligence organizations within the scope of the law that established them. He’s not their boss in the sense that the Navy intelligence operates for the CNO—or the Chief of Navy—but as far as intelligence matters are concerned and as far as coordinating intelligence matters, he is the director for the coordinating purposes. It’s quite a clear distinction but you can see it does get waffled around.

Certain intelligence assets of various departments—we’ll say the Navy—are very independent. Navy’s intelligence organization goes way back to Revolutionary War days. They are an excellent professional organization; they are world-wide and they are very powerful and very able. They were not subverting themselves to any new boss. They knew their job and they made that clear when the law was being written. In fact they protested the law more than anybody else. The Army has its own black intelligence; very deep intelligence. In many ways, deeper than the CIA has ever learned how to do. They were not going to fold that into the CIA either. The Air Force was brand new—had no intelligence other than experience as part of the Army. However, the Air Force had the aircraft: the U-2, the SR-71, the bombers, and the reconnaissance planes. They had the methods of intelligence they used that the DCI needed. So the Air Force, although

7. *Ibid*, p. 141,
<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp6.html#p141>

it was new, in some ways was probably more important than the other branches.

What I'm saying is that this intelligence community which the law created to bring together was not homogenous. But they were essential to each other. No more than say the National Security Agency. Just think what any of these would be without the National Security Agency. They all depend upon the National Security Agency for the interception of electronic transmissions and all the other communications of intelligence, friend and foe and all the rest. The National Security Agency is a function of the Department of Defense. In fact, the office where I used to be assigned was responsible for directing the National Security Agency in order that we could coordinate it with State and CIA and the others ourselves to make sure it was effective. It was a very nice way to do this thing, and it was important in those days.

So there is an intelligence community of great importance and great significance to each one of its components, but the sole chief of that community by law is the Director of Central Intelligence in the role that he's coordinating. No more than that. He doesn't direct these people in a clandestine exercise; not at all. Then he is the head of the CIA and then he carries out things that are assigned to the CIA. So it's quite clear how that works, although I'm afraid historically there are many, many abuses and, a lot of times, oversights in that primarily because many of these agencies and departments have very parochial interests of their own and it's pretty hard for anybody to coordinate them.

Ratcliffe: In the law for Powers and Duties under the National Security Act, Section 3, it says "to correlate and evaluate intelligence relating to the national security". What about going through very briefly and examining or discussing the stated or explicit role of each of these members as well as any important unstated roles that they carry out today. Let's start out with the CIA. At least in terms of the way it should work which may vary a lot from the way it does.

Prouty: That's an excellent way to put the question, because it's impossible to answer that. As we've discussed, the law was written in '46 and '47 in an era that we cannot duplicate at all. So I would just say right off that it would be futile to try to enforce the law literally on either the Defense Department or the CIA or the State Department.

However you have to abide by the law. At that point you begin to let the, you might say, law of customs step in. What have we been doing? What have we accepted? Today, you could never press back into the bottle what was decided in '46 and '47 and say that is what the CIA is going to do. There is just no way to do that. I don't know how to prescribe for the CIA what it ought to be doing today by thinking about the law.

But, there is one part of the law that can take care of this, and this was one of the really beautiful things about that law. No matter what the CIA wants to do or tries to do or is funded to do, it has to have the money to operate. The critically important statement is “funded to do”—because Congress permits the CIA to do an awful lot by pouring money into the CIA. If you have the money, you're going to spend it, that is Parkinson's Law. If you build an office and you put a man in the office, he's going to go do some work whether you tell him to or not. So you fund the CIA, and you're going to get things done. In the present time, under that situation, this emphasizes the great significance of the National Security Council.

Clandestine Operations: *Out of Control* If Not Directed by the National Security Council

Prouty: What we've been talking about emphasizes the very great importance of the National Security Council. If the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Defense can't handle the CIA, then nobody can. If they permit the funding from Congress or any other really covert work to put CIA into areas that they didn't approve, it's their fault and nobody else's.

This is one of the serious aspects about this recent Iran situation. It seems as though Congress wants to accept the fact that Poindexter, McFarlane, North and all those men were doing things that the NSC didn't approve. And they are legitimizing that which is terrible—really, for the future, is a terrible thing to put up with. We've got a law that says if you're going to get into clandestine operations, it can only be done at the direction of the National Security Council. And here we have the men who were members of the National Security Council—Reagan, Bush, Weinberger, and Schultz—all walking off and saying, 'We had nothing to do with it.' Now that, for the next era, is going to create enormous problems, even worse than it did for Reagan.

If Congress doesn't recognize what's happening, they had better do so pretty soon or else they're going to find covert operations going on that nobody knows anything about because what they are doing then is regularizing what I said in my book: that there exists a Secret Team that is out of control. And now by doing nothing they have regularized it. That's the danger. If they don't keep the National Security Council directing these organizations, they'll never get the genie back in the bottle.

Ratliffe: Which is so curious since we heard such a hue and cry during the hearings in the summer of '87 regarding, 'they're trying to take too much power away from the executive. The President needs to have more power here in these operations.' In fact, he already had the power with the NSC.

Prouty: And he denies he used it. The President says, 'I've got nothing to do with what those fellows were doing.' Mr. Bush has said 'I didn't do anything down in Honduras,' or 'I didn't do anything when I met with the Israelis.' It's appalling, because if Congress is going to accept that, they're denying the role of the National Security Council and then they're permitting almost anybody else in the government to run covert operations.

Now that's something else people need to understand about covert operations. We talk about the CIA being in charge of covert operations. Almost any branch of the government gets into covert operations. And they do it in a team fashion. That's why I called it *The Secret Team*. Because I saw just as many people working in covert operations in the Customs Service, in the Treasury Service, even in FAA sometimes, as I did when we saw CIA people and defense people working. It just depends on what type of operation you're in or who wants it done. It's not the CIA all the time, although they all get together and say it was the CIA. The CIA might just have had a representative in there. Or the CIA would provide its special communications and its other facilities that they have—as we heard in the case of Ollie North and the others—they had these special communications devices and all that. But other people were doing the job. So we have to learn a lot more about how these things are done. But if we deny and cancel out the role of the National Security Council, we're going to be in very, very deep trouble. There will be no one in charge at all.

Four Categories of Military Personnel Employed by CIA

Ratcliffe: A very central point, it seems, in *The Secret Team* book was your qualifying people who were working either within the military or then in a position inside the Central Intelligence Agency. Regarding this term “military,” please clarify your use throughout the book, of the four examples of different types of military personnel you define.

Prouty: In ordinary every day agency business, there is a need for a close relationship between the agency and the military departments. So hundreds of experienced intelligence officers are assigned to work with the CIA. The distinction is they’re paid by their service—they are under the control of their service commanders—but they sit in a CIA office and work with the CIA for the purpose of coordinating intelligence. They bring to the CIA certain assets that it doesn’t have and the CIA exposes them to certain assets of theirs. So they work together. That’s one group of the “team”.

Next, there are certain military officers whom the CIA needs to have for its own purposes. Let’s say pilots. That’s one career field: helicopter pilots, aircraft pilots, and so on. So, the CIA pays the Department of Defense for we’ll say a hundred pilots who will be assigned to CIA—the CIA reimburses the Department of Defense for those men and strictly speaking, they work as employees of the CIA. The Defense Department, if it wishes, could hire a hundred more pilots within its budgetary limits, you see, because it has this money from the CIA. In every case of that the man who is assigned is a volunteer. He doesn’t have to go. He’s not being assigned by the military; he’s accepting an offer from CIA. What we do is we keep dual records because we don’t want to penalize either his military service or his retirement benefits and all that. He’s still a government employee. This is a very technical area we start getting into. But that’s a second group. They take these people over there, as they do people from the Department of Agriculture, or as they do from FAA—they need certain other assets which they pay for.

Then we have an extensive group of people in the reserve. They can be called to active duty—they can be employed as civilians by CIA and then, with the permission of the Defense Department, called to active duty. And of course they’re paid for by the CIA, they work for the CIA, they’re CIA employees. But only in certain jobs are they

permitted, by agreement with the Defense Department, to put on their uniforms, carry defense I.D., and work perhaps in a friendly country or maybe in a marginal country. In this manner we have organizations in Athens, in Australia, in many countries around the world where military officers are assigned, but the CIA is using their capability. So there's a third group.

Finally (and this is a pretty rare case, but it existed), there are certain CIA men who have to be assigned to certain countries for specific duties, but there is no way the CIA can tell that country, 'Look, I'm sending you a CIA agent.' Sometimes they say, This man is with the State Department, or a Foreign Service officer, but very frequently would say, This man is a military officer. And with the approval, with the cognizance of the Defense Department, they take Mr. X and call him Commander Jones and he's made a Navy commander, and ostensibly he's a Navy commander. He's never been on the military rolls before, and he works for CIA.

So you can have those four different roles simultaneously, and they exist in large numbers, thousands—during my day, I think we had over 5,000 people in these various categories—and they're effective around the world. In fact I can remember a meeting when President Diem in Saigon said, 'You know I have a real problem here.' He said, 'I have all these generals, who are military generals, but I find out they're really CIA. How do I know who's CIA...?' In his country, there actually were more CIA generals than there were military generals. He had a right to the question.

The same has happened in other countries, but usually it's kept pretty quiet and the people are there for specific jobs. Generally there are no abuses of the situation. We know what's going on and, at least in the days when I was close to this situation, we were kept very well informed in the Defense Department about these. We knew these agreements existed and the people were taken care of very carefully and we kept it on the books under the regulatory base of reimbursement. We made them pay us money for these people when they were our military people.

Final Chapter in the History of War Making: Going From Offense to Defense

Ratcliffe: Stepping back for a minute to this idea of the shift in government policy after World War II from offense to defense. You spoke on page 126-127 about this in terms of the positive action that

war, the idea of war had held in the past. Quoting from the book here you write:

What began perhaps as an honest effort to alert this country to the fact that the Soviet Government did in fact have the potential to unleash the secrets of the atom and thus to build atomic bombs, gradually became a powerful tool in the hands of the irresponsible and the agitators....

The first great fault with the drift of opinion at that time became evident in the very shift of emphasis with regard to the national military establishment. Throughout our history the idea of war had been treated as a positive action. War was the last resort of a nation, after all means of diplomacy had failed, to impress its might and its will upon another. Throughout our proud history we never had faced war as something passive or reactive. But somehow in that postwar era this nation began to think of war as defense alone. In other words, in this defense philosophy we were not telling the world that the most powerful nation in the world was showing its magnanimity and restraint; we were saying that we would defend only. To the rest of the world that meant we were going to play a passive role in world affairs and that we were passing the active role, and with it the initiative, to others—in this case to the men in the Kremlin. We not only said this as we disestablished our traditional War Department but we have done it throughout the intervening twenty-five years by developing the capability to search out the action of an enemy and then by responding. This defensive posture of our military and foreign policy has been a terrible mistake, and it opened the doors for the newborn intelligence community to move in and take over the control of U.S. foreign and military policy.⁸

Could you discuss the idea, stated above, that “Throughout our history the idea of war has been a positive action.”

Prouty: I think that’s a powerful concept and we have to talk about that. To have the greatest and most powerful nation on earth, and in the forties when we were the dominant power because we were the only ones with the atom bomb and the only ones with the means to deliver the atom bomb effectively all over the world, we all of a sudden went into this guise of defense when we talked about our military.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 126-7,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp5.html#p126-7>

A clear example of it during the Vietnam War was General Westmoreland's goals of search and destroy. Search—you're looking for something. If you find it—you destroy it. It isn't destroy—it isn't attack. He wasn't on the offense. He was looking for something to shoot at, to destroy as a defensive mechanism. It affected even what I would call "small wars" that way. We were on the defense. He had no objective in Vietnam. He had no place to go in Vietnam and win the war.

I've said in earlier elements of this discussion with you that the first officer I reported to the first day of my military duty in July 1941 happened to be a captain named Creighton W. Abrams, who became Chief of Staff of the Army and head of our forces in Vietnam after Westmoreland. I know this from friends of mine—I've known General Abrams all my life—he's from my hometown: when President Johnson told him that he was going to be the commander in Vietnam, President Johnson with his gung-ho attitude said, 'Now Abe, you've got 550,000 men in the army out there—all you need to do the job. You've got the strongest navy assembled in the world—the 7th Fleet. And you've got an air force that has delivered more bombs than in all of World War II. Now by God, Abe, go out and do it.' I've been told that Abrams, or one of his immediate staff, turned to the President and said, 'Mr. President, would you want to define the word it for us. What is it that if we do it will win that war from your position as our commander-in-chief?' The President put his arm around Abrams' shoulder and led him to the door of the Oval Office—sent him Saigon. There was no *it* in the Vietnam War. That was the problem.

When General Krulak, the very able Marine commander, became chief of all Marines in the Pacific, he devised a war plan that would move the forces forward, strongly fortified with native forces, people who were imbued with the idea of fighting for their country, to march on Hanoi and take over that city and end the war. He could not get approval for that plan from the President and from Averill Harriman who at that time was serving as the Assistant Secretary of State for Far East Affairs, even though all the military agreed—the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Mr. McNamara, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, CINCPAC, Admiral Sharp—all the military agreed with this plan. But Averill Harriman, a civilian, and President Johnson, a civilian, imbued with the idea of 'we're on

the defense,’ couldn’t see that and they denied General Krulak the permission or the direction to go and do *it*.

That’s making an example out of the statements, but, you see, that’s what happens. Warfare, probably best defined by Clausewitz is an all-out action of a certain country. It is total action; it’s not half-way, it’s not divided, it’s not graduated—it’s total. Well, you can’t make total defense. You have to make total offense, even if you’re in a defensive position—if you’re in a siege in a fort, you’ll be thinking about offense because you’re thinking of getting out of there—you’re going to die if you stay there. Offense is the core of war. Clausewitz lists nine principles of war that have been the same ever since men were throwing stones at each other on up to atom bombs. The primary principle of war is the objective. If you don’t know what you’re doing, you’ve got no business going to war. That is the antithesis of the idea of having a Department of Defense.

The Threat of Nuclear Weapons: Making War Planning Obsolete

This is very important for our country. We don’t know why we have a military. In fact, when President Reagan spoke about having weapons in space, he called it the Strategic Defense Initiative, putting two opposite words together: the initiative and the defense. The defense initiative: the words don’t even go together. It’s like having a cat-dog. You can’t do it. This is how bad the thinking about warfare has become in this country. *It isn’t because people have become less able—it’s because they are unable to assimilate the power and the threat of nuclear weapons into war planning.*

Today, the power and the threat of biological weapons, such as AIDS—AIDS is a weapon and don’t forget it. It was developed by the Defense Department and it’s a weapon. People need to know that and they should never forget it. It is a biological weapon created by the Defense Department, funded by Congress—that’s all a matter of record. It is not a disease that came out of some cell or somewhere else by mistake. This is why people don’t know how to assimilate the idea of warfare. They don’t know what to do with hydrogen bombs that can erase a whole city in seconds. They don’t know what to do with AIDS as a weapon. It gets away and they can’t stop it. That’s the basic problem we’re having today when we talk about warfare. We have forgotten how war is waged and defense is not the way to wage a war.

Ratcliffe: How would you see an offensive, positive action-based War Department operate in the world today?

Prouty: Because of the power of weapons, including some that we only talk about and haven't used yet, there is no way to wage war. Man is too puny a beast to cope with hydrogen bombs—there's no way you can do it. You can destroy the earth, but that's not winning a war. So, when you ask me to define that, we can still fight; we can still make victory; we can still go on the offense, but we will do it economically. And we are doing it economically.

The first battle of the new kind of war was called the Arab Oil Embargo. We made the entire world pay tribute to the people who possess petroleum—and it's quite a battle. It separates the winners and the losers, but that's the new battle. The second battle is being prepared and it will be the battle over food. This blends in with the idea that increasingly we hear of Malthusianism. We are beginning to agree, or to permit, the concept of genocide because there are too many people on earth. Well, that fits in with this next battle that's coming up. Petroleum, in a sense, is a luxury. You can walk to work; you don't have to drive to work. But when the battle becomes the battle for food, there are no alternatives. You have to have food.

War still is on. You see, people's minds are still ready to fight. Terrorism is a function of this, but terrorism is not war. Terrorism is mosquitoes and you kill mosquitoes if you can. But food becomes a weapon of war and there is no way we can have a war anymore. War is done—when you're talking about divisions, battleships, bombers—because of hydrogen bombs.

Ratcliffe: Would there be any way through the thicket, with the benefit of hindsight, that you would see possible such a form of a department of government having been retained and maintained in the years immediately after World War II with all of the accompanying pressures and transformations of that time? I suppose the answer would be “no” because of the nuclear capabilities.

Prouty: The leading commanders, immediately after Hiroshima, had no trouble in seeing that if you replicated that around the world, you'd just do it until the world was ashes. The Russians first perfected the hydrogen bomb—remember, the Russians initiated the hydrogen bomb, perfected it first; we did it second. We knew they had exploded

a weapon, a device, equal to about 50 megatons. That device is so powerful that it not only destroys an enormous part of Earth and puts radiation over a larger part, lethal radiation, but it actually blows a hole through the atmosphere above the earth and goes out into space somewhere. It's beyond control on Earth entirely.

Our leaders recognized that fact as far back as the forties and early fifties. Ever since then, our Presidents, including Eisenhower, could not visualize or even see the business of going to war anymore. The Korean War was simply a kind of war game. When MacArthur really began to move, they called him back. The Vietnam War was even worse than that; there were no attacks, no moves anywhere. Anloa Valley, a very hostile area in the heart of Vietnam, was captured eight times by our forces, and once they captured it, they had no reason to keep it so they walked away. Then it got hostile again—we captured it again. That's the way war's being fought today. War now is outmoded entirely, but I don't think many people are ready to accept that. But if I were teaching evolution of warfare today at Yale University, I would put the closing chapter on war and I would simply end with the explosion of the hydrogen bomb—just say “there it is.”

Ratcliffe: That's it.

Prouty: It doesn't mean you can't fight and shoot people. We've got automatic rifles on the streets now. I'm not saying people aren't going to be killed, but we are not going to have a war between country A and country B effectively anymore if hydrogen weapons are involved. Iraq and Iran can fight to exhaustion; notice they didn't go anywhere. They fought each other for, what is it, six or seven years? They didn't go anywhere, didn't do anything, except kill each other. If either one had had nuclear weapons, they would have had to end the war, because they couldn't live with such weapons.

Ratcliffe: Discuss the significance of, as you write,

“[the] schism between those who believed in the traditional school of national planning and overt diplomacy and those who believed in a passive role of reaction to a general enemy (Communism)”, that began after World War II, and how, “This latter school would operate in response to intelligence inputs, without plans and without national objectives, would hide everything in secrecy, and would justify its actions in all instances as being anti-Communist.”⁹

Prouty: We've been talking a bit about that. It's very important. It used to be very interesting, in the period of the fifties, to go to SHAPE headquarters in Europe—the head of the NATO forces—and to work with the war plans people there. I was in the Plans Division of Air Force. Although I was doing the clandestine work, I was immersed in the plans work, day after-day, for years. I would go to the War Plans sections in NATO, and you could see that there was no war plan that called for a war like World War II. What I mean by that is an all out war where you take a general like General Patton and say, 'Destroy the German forces, bring the country to its knees,' which he could do. In a modern war plan, if you wanted to destroy, we'll say East Germany, you would just push a few buttons and some rockets would fly over there and the nuclear weapons would fall and you would say 'what's next?' That's the fact of what we are dealing with now. So it was interesting to see in this transition period of the fifties that some people began to realize this was the position we were now in, and the war plans had no place to go.

Then over here in the U.S., the people who were the officers that I described earlier, working for the CIA, were saying, 'Yes, but we need to fight Communism. We can go in there and stop this insurgency. We'll run a counter-insurgency program.' It was the CIA that took the special forces who were designed to do post-strike work in a nuclear war and gradually moved special forces over into the civic action/counterinsurgency side of the business. They realized that if there was going to be any activity, they could promote that activity their way—as counterinsurgency or covert operations, covered in secrecy. But, this was far removed from warfare. Yet it has been a very lethal activity going all the way up to the Vietnam War. Once you start a fire, there's no telling how far it's going to burn. You just keep throwing more fuel on the flames and it'll burn.

Creating a Manichaeian Devil to Justify Spending \$6 Trillion for a Cold War

Ratcliffe: There is a very philosophical passage where you discuss the manifestation of the Manichaeian devil in the nuclear age:

9. *Ibid.*, p. 74,
<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp3ii.html#p74>

Those who believed that our only road to salvation lay in greater stockpiling of atomic bombs, those who argued that it must be the hydrogen bomb, and those few who said that it must be both, all perhaps without common intent, began to create the idea of the “enemy threat.” It was coming. It was inevitable. The things that have been done since that period in the name of “anti-enemy” would make a list that in dollars alone would have paid for all the costs of civilization up to that time, with money to spare.

Such an enemy is not unknown. Man has feared this type of enemy before. It is a human, and more than that, it is a social trait, to dread the unknown enemy. This enemy is defined in one context as the Manichaeon Devil. Norbert Weiner says, “The Manichaeon devil is an opponent, like any other opponent, who is determined on victory and will use any trick of craftiness or dissimulation to obtain this victory. In particular, he will keep his policy of confusion secret, and if we show any signs of beginning to discover his policy, he will change it in order to keep us in the dark.” The great truth about this type of enemy is that he is stronger when he is imagined and feared than when he is real. One of man’s greatest sources of fear is lack of information. To live effectively one must have adequate information.

It was in this great conflict that the National Security Act of 1947 was brewed. And man’s demand for information pervaded and surmounted almost every other move he made. Thus a great machine was created. All of the resources of this country were poured into a single Department of Defense—defense against the great Manichaeon Devil which was looming up over the steppes of Russia with the formula of the atomic bomb in one hand and the policy of World Communism in the other. Our statesman foresaw the Russian detonation of the atomic bomb in 1949 and the concurrent acceleration toward the hydrogen bomb as soon thereafter as possible; so they created the Atomic Energy Commission in January of 1947 and then the Defense Department in September 1947 and gave both of them the eyes and ears of the CIA to provide the essential information that at that time was really the paramount and highest priority. The AEC was ordered to achieve both goals—the second to-none atomic bomb stockpile and the hydrogen bomb, and the DOD was ordered to create the global force that would defend this country against the giant of the Soviet Union and all other nuclear powers.¹⁰

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 226-27,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp10.html#p226-7>

Discuss the significance of “the transfer in January 1947 of the great nuclear weapon technology to the new Atomic Energy Commission.”¹¹

Prouty: We’ll start with that final question because it’s an important one. The atom bomb, as you know, was developed under the Manhattan Project which was part of the Army during the War. It was obvious that, at the end of the war, there would have to be a continuing development with atomic weapons, fission weapons; that there would also probably be peace time use of these weapons, and that the ability to manufacture these rare materials—plutonium and the like—for the weapons required an enormous facility and would have to be run by someone.

Yet, it was inadvisable to keep that in the Army. It was felt that this should be under national control, more or less for coordination, almost like the CIA, but to coordinate all this. So they moved this business of nuclear weapons into the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and they continued the development of the fission weapon. At the time they were dropped at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, there were two different types more or less competing with each other for perfection. But there was a lot of research still to do.

Finally they got the atom bomb from a monster that had to be put in a B-29 down to where you could carry it around in the back of a Volkswagen. They improved it. And enlarged its explosive power as well. In due time the hydrogen bomb was created which now can be any size you want. You can make a hydrogen bomb as big or little as you want.

So this was put under the Atomic Energy Commission as well as the development of nuclear power and, to a degree, space materials and so on. It was a practical matter. The other side of this situation, the Manichaeon devil, is simply another way to talk about the Cold War. You can’t get Congress to appropriate money for an enormous war organization unless you can show a reason for it. We had to create the reason, we had to create this devil so we created Communism. Even the Soviets don’t understand the communism we think about; it goes so far beyond their model. And we saw it in every closet, every country. We divided the entire world up into “us” and “them” and then began to create a military establishment that could counter, we

11. *Ibid.*, p. 202,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp9.html#p202>

thought, every move made by anybody. Every time India went a little bit pro Communist, India became our enemy. Every time India went a little bit toward us, they became our friend. Everybody was in that area; there were no neutrals, it was all “us” and “them.”

This has resulted in the expenditure of \$6 trillion for armaments, most of which can never be used effectively. There is no way to use them effectively. Even in Vietnam. We dumped two-and-a-half times as much bombardment onto the ground in Vietnam as we did in all of World War II—to what effect? We killed a lot of people. We uprooted a lot of trees and so on. But there was no actual military effect of that. That’s the way the rest of our establishment is. They could have used hydrogen bombs and in fact, we did have nuclear weapons in Indochina. Fortunately we didn’t use them. But they were there.

On the other side of it, if you create this devil, and he’s in every closet around the world, then you can justify having a 600-ship navy and a something-or-other wing air force, and an enormous army, because you keep telling the Congress and the American people that ‘My goodness, this great enormous devil is going to leap out of a closet any day at any time—the war could start here or could start there—we’ve got to be ready for the whole world.’ And that’s how you spend the money. Even though you can’t prove what you’re going to do with the money, you spend it.

The devil scares you so bad that you don’t think anymore. Take the Strategic Defense Initiative, this thing that was going to cost billions and billions: now we spend for a B-2 bomber which is supposed to be stealthy and they claim that radar cannot find that bomber as it approaches. Heck, it makes more noise than almost anything you ever heard. It’s got huge engines and they’re ducted out so that even the radar can’t read the engine, but that doesn’t mean it shuts the sound down. The first way we used to detect bombers coming during World War II was with noise devices. So they’ll simply go back to noise devices—the Stealth Bomber will be worthless. It’s already worthless before it flies. The most expensive airplane ever built—they spent \$65 billion on an airplane they can’t get in the air yet and when it does, all the enemy will have to do instead of using radar is use audio to listen for it and they’ll know it’s there. We don’t even know what we’re doing.

That’s what this Manichean devil does. I’d like to mention an interesting side-line about Vietnam. The Vietnam escalation

modestly began in the Kennedy Era, and Kennedy was said to have around him the Irish Mafia. If you are familiar with the lore of old Ireland, you'll know that the Irish mother would tell her bothersome child, 'If you aren't a good boy, the cong will get you.' The cong was a ghost in the closet. In Vietnam, the word for a beggar is a kha, and they were briefing about these beggars, these trouble-makers in Vietnam, and they were calling them the Viet Kha. Kennedy's young Irish Mafia men who did not know much about Vietnam thought they were talking about the Viet Cong, the devil in the closet, and the word "Viet Cong" was created by mistake, by hearing the word "kha" as a Vietnamese word and "cong" as the Irish ghost. It just happened that in that era, we all of a sudden got Viet Cong phonetically out of the misapplication of the word right in an office in the Pentagon of Washington, and not out in the field. Ever after that, it was the Viet Cong. That's how we create our Manichaeian devils, that's how we create our opposition, that's how we spend \$6 trillion.

Secret Team Foundations: Creation of the CIA Focal Point System Throughout The Government

Ratcliffe: Further on you write about the realization of the Dulles-Jackson-Correa report's method of placing CIA agents throughout the government:

Many of these people have reached positions of great responsibility. I believe that the most powerful and certainly the most useful agent the CIA has ever had operates in just such a capacity within another branch of the Government, and he has been there for so long that few have any idea that he is a long-term career agent of the CIA. Through his most excellent and skillful services, more CIA operations have been enabled to take place than can be laid at the feet of any other, more "legitimate," agent.

This was the plan and the wisdom of the Dulles idea from the beginning. On the basis of security he would place people in all areas of the Government, and then he would move them up and deeper into their cover jobs, until they began to take a very active part in the role of their own organizations. This is how the ST was born. Today, the role of the CIA is performed by an *ad hoc* organization that is much greater in size, strength, and resources than the CIA has ever been visualized to be.¹²

The first question I have here would be how “on the basis of security,” would Allen Dulles “place people in all other areas of the government”?

Prouty: When I was assigned to the Air Force Headquarters, in 1955, the Chief of Staff General Thomas D. White directed me to create an office “to provide the military support of the clandestine operations of the CIA” in accordance with the provisions of the National Security Council Directive #5412 of March 15, 1954, and to operate as the Pentagon “Focal Point Office for the CIA.”

As Mr. Dulles told me later, “I do not want various people from my agency going into the Pentagon and dealing with different people there and therefore exposing the activities of the CIA to a large number of people, because obviously such a ring would then proliferate to others and if they wanted submarines, they would have to bring in some navy people and if they wanted helicopters, they would have to talk to some army people.” He said, “I want a focal point. I want an office that’s cleared to do what we have to have done; an office that knows us very, very well and then an office that has access to a system in the Pentagon. But the system will not be aware of what initiated the request—they’ll think it came from the Secretary of Defense. They won’t realize it came from the Director of Central Intelligence.”

The Dulles philosophy was to control the focal point area. This then led to the creation of focal point offices everywhere. As I established this “Tab-6” organization, as we called it, in every major staff area within the Air Force (because that was my jurisdiction at the time), I would “clear” people—another focal point, you might say a sub-focal point—a person I could go to who had been given, ahead of time, the authority to do whatever it was that he was authorized to do. We stressed this was only for “authorized” business—he would have to be sure he had orders, either from my office or directly up to the Chief of Staff, and that we knew what we were doing for CIA.

This leads to another step, of what you might call “breeding”. We had to work with various agencies of the government, not just the Defense Department. We had to have contact points in the State Department, in the FAA, in the Customs Service, in the Treasury, in the FBI and all around through the government—up in the White

12. *Ibid.*, p. 260,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp11.html#p260>

House. Gradually we wove a network of people who understood the symbols and the code names and the activities we were doing, and how we handled money which was the most important part. Then we began to assign people there who, those agencies thought, were from the Defense Department. But they actually were people that we put there from the CIA.

This led to the creation of a system of powerful individuals—people whose jobs were quite dominant in some of these other agencies. Especially after they'd been there two or three years, because we put them in there by talking to the top man, the cabinet officer or the head of the agency. We would say, "This man is being placed here so that he can facilitate covert activities and so that he can retain the secrecy that's required and he will keep you informed at all times." Well, in the over-all U.S. bureaucracy, the top people tend to move from one job to another faster than anybody else, not the career people who are there for a life-time. So the man we had explained the "Focal Point" structure to, perhaps a year-and-a-half earlier, would be transferred or leave the government. But our trained and fully cleared "Focal Point" man was still there. So after one or two cycles of this, that agency might not even know that employee was our man and not actually theirs because they would have no record of his special assignment, of what his origins were. They would think he was just another one of their own employees.

As a result, he became extremely effective. Because if we wanted something done—I remember a very sensitive operation that I needed some information on, and I needed it from the FBI. I didn't go to the FBI. I went to this guy that we had planted, and he got it twice as fast and in a much better form than I would have gotten it from the FBI, even though I was at that time working for the office of the Secretary of Defense. We had no trouble working with the FBI. This process was just to facilitate it and conceal the CIA role. These people became very, very adept.

By the same token, people that were bona fide employees of CIA (agents), were assigned even into the office of the Secretary of Defense. We had certain people there who were CIA employees—Ed Lansdale worked for CIA all his adult career. A person named Frank Hand worked there. But the people in the Pentagon thought they were ordinary military employees. They didn't realize they were CIA.

To give you an example: Colonel Lansdale was a full colonel in the Air Force—that was his cover story. And he had been a full

colonel for a few years. And the Air Force was promoting some men to general. The question came up, would Lansdale be eligible? I told Mr. Dulles personally, I said, “You can make Lansdale a general if you just write a letter to General Lemay, because you’re going to pay the bills anyway and not the Air Force.”

A few days later I got a call from General Lemay’s office. He called me in and he had the list of men that the Air Force was promoting to general, and as I recall, it was 13 or 14 officers. General Lemay knew every one of them intimately except one. He said, “Prouty, I understood you know who this guy Lansdale is.” He said, “I don’t know who the hell he is. I’m not going to promote him to a general.” And I said, “Well, don’t you have a file on him?” He said, “Yes.” He opened it up and the top letter was from Allen Dulles. I said, “He’s a very important man for Allen Dulles.” He said, “OK, I’ll promote him.” Just like that. That’s a good way to get a promotion, you see. But that created a very important job within the structure of the office of the Secretary of Defense.

Frank Hand had been there for years in the same way. Frank was a civilian of outstanding ability. I always wrote that he was the most important agent that the agency had because he was operating daily and effectively as a member of the office of the Secretary of Defense. You can just imagine the things that a person in that capacity can do when his home base is really CIA. Although people rarely believe this when they first hear it, there are assignments like that in the White House; there are assignments like that in the State Department. For instance, it’s hard to tell the difference, between Bill Bundy who was a long-time CIA employee and his brother McGeorge Bundy who was in the White House with Kennedy. The two brothers certainly are going to act side-by-side—they have the same goals and the same intentions. There were many instances that duplicated like that.

It wasn’t long—I’d say by the end of the fifties or early sixties—before we had spread through the government what I called a Secret Team, a group of people who really knew how to operate the CIA business through the boundless maze of the United States government.

Understanding The Secret Team Part II

The Power of Indirection— Military Units Financed and Controlled by the CIA

Prouty: This business of the inner team of workers, all actually operating within the law (once in a while there was some aberration, but we usually found it and brought it to Mr. Dulles' attention—but, generally working within the law) could get rather phenomenal things done.

For example, one day I got a call from the agency. They had heard of the capability of a new aircraft that had been designed at MIT and they wanted to know if the Air Force had an interest in it. The Air Force hardly knew about it. I had seen a picture of it in the newspaper. The plane was the Helio Courier manufactured by the Helio Aircraft Co. And I said, 'Let me find out what we can do about that.' I called the company. A small company—but it had very preeminent people including Dr. Koppen from MIT and Dr. Bollinger from Harvard Business School, as well as a lot of very good aircraft designers and builders. So, the company was solidly on the ground but it was very small. I told the man I was talking to that I was a Colonel in the Air Force, that we had an interest in this small plane for certain special activities, and that I would send a representative of my office up there to talk with them.

I called in a CIA man—the same man that had called me—and said, 'Look, you're from my office, here's some credentials—you go up there, you see this company. You know what you want.' I didn't know whether they'd really want the plane or not. But they decided they did. In fact, they wanted hundreds of them—something that company had never heard of before, orders in that number. We

bought hundreds of those airplanes for the CIA, technically for the Air Force. The Air Force had no concern with this because the CIA money paid for it—it didn't cost us anything—and we didn't go through the Air Force procurement procedures at all. We were just like a civilian company buying airplanes.

The CIA was delighted with the plane. They used so many of them in Southeast Asia that there was a flyer's handbook for what were called Heliostrips. In other words, air landing grounds that only the Helio airplane could land on, because it could land in a very short space, and it was under full control right down to the ground. Some of these little runways were hardly suited for helicopters but this little Helio plane was operating regularly.

Millions and millions of dollars were poured into that exercise—a lot of people were involved in it—and it never went through any Air Force procurement. However, the cleared individual—the man in the team—in the procurement offices, made papers that covered up this gap. There were papers in the files but they had never been worked on—they were simple dummy papers. We could do things like that with no trouble at all. The U-2 was started like that. That's how the U-2 got off the ground. Ostensibly, purchased by the Air Force, but not paid for by the Air Force, and so on.

So when I say that this team was quite effective, it was very effective, very strong, handled a lot of money, worked all over the world, thousands of people were involved. Once when I was speaking to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (at that time General Lemnitzer) he said, “You know, I've known of two or three units in the Army that were supporting CIA. But you're talking about quite a few. How many were there?” At that time, there were 605. General Lemnitzer had no idea. It's amazing—here's the top man in the military and he had no idea that we were supporting that many CIA units. Not true military units—they were phony military units. They were operating with military people but they were controlled entirely and financed by the CIA. Six hundred and five of them. I'm sure that from my day it increased. I know it didn't decrease.

People don't understand the size and the nature of this concealed activity that is designed for clandestine operations all over the world. It goes back again to things we've spoken of earlier, that each activity must be under somebody's control. There is no law for the control of covert operations other than at the National Security Council level. If the National Security Council does not sign the directives—issue the

directives—for covert operations, then nobody does. And that's when it becomes a shambles as we saw in the Contra affair and in other things.

But when the National Security Council steps in and directs it and maintains that control, then things are run properly. During the last decade we've seen quite a few aberrations where they were talking about Iran or Latin America or even part of the Vietnam War itself. In fact, it was in the Vietnam War when the situation really began to come apart—it just outgrew itself and the leadership role disintegrated. We see the results of the worst of it in the Iran-Contra affair.

Secret Team Growth: Focal Point Personnel Assuming Broader Roles

Ratcliffe: Following on from that you write about Dulles being able to “move them up and deeper into their cover jobs.”¹ Would this be a function of them being there longer than the people who would be promoted to something else in time?

Prouty: Yes. When we put them in other departments and agencies, they might be somebody's assistant. Then they've been there for three years and the man who was above them, who was probably a political appointee, leaves. That agency might move this man up. Or when a newer political appointee comes, he has no knowledge that this man is really from CIA. He's just a strong person in his office and he gives him a broader role.

Sometimes these people were working in another agency so long we nearly forgot them. One man I know was in FAA and we needed his work to help us with FAA as a focal point there. He'd been there so long the FAA had him in a very big, very responsible job, where probably 90% of his duties were regular FAA work. A very effective individual. When we needed him to help us with some of our activities on the covert side of things, he was in a much better position to handle this than he had been originally.

This happened with quite a few of them. That's why I say in the case of Frank Hand, he had been in the Defense Department so long he was able to handle major operations that weren't ever visualized at

1. *The Secret Team*, p. 260,
<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp11.html#p260>

the time he was assigned. This carries over into many other areas. I pointed out that the Office of Special Operations under General Erskine had the responsibility for the National Security Agency as well as CIA contacts, and the State Department, and so on. And as we filled up these positions, some of them became dominant in some of those organizations, such as NSA.

Early people in this program have created quite a career for themselves in other work. For instance, a young man in this system was Major Haig. Major Al Haig. He went up through the system. He was working as a deputy to the Army's cleared Focal Point Officer for Agency support matters who was the General Counsel in the Army, a man named Joe Califano—a very prominent lawyer today. Later when the General Counsel of the Army was moved up into the office of Secretary of Defense—in McNamara's office—he carried with him this then Lieutenant Colonel Al Haig. During the Johnson Administration, Califano and Haig both moved to the White House. Then during the Nixon time, Haig with all his experience in this highly classified system, and already having been in the White House, worked with Kissinger.

You can see that it was this attachment through the covert side which gave Haig his ability to do an awful lot of things that people didn't understand, because he had this whole team behind him. To be even more up-to-date, there was a Major Secord in our system. And Major Secord is the same General Richard Secord you've been reading about in the Iran-Contra business.

A lot of these people worked right up into the White House. And there were these same assigned people even at the White House level that actually were working on this CIA covert work rather than the jobs that they seemed to hold, that the public understood was the job that they were working for. It's a much more effective system than people have thought it was.

Ratcliffe: In the last sentence you said:

Today, the role of the CIA is performed by an *ad hoc* organization that is much greater in size, strength, and resources than the CIA has ever been visualized to be.²

2. *Ibid.*

(You alluded to this before.) What is your sense of what this *ad hoc* organization encompasses today?

Prouty: There is no law, there is no structure, for covert operations. The Government didn't confront that in 1947 when they wrote the law. There has been no revision of the law to accommodate that. There have been decisions by the National Security Council which do assign covert operations, primarily to CIA but, on a time-to-time basis.

In fact, one of the strongest of these papers—the designation was NSC 10/2—was in my files early in the business back in 1955. And I remember that on the side of the paper—written in pencil and in his own hand, President Eisenhower had written that any time a decision had been made for the Defense Department to support the agency with arms, equipment, money, people, bases, etc., that the equipment was to be limited to that one time only and afterwards withdrawn. He did not want the CIA to create a capability that was on-going. He was very specific about it.

That was 1955. Those things change with the times. And they got more powerful and more powerful. And because of that kind of growth, you don't have the legal structure, you don't have the approved structure to deal with it. It's an *ad hoc* creation. Probably the strongest *ad hoc* creation in our government today.

Ratcliffe: Again focusing on this Dulles-Jackson-Correa report you write:

The CIA has the authority, or at least it is given the authority by other Government agencies, to create cover organizations within other parts of the Government. This is one of the key tasks that the old Dulles-Jackson-Correa report set out for the agency.³

How is it that other Government agencies give the CIA the authority to create CIA cover organizations within themselves?

Prouty: It's more simple than you visualize. All of the Government is willing to cooperate with and work with other parts of the Government at any time. If it was the Department of Agriculture,

3. *Ibid.*, p. 306,
<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp15.html#p306>

we'd never have any trouble working with them, and so on. So we understand that—that's a given, in the beginning. But, what we would do is have a top-level meeting either with Allen Dulles or somebody like Dick Helms or Frank Wisner or one of those people. We'd pay a call directly on the head of this department and since I've mentioned it before, I'll say the FAA.

We might go to the Administrator for the Federal Aviation Administration and say, 'Look, it's necessary from time to time that the CIA has to operate aircraft perhaps a little differently than your regulations specify because we're doing a clandestine operation. Or perhaps we have to have two aircraft with the same number on them at the same time; so that one can cover another during a covert operation. So if that ever turns up on one of your control towers that an airplane lands this morning and its tail number is 1234; another plane comes in this afternoon of the same type and its tail number is 1234, don't do anything about it. It's a covert operation that we're operating.' And they would agree to it. They'd say, 'Fine.'

Then Mr. Dulles would say, 'I'd like to assign a person to your administration as a Focal Point Officer, so that if anything comes up like this, anybody in the FAA will contact that man or vice-versa, he'll contact them ahead of time to say, We're running this kind of a covert mission, and you people will know about it.' We never ran into a problem with that. And if the workload was heavy, we'd augment that man; he'd have two people, three people. Or if it was something that was going to last for three months, or six months, we might put ten people there and when we went to take the ten people back, we might take five back and leave five there.

In this way, over a period of years, what had started as just a simple Focal Point office became a very large one. When I created Team B in the Air Force as a Focal Point office, I had one assistant and one secretary, In short order, I had several thousand people around the world. Such activities grow by the job.

**Obtaining Everything Money Can Buy:
The CIA Act of 1949 and
Secretary of Defense Johnson's paper on Covert Operations**

Ratcliffe: This is tied in with all the rest as of course discussions of the CIA would be: concerning the fact that the National Security Act of 1947 was quite strict with reference to money for the CIA, please

discuss the impact of the CIA Act of 1949 which made it possible for the Agency to have “no trouble at all getting adequate funds.”⁴

Prouty: The secret of covert operations is the control of money. And that begins with having a good-sized account. This includes the ability to use it throughout the Government. By 1949, the CIA was able to convince Congress that many of the things it was doing were perfectly legitimate and that many of these legitimate activities cost money because they were paying for people in other Government agencies, they were paying their salaries. As I said when General Lemay promoted Lansdale to be General, it didn't cost the Air Force anything. His paycheck came from CIA. The Air Force paycheck would be torn up. It would go to a certain office where they would destroy it so it didn't cost the Air Force anything.

In 1949, the then-Secretary of Defense, a man named Louis Johnson, wrote a very important paper with respect to covert operations. He said that the Department of Defense would fully support the CIA in any of its approved covert operations, provided that the CIA would reimburse the Department of Defense for all ‘out-of-pocket’ costs. They wouldn't have to reimburse for the purchase price of an aircraft because the Air Force had already spent that money. But they would have to reimburse for the cost of operating that aircraft, for the cost of any other facilities required, and even for the salaries of crews that were assigned to that aircraft over a period of time.

This philosophy of reimbursement is very important in covert operations because it keeps bills from appearing in public that would stir up questions about why this money spent was when it wasn't spent for the line items in the budget. Thus when we created the Tab-6 system we worked this reimbursement system in throughout so that you never saw the spending of any money. The Air Force never spent any money on the CIA operations, technically. The money was immediately transferred through a comptroller's office arrangement up in the office of the Comptroller of the Secretary of Defense. And that expenditure was, actually, Agency money.

Within a few years, the Agency was able to point out to Congress that a lot of money was flowing in that channel because, effectively, they were paying for the utilization of very high cost equipment:

4. *Ibid.*, p. 383,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp21.html#p383>

aircraft, submarines, even aircraft carriers in a few places. Very expensive things to operate on a reimbursable basis. So based on that, the agency began to get a much larger budget.

Then when they went into the U-2 and the space programs that budget grew considerably. And it was a completely classified budget and almost non-accountable as the DCI has the authority to spend that money simply on his signature. He doesn't have to account for it. It's a rare thing in the budget process, but the Congress goes along with that, for the CIA.

As a result, because of the law of 1949 which permitted this activity, and the letter from Secretary Louis Johnson—the policy statement that we would carry out all our work on a reimbursable basis with other departments and agencies of the government then following that procedure—the Agency was allocated considerable amounts of money after 1949 and it was under their own control.

Employing the System of Reimbursement To Fund Unaccountable Activities

Ratcliffe: Could you comment on the fact then, that, quoting from the book:

... more important than the dollars the Agency gets is what it can do with those dollars to make them cover all sorts of research, development, procurement, real estate ventures, stockpiles, and anything else money will buy, including tens of thousands of people who do not show on any official rosters.⁵

Prouty: One of the most interesting developments with the use of this horizontal application of money, or reimbursement, is that it can be used to pay salaries without explaining that it was for salaries—it was just an expenditure of money. The DCI would sign it off as an “expense”, but it might have paid for the salaries of a hundred people. I don't know how familiar you are with the way the Government handles its people, but each department and agency has a certain stated number of people that are budgeted for because they have to be paid every year, their pensions have to be paid, some of them have insurance and other obligations of the Government, so they're very carefully monitored. This is one of the few places in the Government where money equals people. And if you're paying people, well say,

5. *Ibid.*

\$20,000 a year, and you spend \$100,000 for five people, the CIA \$100,000 did not say it was for five people whereas all the rest of the Government did. And this enabled us to put people into programs that were not visible.

If you carry it out to other things, the same way we were able to buy aircraft that were not visible, we were able to buy radars that were not visible. So that the money in this method of operation is truly concealed in a budget without anybody knowing—Congress doesn't know where it is and I don't think they've ever made the attempt to try to find out where it is. They allocate a bulk sum and then just sit back.

There's no end to the things you can do with government money that way. The Agency, during my period of operation with them, for instance, had an account with the big banks on Wall Street that is like Cede Incorporated, “street name” accounts. I don't know whether you're familiar with that finance term or not, but one of the biggest of the street name accounts is Cede Incorporated, C-e-d-e. This is where money is that's between transactions on the stock market. It's got to be somewhere. So, they assign it to Cede and Company. Well, Cede is nobody; it's just under control of the major banks and the money's flowing. But while it's flowing, it has to belong to somebody, especially if it's in big numbers.

The CIA had, and may still have, a street name called “Suydam”, S-u-y-d-a-m. When money was in the Suydam Account—I don't think the financiers knew it, maybe a few did—it was CIA's money. Because in order to cover some of the activities they did—like for example, operating Air America—they would have to do some overt commercial work as cover for their clandestine work. They had quite an income from this huge air line. And that money would be put into the Suydam account.

It interested me at one point, when I had a breakdown on the Suydam account, to find out that an awful lot of CIA money had been invested in a major supermarket chain in this country. In today's world, they might have been able to take over the operation of the supermarket. But it was just a quick place to put money that the CIA had made and would spend later in their own operations. And it got to be very large amounts of money at times. By law it ought to have been transferred to the U.S. Treasury.

If I were in Congress today, I'd take a look at that. Sometimes when you hear about large sums of money being handled for the “Contras” or received from the sale of items to the Iranians, you begin

to realize there is an awful lot of potential for money to be handled without an accounting. We saw that back in the days when we did account for it. And I think people would be surprised to find out that it was such a large activity.

Post WWII War Plans—CIA Begins Amassing Its Own Stockpile of Military Equipment

Ratcliffe: This brings us to other ways of spending the money. One of the ways that the CIA apparently (from reading your book—as far as my understanding goes) was able to develop these cover units around the world that would hold equipment earmarked for its own use (even though it might be labeled as a military unit), was through the CIA being able to involve itself in the war plans developed in the late forties and early fifties that attempted to combine nuclear strategies with conventional strategies. You write:

As a result of the war planning role of the CIA, it was easy for the CIA planners to enter in the plans of all armed forces, requirements for wartime equipment, vehicles, aircraft, and facilities that had to be earmarked and stockpiled for use by the Agency in the event of war. Once such requirements were listed in the war plans they could be requisitioned along with all other war-plan material. This meant that the cost of this equipment would be worked into the military budget, and then in due time each item would be purchased and delivered to the advance base site where war plan material was stockpiled. Warehouse after warehouse of “military equipment” is stored in the Far East, in Europe, and throughout the United States for the eventual use of the CIA. The cost of this material and of its storage, care, and conditioning is inestimable.... As the years passed and as the Agency's “military” role became more a matter of custom and generally accepted, Agency military cover units became so deeply covered that their neighboring military units did not know, or forgot, that the unit near them was not a regular military unit. By that time, requisitions from these CIA units were as readily acceptable as any others and the units became easily self-supporting without any Agency funding input.⁶

From this I'd like you to please discuss this rise and growth of the logistical global network of the Support side of the CIA, and how the

6. *Ibid.*, p. 249,
<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp11.html#p249>

existence of this relatively unknown component of the Support section is fundamental to the CIA's ability to engage in clandestine operations.

Prouty: This grew out of the natural war-planning function of the military. Right after World War II and on into the early fifties, we visualized that a war would begin with some attack, we'll say on the NATO lines, more or less like conventional World War II fighting. But that it would immediately elevate to the level of a nuclear exchange. It was planned that in that nuclear exchange, we would try to preserve certain areas in the target countries, say in the Soviet Union, that would not be hit and, judging by meteorological data, would not be covered by fallout which would be radioactive for years and years. And that in that area we would have the CIA create certain network agent functions and groups of Special Forces people that we could immediately send in by paradrop. This was the original Special Forces function, not the contrived one that grew out of the Vietnam War.

With this in the war plan, it then becomes included in the basic military budget each year. And with the CIA considered as a fourth force—Army, Navy, Air Force, and CIA—what the CIA needed for its war planning functions on behalf of the United States Government, the total Government, would then be treated as part of the military budget—not the agency's budget. In the beginning, this amounted to trucks, aircraft, weapons, radios, and everything else that they visualized their function would require right after what we used to call the “post-strike” function.

The agency learned that this system worked in its favor. They had warehouses under their name, in the name of a military unit. For instance, we'd create a unit, the 234 Provisional Support Group. And the 234 Provisional Support Group in Germany, staffed with all military people—of course, CIA people in military uniforms—would begin to fill its warehouses. They'd have trucks and jeeps and guns and radios and ambulances and everything else the rest of the military had. So the agency was quick to see that if they visualized their post-strike function as bigger this year than it was last year, they'd have more things to put in the warehouse. Then, since NATO exercises are run every year to train in the war plan, they would have to have more and more equipment for the NATO exercises. They did a very good

job of filling their warehouses and then in using this equipment, on “exercises”, which really were covert operations.

So this was an area in this business of reimbursement we weren't able to keep up with. We knew it existed, we knew what they were doing, we supplied the equipment, and it was sort of an even exchange. We figured, ‘Well, we've told the agency they're to be the fourth force and they're going to do a job in wartime so we might as well let them use it and train themselves and everything else.’

So the first thing we knew, the agency was able, despite President Eisenhower's warning, to create quite a well-equipped military force. And they had a lot of aircraft of their own, they had trucks of their own, they had all this equipment and this was the way that they ran their business under the war plan⁷.

I don't know what has happened to that in today's world. I assume it has grown. I have never heard anything about it since the days when I worked on it regularly. I think if anybody looked into the war planning in the Far East or in Europe, they would find that this still exists under one cover arrangement or other.

This is the reason why the Agency is able to get equipment immediately for almost for any covert activity in any part of the world. Just as an example, when we heard a lot about the Nicaraguan-Contra-El Salvador problems in Central America during the last decade, I noticed that the plane that went down with a man named Hassenfuss on board was a C-123. That was one type of aircraft in the Agency's stockpile. It was an Air Force plane category and it was one used by the Agency—I knew the designation. Very few people have ever heard of an airplane called a Chase. But the C-122 was designed by an airplane company called Chase Aircraft and the C-123 was a modification of that. With situations like that, you can see that the Agency is still operating within this same structure of the fourth force concept and I imagine it still exists.

**From the Chairman of the JCS On Down:
“where the CIA was concerned
there were a lot of things no one seemed to know”**

7. See also “The United States Military Consists of the Army, The Air Force, The Navy and Marines, and THE FOURTH FORCE” by L. Fletcher Prouty, *Gallery*, December, 1975, pp. 43-45,
<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/4thForce.html>

Ratcliffe: You describe what seems to be a very enlightening day—an event in 1960 or 1961 when you briefed “the Chairman of the JCS [Joint Chiefs of Staff] on a matter that had come up involving the CIA and the military.”⁸ As you described it:

The chairman was General Lyman L. Lemnitzer, and the Marine Commandant was General David M. Shoup. They were close friends and had known each other for years.

When the primary subject of the briefing had ended General Lemnitzer asked me about the Army cover unit that was involved in the operation. I explained what its role was and more or less added that this was a rather routine matter. Then he said, “Prouty, if this is routine, yet General Shoup and I have never heard of it before, can you tell me in round numbers how many Army units there are that exist as ‘cover’ for the CIA?” I replied that to my knowledge at that time there were about 605 such units, some real, some mixed, and some that were simply telephone drops. When he heard that he turned to General Shoup and said, “You know, I realized that we provided cover for the Agency from time to time; but I never knew that we had anywhere near so many permanent cover units and that they existed all over the world.”

I then asked General Lemnitzer if I might ask him a question. He said I could. “General,” I said, “during all of my military career I have done one thing or another at the direction of a senior officer. In all those years and in all of those circumstances I have always believed that someone, either at the level of the officer who told me to do what I was doing or further up the chain of command, knew why I was doing what I had been directed to do and that he knew what the reason for doing it was. Now I am speaking to the senior military officer in the armed forces and I have just found out that some things I have been doing for years in support of the CIA have not been known and that they have been done, most likely, in response to other authority. Is this correct?”

This started a friendly, informal, and most enlightening conversation, more or less to the effect that where the CIA was concerned there were a lot of things no one seemed to know.⁹

Can you recount more of the details of this enlightening conversation for us?

8. *Ibid.*, p. 257,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp11.html#p257>

9. *Ibid.*, p. 258,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp11.html#p258>

Prouty: It astounded me, that day. I assumed that there were a lot of things the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was not aware of every day in the Air Force, in the Navy, and in the CIA. But I had never expected such a blanket answer, that he didn't know, and that General Shoup didn't. Now, what we were talking about was rather specific.

At the time of the rebellion in Indonesia in 1958 when the CIA supported tens of thousands of troops with aircraft, and ships, submarines, and everything else, in an attempt to overthrow the government of Sukarno, we needed rifles pretty quick to support these rebels and I called out to Okinawa and found out that the Army didn't have enough rifles for what we wanted. We wanted about 42,000 rifles and they had about 30,000. But that he said he thought he could get more—General Lemnitzer was the Commander at that time in Okinawa. So he was right up close to this situation. He said that he'd have somebody call the Marine Corps and see what he could get from them. It just happened that General Shoup was the head of the Marine unit at Okinawa and he said, sure, he could provide the extra 12,000. So without delay, we had 4-engine aircraft—C-54's—flown by Air America crews but under military cover—appearing to be military aircraft—come into Okinawa, pick up these 42,000 rifles, prepared for an air drop in Indonesia. They flew down to the Philippines and then down to another base we had and then over into Indonesia and dropped these rifles.

We replaced those rifles. The General didn't know where they were going, we just borrowed them, and the unit that borrowed them was military and the call had come from the Pentagon. There was no problem with supplying the rifles. So years later, we replaced them. Then when I told him about that in the Pentagon, he said he never knew where those rifles went and General Shoup said, “You know Lem, when you asked me for 12,000 rifles, I thought you wanted them and, of course, being a good Marine, I gave you 12,000 rifles.” He said, “You owe me 12,000.” They were sitting there kidding but they never knew they went to Indonesia. They never knew they were part of a covert operation going into Indonesia.

This is true of a lot of the things that go on. We kept the books in the Pentagon. We covered that. We got reimbursement for it. That part of it was all right. And that's what kept it from being a problem because as long as General Lemnitzer's forces got the 30,000 rifles back and Shoup got the 12,000 back for the total of 42,000, they didn't

complain to anybody. They had their full strength of rifles. That's the magic of reimbursement.

This kind of operation was run on an established basis—the units are there. When I said there are 605 units, those are operating units. Now some of them may only be telephone drops, because that's their function, they don't need a whole lot of people, they're just handling supplies, or something like that.

But put this in present terms. When Colonel North believed that he had been ordered to take 2,008 T.O.W. missiles and deliver them to Iran—there has to be some way that the supply system can let those go. You can't just drive down there with a truck to San Antonio at the warehouse, and say, 'I want 2,008 missiles.' You have to have the authority. And 2,008 T.O.W. missiles—I don't know what one of them costs, but it's an awful lot of money. Somebody had to prepare the paperwork for the authorization to let the supply officer release those. I'm sure they went to a cover unit that North was using for that purpose. But it appears from what we've heard from this that, unlike the way we used to run the cover operations, when those missiles got to Iran, these characters sold them for money. In fact, they sold them for almost four times their listed value.

This is the problem Congress has been having. What happened to the money they received from the Iranians after they got there? And you can see how the system developed. Originally, we developed it on this one-for-one basis. Also we never used this kind of supply, to deliver grenades to the Contras and charge them \$9.00 a grenade or whatever it was. We just delivered the grenades. It was part of a Government program. And the CIA would reimburse the Defense Department. Everything came out even. We didn't sell anything. We never charged such cost to the "Contras" or other people we supported.

So I know how it worked in the fifties and sixties but I can't tell you how it's been working in the eighties. I'm just astounded by what has developed. Just like the General not knowing that we had so many units, in so many places around the world, in another case, we learned that a scientist (as I recall at CalTech) had learned how to interpret a radio transmission that was so brief that a whole paragraph would be a blip—an electronic blip, a matter of milliseconds—and he learned to stretch that millisecond blip into readable language. He did it with, I think what electronics experts would say—and I certainly am not one of them—is like this characteristic of a cathode tube, that when

you turn the thing off that for a little while it still glows? This was called the Rambo Effect. And Dr. Rambo realized he could do that with a radio wave just as well as a cathode tube could do it. The Soviets were using this blip transmission on CW Wave, Constant Wave, like Loran to deliver secret messages.

When CIA heard about that, obviously they wanted to exploit the capability. We used an Air Force unit to go to one of the major radio suppliers, an electronics supplier for the Air Force, and by feeding CIA dollars into that on-going contract, and without raising any eyebrows at all, we had that company, over a period of about a year and a half, develop a super receiver capability that could listen to the CW tone, discover that millisecond blip the Soviets had concealed there, stretch the blip to readable language, and then get a translator to translate from Russian to American. That's a tremendous achievement when you think about it, because it broke the whole system of that kind of cryptology and it was done with dollars that never affected the Defense Department. But we used the Defense structure to do it so that the company that did it had no idea that they were dealing with CIA. They just thought it was part of an ongoing Air Force contract. That's one of the ways these things are done.

There's a major company in this country in the Fortune 500 listing called EG&G. It's full name is Edgerton Germeshausen and Grier. Most of their work is in a very highly classified area of operations for the U.S. Government. I'm not sure to this day that EG&G realizes that in their earlier days, when they were a somewhat smaller company, much of the funding that went into their company came through this channel: from the CIA, to the Air Force, and to EG&G. So that EG&G would actually develop these very, very special devices for covert operations—not for Air Force, or Army. There are a lot of companies that have had those contracts. And this is not a small operation.

What bothered me then—and it bothers me today—was that there was no way to let the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff know this. I tried to do this when I could in my own role, since—I had just been assigned to the Joint Chiefs of Staff—in my work, I was five years with the Air Force and then two years with the Office of Secretary of Defense. And then Mr. McNamara decided to transfer that function to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. One of my functions there was to become a briefing officer for the Chairman so he would know what was going on. I think we served quite a purpose there because

from that time on, every time we got into one of these situations, I would brief him right away. And that at least kept him alert to what the services and the CIA were doing.

I fail to see that function in this Iran-Contra era. I don't think anybody from National Security Council was going down to the Chairman or the Secretaries of the various departments of the military and saying 'This is what we're doing,' just to keep them current. After all, they have the right to know all this. It's an important function. It's a much larger function—a much more costly function—than people realize and because of the odd way this country has decided to do covert operations, it's almost uncontrolled. Except for NSC. If NSC does not do their job, then it is uncontrolled. This is the big issue today, even after Ollie North's trial. The NSC members are sitting back and saying 'We didn't do any of it.' It seems to me the jurors realize they did. They think Reagan was involved. Bush was involved. Weinberger and Schultz were involved. They had to be involved. They *are* the NSC and no one else.

This is the breakdown now. We're going to have a hard time restructuring this business again, because all covert operations require foreign alliances. They are all bilateral. You can't take an aircraft and make a paradrop in Tibet without letting the Indian Government know that you are using their airways to fly to Tibet for an illegal or covert drop. So we would notify the Indian Government. Or we'd notify the Pakistani Government. Or the Government of Thailand. And so on.

I can not think of any way to operate a covert operation without at least a bilateral agreement. If we don't have our agreements in order, how on earth can we work with these other people around the world? This is serious business. And this is why the other countries around the world have begun to lose faith in what we're doing because either we're not telling them, or we're getting them involved in something that they don't want to be involved in. They don't want to even be connected with it.

Ratcliffe: From the end of the previous excerpt: What was the sense among the three of you talking there about the implications that, "where the CIA was concerned there were a lot of things that no one seemed to know"?¹⁰

10. *Ibid.*

Prouty: My office had just been moved from the Office of the Secretary of Defense into the Joint Chiefs of Staff structure. It was a very formal structure. At that time it was legally controlled at 400 officers and even to move my small office down there, they had to increase the Congressional approval of the more-than-400-limit on the Joint Chiefs of Staff. So it was an important move when they made it.

Now although I may have joked a little bit about the Generals not knowing that such an enormous organization existed around the world in our support of CIA, they were very serious about it. They felt it was a real oversight, to have this sort of thing going on without review. And I am of the opinion that this is one of the real reasons why the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Mr. McNamara had agreed to establish this office of Special Operations within the Joint Chiefs of Staff: so that all the military forces would be treated equally in their supporting activities in the CIA, and so that the Chairman would always be briefed on what was going on in covert work. The support of covert work goes on every day. One covert operation might be ten days. But we were supporting them year-round. This was a serious business and they recognized it as such.

The Importance of the CIA's Deputy Director of Support (DD/S) Side of the Agency by the Time of the Bay Of Pigs

Ratcliffe: You write further on that

By the time of the Bay of Pigs operation, the CIA was part of a greater team, which used the Agency and other parts of the Government to carry out almost any secret operation it wanted. By that time this organization had the equipment, the facilities, the men, and the funds to carry out clandestine operations that were so vast that even on the basis of simple definition they were no longer truly secret, nor could anyone hope that they might be.

The availability of supplies and facilities made it possible for all of this to come about. The growth of the CIA and of the greater Secret Team has resulted more from the huge success of the DD/S side of the Agency than from either the DD/P or the DD/I.¹¹

11. *Ibid.*, p. 261,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp11.html#p261>

Please comment on the importance you ascribe to this DD/S side of the Agency.

Prouty: It's one thing to have approval to carry out a covert operation and then to be able to go to the Defense Department or any other part of the Government and get support for that operation. It's something else entirely to have warehouses full of equipment—ships, aircraft, and people all over the world—and be able to carry out covert operations on a regular basis. You've used a good point of reference—the Bay of Pigs.

By 1960, when President Eisenhower approved the early actions that later led to the Bay of Pigs—and these were very, very small matters—the Agency itself was able to schedule a program that they knew was going to be a major program. Any of us in covert operations knows that 3,000 men in a program that led to putting—what was it—twelve hundred, thirteen hundred troops on a beach in a foreign country is not covert. You can't train 3,000 men in Guatemala, Nicaragua—some unfortunately in Mexico by inadvertence—and operate radio stations off islands in the Caribbean, etc., and call it covert. It's just a joke. The *New York Times* was reporting almost daily on the program. Castro was broadcasting about its threat almost daily. And yet, it was called a covert program. The thing that was against it's being covert was its size.

But, be that as it may, the CIA had the aircraft—they had the B-26's. In fact, as I think I said earlier, we had created an Air Force for the Cuban exiles—a tactical combat Air Force that was larger than any Air Force in Latin America at the time. All of that came from CIA assets. It was made up of their own aircraft. They were planes that had been used in the Indonesia business. They took planes back from the Vietnam theater. They used a lot of C-54's that Air America had provided.

As a matter of fact, it's very interesting what they did do. They even brought Philippine Army officers who had worked with General Lansdale in the Magsaysay campaign in the Philippines, back in the fifties—they even brought some of those officers into Guatemala to do the training there. You see, they had the facilities that were world-wide even involving people from other governments. This is what they had gotten into existence in time to run something like this anti-Castro program.

Yet, when it started, the first request the Agency made to the Department of Defense, when they got the approval from Eisenhower to start this anti-Castro move, was for two Navy doctors. That's all they needed. They said, 'We need two Navy doctors.' The Navy did not want to give up two doctors at that time. They didn't have two that they could give up because it was a long-term, indeterminate period. So the CIA men came to my office and they asked if could we get two Air Force doctors. Most of our doctors were flight surgeons—we did not want to give them up. But I talked to our chief surgeon in the Air Force, and he had a few doctors at that time—I think at Lackland Air Base in Texas—that would be willing to do this on a voluntary basis, and that he could spare.

So it happened that we sent two Air Force doctors to begin the program—that's all it was. They didn't ask us for anything else. Here's the anti-Castro program beginning and they wanted two doctors. Of course we asked them why, and the reason was they were going to put hundreds of Cuban exile men who were enrolled in the Army at a small military base that belonged to the U.S.—it was used by the U.S.—in Panama. And they needed doctors because the men would be in the base in Panama. They didn't ask us for equipment. They didn't ask us for airplanes, and rifles, and trucks, and everything else. They already had all that. So just by filling in with a few things they didn't have, they could be ready to go. And they were ready to go more than we thought. They had a lot of capability. Within a month or so, they were building a big air base over near Retalhuleu in Guatemala. They did this themselves—bulldozers and every other darn thing they bought for the construction with their own money.

So by the time of the 1960s, the Agency could run major operations—major warfare you might call it—by themselves. This led to an interesting bit of political development because during the summer of 1960, we were using a primarily World War II transport aircraft, called a C-46, that could carry 40 or 50 people—carry a pretty good-sized cargo. We'd fly it from Guatemala or Nicaragua to Cuba. We would not fly it from the United States. We didn't want any reference to the United States—they still thought they were playing a covert game. And we'd make airdrops in Cuba. This was a touch-and-go game and many of the airdrops just disappeared—they didn't drop to the right people, or Castro found out about it and intercepted it for them. But in any case, that's what they were doing: small airdrops, and mostly of equipment, weapons, communications gear to what

they thought were people on the ground who would handle it in the anti-Castro movement.

That went on until the political campaign of 1960. And it was pretty active. The most active person on this—from the Administration side—was Richard Nixon and he was running for President against Kennedy. Within a week after that very close election where Kennedy won, the Agency came in and told us that they were planning for a force of 3,000 Cuban exiles and that their target would be an invasion of Cuba.

This is something they developed themselves. I know very well from the repeated dealings we had with the White House from March of '60 until November of '60 that President Eisenhower never, never authorized an invasion of Cuba. But the Agency, able to plan that for themselves, and realizing Eisenhower was in a lame duck position after the election, and that Kennedy—although he knew about this training program—had no idea what the limitations put on it were, would probably accept this kind of thing. They just moved it from small airdrops, or over-the-beach—we put a lot of teams over-the-beach from pontoon raft equipment and such—and the next thing you know, we were in this big program. So that when Allen Dulles and Richard Bissell briefed Kennedy, I think, in the end of November or early December of '60, down at Kennedy's home in West Palm Beach, they were talking of a 3,000-man force—not these little intermittent airdrops.

I think there are two facts here though, that the Agency wasn't aware of. Kennedy knew the Cuban leaders. One of Kennedy's close friends was Senator Smathers of Florida. Senator Smathers had connections with many of the Cuban people in Florida and I think he had briefed Kennedy. Because in an interesting little event—I was asked one day to go from the Pentagon to the Senate Office Building to Senator Kennedy's office and to take a car that could carry six people—the driver, myself, and four passengers. So I went over to the Senate Office Building and went into Kennedy's office, and I sat there for a few minutes and the Senator came out, shaking hands good-bye to four men who were Cubans. I could tell by their Spanish accent, I could tell by their names Kennedy called them, and they seemed like old friends. Kennedy was patting one of them on the back and saying, 'Well, we'll see what we can do for you,' and all that sort of thing. And then the Senator turned to me and he said, 'The Secretary of

Defense wants to meet these people. You please take them back to the Pentagon, to see the Secretary of Defense.'

One of those four men was Manuel Artime. Artime was the Commanding Officer on the beach of the brigade in Cuba. Kennedy knew Artime. And he had talked with Artime. He knew what Artime's plans were. The second man, Mendonca, was one of a former—I believe a former president of Cuba—for a short time. There was a man named de Varona who was one of the leaders of the Cuban exile group. And I can't recall the fourth man. But that's the type of people they were. They were the top people that Allen Dulles had put together for the Cuban exile group. And here was Kennedy meeting them privately in his own office. He knew them ahead of time. So the people that think Kennedy didn't know what was going on don't understand how much experience Kennedy had with this kind of thing.

Ratcliffe: When do you think that meeting really was?

Prouty: This took place in August of 1960.

Ratcliffe: He'd already gotten the nomination by then. In August of 1960, they'd already had the Democratic Convention that summer.

Prouty: I'm talking about that period. Artime had just come from addressing the annual American Legion Convention in Detroit that year, which, was in August of 1960. These things were happening one right on top of the other. The most important thing was that people were saying Nixon knew all about this brigade going into Cuba but Kennedy didn't know about it. Kennedy did. He was smart. He kept it quiet.

As this force developed, by January of 1961—just before the inaugural—the Agency was making regular plans for an invasion on the beach. And they brought in a Marine Colonel named Jack Hawkins to do the tactical planning—to make the plans for it. And it was a very good plan. I think I mentioned earlier, they decided that the absolute foundation of the plan was to wipe out all Castro's combat aircraft. Which meant the CIA was going to use B-26's that had been developed for the Indonesian campaign, and use them to destroy Castro's air force on the ground before they ever invaded the beach. This was the key to that operation. Well, I'll go that far with

this story because I don't think we're supposed to be talking about the Bay of Pigs. But you see, they could do these things themselves. Even the beginning of combat in Laos and combat in Vietnam were done with equipment that the Agency owned by the period of 1960-61. It had become a major combat force at that time.

Ratcliffe: Do you think, from your own experiences, that Allen Dulles knew back in the late forties—or at least by the time he wrote the Dulles-Jackson-Correa report—how important this component of the CIA would be?

Prouty: Mr. Dulles realized that covert operations require materiel. And they also realized that if you don't have your own, you can't make your plans yourself. Having to make plans with borrowed equipment is always rather difficult. The reason I go back to this Jackson Correa-Dulles document so often, and why I called it the Dulles *Mein Kampf*, was this was the plan of the future of CIA. There's no question about that. And it was based upon having the ability to do it with equipment on hand: the bases, the people, the airplanes, the ships, everything else.

Congressional Non-Oversight of Agency Funding and Executive Branch Responsibility for CIA

Ratcliffe: Writing about some of the attempts of some Senators, or Congresspeople, to try to have more oversight of these potentially run-away capabilities, you write:

It was in 1955 that Senator Mansfield, among others, attempted to get a law through the Congress that would establish a strong watchdog committee to oversee the CIA. One of the principal reasons this law did not pass was that such CIA stalwarts as Senator Russell and Senator Saltonstall affirmed that there was no need for such committees....

I have worked closely with Senator Saltonstall, and many others, who were on those committees, and except in rare instances, they never knew that the CIA was so huge. They knew how big the CIA was within the bounds of the 'real' or intelligence organization; but none of them knew about its tremendous global base capability, and what is much more important, none of them knew the intricacies of the Agency's supporting system that existed in the name of the Army Special Forces and the Air Force Air Resupply and Communications

Wings ... no one man or no one group of knowledgeable men had ever had the opportunity to see the whole picture. As I have heard Senator Saltonstall say, 'Now don't tell me about that classified material. What I don't know won't hurt me.' That has been a general attitude on Capitol Hill. In discussions I have had with responsible committeemen on the Hill, I have found this to exist as recently as September 1971. This situation has not changed much. There are no Congressmen and no Senators who really know about the Agency and about what the Agency is doing.¹²

I'd like you to discuss this crippling impact on the very essence of our constitutional form of government, that is every day becoming more and more endemic, because of elected officials betraying the responsibilities of their office when they indicate no desire whatsoever to be accurately appraised of "classified material" and its fundamental implications.

Prouty: Of course, that varies with individuals and it varies with time. But it's a pretty accurate statement—unfortunately so. You see, in the eyes of Congress, when they created CIA, they were creating a coordinating organization only. That doesn't give them too much power. So the Congressmen can sit back and say, look, we wrote the law, here's what the law says, and this is what we expect it to do. Except for one thing: the amount of money that they've been appropriating to this ever-expanding organization. So I can't excuse them for not realizing that there's a requirement for oversight. Where's the money going? But then again they effectively back out of that because only a few Congressmen know how much money is appropriated. It's a very narrow area. But that doesn't mean they don't know. And, again, it's their responsibility.

So they lean on the fact that, look, to control the CIA we created an organization called the NSC—the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense. If they can't control that organization—those are our top people—then what are you talking to us about? It isn't Congress' job. And from that point of view, they're accurate. It is not up to the Congressmen to control the covert operations—it's up to the Administration because they're the

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 248-9,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp11.html#p248-9>

ones that direct it. At least, by law. So you can make a case for both sides.

During my work with this activity, I was told frequently and regularly by senior officers in the Pentagon—Generals and Secretaries of Departments and so on—to go over to the Congress and speak to the cleared Congressman about what we were doing on a certain covert operation.

I remember in my first clearance, it was explained to me that Senator Russell and Senator Saltonstall were the cleared officers—cleared Senators. I went over to see them. Well, it just happened that Senator Saltonstall knew my father—my father knew Saltonstall pretty well. So when he heard my name—right away, “How's your father? How are things?” and we got along just great. Then I said, “Now look, General Martin has sent me over here to talk to you about a covert operation which CIA is running.” To which the Senator responded, “Now look, if General Martin knows about that operation, and if the Defense Department is taking care of it, I don't need to know about that, Colonel. What I don't know...” And really, this was the way it was handled.

I wouldn't say that he meant it exactly that way but that's what you get because I know I wasn't able to tell him about it. He didn't want to hear it. The very fact that I came to tell him I think was simply enough to confirm that we were in some operation that he'd hear about later—especially if something went wrong—and that would do. That would suffice. But he wasn't going to sit there and be the conduit for everything we knew in the Defense Department, between himself, and then all of the rest of the members of Congress. He may have felt that if he told them about one operation then they'd expect him to tell them about all of them, and that would be bedlam for him, too. But that's trying to make a case for him.

What I can report to you is that in my many, many visits both to Saltonstall and Russell—and then a lot of others, that's just two I recall—the general feeling was that if the operation had been directed by the President—by the NSC—and if the Defense Department was supporting the CIA, then it must be all right, it must be official. You can't read it any other way. I mean, they weren't joking about this. It's just that they were saying, ‘We've set this system up, it should work.’

But as you can see, it proliferated into things that they didn't know about. And now, again, with the Iran-Contra thing, you have Congress saying, ‘Look, we didn't know anything about that at all.’

And we have NSC saying, 'We don't know anything about it at all.' So you see, it does get worse and worse when you try to run things that way. But that was my own experience with it, I could not brief Senators. They would not listen to it.

Ratcliffe: Because they felt it was in the proper hands that it should be in.

Prouty: They thought that the very fact that I was there proved to them that it must be in proper hands. You can see the man's point of view. Because if I'm there to tell him, he's saying 'Okay, it must be a legitimate organization.' If it was a real sneaky one, I wouldn't have been there. So, that's his rationale.

The Significance of the Sense of Infallibility Leaders of the Agency Felt Imbued With

Ratcliffe: You quote extensively from Lyman Kirkpatrick's book, *The Real CIA*, who you describe as a very exemplary officer and capable man. Quoting in *The Secret Team*, quoting from this book *The Real CIA*:

Among the inner group of top Agency careerists [this is talking about Kirkpatrick], he was a moderate and a most dedicated man. As a result, his statement [the excerpts from his book, *The Real CIA*] takes on a very special meaning. It is an example of the blind statement of faith found in a religious order. The great error and the great damage, however, from this kind of thinking arises in the fact that it is predicated upon the belief that the leaders of the Agency can do no wrong.

When the same organization is given the authority to develop and control all foreign secret intelligence and to take its findings, based upon the inputs of this secret intelligence, directly to the last authority, the President—not only to take it to him regularly but to pre-empt his time, attention, and energies, almost to the point of making him their captive—and then also is given the authority and the vast means to carry out peacetime clandestine operations, that agency has been given the power to control the foreign operations of the Government on a continuing day to day basis.¹³

13. *Ibid.*, p. 236 (See pages 230-5 for essential background to the above quote.), <http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp10.html#p236>

Please comment on the effect, or effects, this sense of infallibility that the leaders of the Agency felt imbued with had on the decisions and choices they made and on the goals they defined.

Prouty: The first part of your question ought to be dealt with a little bit. Lyman Kirkpatrick, Ray Cline, Pier DeSilva are three men with extensive agency experience who have written books. Fortunately their books are better than most books that are written by outsiders. They don't try to hide things or change things or conceal things from the public. Now, they don't include certain activities, they just don't put them in the book. But they are reliable (I have a very large library of Agency books most of which are trash).

But those three, former careerists, are quite responsible and if I had to pick one, I would pick Lyman Kirkpatrick's. Now remember, of course, that it was written 25 years ago. But it's still a good book. Lyman Kirkpatrick served in many capacities in the Agency and if it had not been for the unfortunate fact that he had a very serious case of paralysis and had to travel around in a wheelchair, I'm sure he would have followed Allen Dulles as the Director of Central Intelligence instead of Dick Helms because—not that Dick Helms wasn't qualified, but Kirkpatrick would have followed Dulles. And that was unfortunate. So that what he says about the Agency is generally accurate, and he was really, among his friends and acquaintances in the Agency, a competent person and a reliable person and I found him to be that way.

The problem the Agency has is that a lot people write about it who really have never served a day with it or if they have, they have some sort of axe to grind—one way or the other. Another writer who worked right in the Agency's headquarters and wrote a really good book about the Agency with John Marks is Victor Marchetti. It's hard to get a good book about the Agency unless you've been an insider. There's no question about it. The other people that write have got some little angle or axe to grind and their books are not good—they're not accurate. So, I wish to make that statement pretty clear while we have it on the record. Now, repeat the last question and I'll circle back to the rest of the item.

Ratcliffe: I'd like you to comment on the effect or effects, this sense of infallibility that the leaders of the Agency felt imbued with, had on the decisions and choices they made and on the goals they defined.

Prouty: To really understand CIA, you have to remember that perhaps its best cover story is that it's an intelligence organization. It doesn't do much intelligence. Intelligence is gathered by other assets throughout the Government, also. The Agency has quite a bit; but that isn't why they were created. Covert operations is their big money deal. You divide that up into the mechanical and electronic things like U-2s, and SR-71s and the satellites and all that—photographs and that whole business. That's the technical side of the agency. Then you get into this other part of covert operations where you're dealing with people—spies and agents and the like. That's a business that is almost everywhere. These people are the only ones doing covert work. It's a small group of specialists.

It's interesting to know that if you are involved in a covert operation in Greece, and you meet the people that are doing that and then you happen to be involved later in a similar operation in Bolivia, you meet the same people. To them, the world is all just one big chess board. When it comes to covert operations, you'll find the same specialists all over the world. It used to amaze me. Of course, I got to know them and their trade-craft. If I were working with them on something up in Teheran and we were running some program there along the border of the Soviet Union, and then later on we're running a program up to Tibet out of Thailand, I'd find they were the same specialists.

It's a relatively small group in covert operations. Their real leaders are anonymous. On the other hand, when you get to a man like Howard Hunt—his name is in books all the time—they're there. They're in the scenery. But they aren't the movers. They aren't the real deep operators. The ones that really run these exercises are a group of professional characters. It's just like a pro football team. They are good. They've got the people who can carry the ball, and they've got the people who can block, and so on. And, really, I have the greatest respect for them.

Their leaders, such as Bill Colby, Dick Helms, Allen Dulles, Des Fitzgerald, and so on, are convinced that what they are doing is right and that they are able. They have the ability, as Dulles said in his book, he understood *The Craft of Intelligence*. And the craft is this covert business. So that's what I mean by writing about it. They are the dominant people in this business. In today's world, you can guess at the names of—when they bring people in briefly, like they did Admiral Raborn or like they did George Bush, you get a man that

really is just keeping the seat warm, there. It takes a long time to bring somebody up to this capability. The key ones are men like Dulles and Dick Helms. Dick Helms was a very effective person in charge of covert operations.

Then you've pointed out that I put considerable stress on their "Support" side. You can't do any of this thing without the support. The Deputy Director of Support, called DD/S, was an organization headed by one of the most important CIA men of all, Colonel L. K. White—"Red" White. His skilled organization for global support for CIA was the envy of anybody. If he wanted to run a Federal Express delivery system, he could have done it off the back of his hand. If he wanted to run any other organization, he could. He was great.

Now, he had within his logistics system a deputy strictly for Supply so that all of the things he needed were there, and he had his own money man. The head of finance for the CIA was within logistics where he belonged. And then he had shops—for instance, one called TSS. This is where they would take equipment that the Army might call rather far out and then go further themselves. They developed all these spy gadgets that you see in magazines and books—and even better. I have enormous respect for the capability of the DD/S area under L. K. White.

A little incident—every CIA man traveling around the world always goes on a code name. I forget some of them, but whenever Des Fitzgerald or Dick Helms or somebody would travel, they'd use a code name. When White traveled, his code name was Ballou. And the reason it was Ballou—he was "Red" White and Ballou. It broke the code as soon as the people figured that out.

But he had under him, in supply, a Navy Captain named Garrison who had spent all his life in Navy supply and he knew the business very well. His finance man matched our finance man in the Defense Department and they were very good. And really, it was DD/S that made things work between our organizations. When they needed boats, when they needed aircraft, they were there. DD/S was very fundamental in all of the proprietary operations, like, Air America, and the other units they had world-wide. That's quite a job because you're dealing there with civilian establishments right alongside military-type operations. Not enough has been said about the strengths of the supporting groups in the CIA.

Ratcliffe: Do you think this sense of infallibility is still fully active today?

Prouty: I think Casey brought it back. I don't know about it since Casey. But you could see it with Casey. I think Casey figured he could have done anything. Who was it—Atlas—give him a big enough lever and he'll lift the world? I think Casey felt that way. I think Casey was the nearest to Dulles as a true CIA leader that any that they've had. He was another big-time lawyer.

Ratcliffe: And is that, in part, because he was from that original OSS core group under Donovan along with Dulles and Helms?

Prouty: That could have a lot to do with it. It's the man. It's the type of person. Indomitable. Allen Dulles, with all his experience, nothing ever shocked him. He was able to do things. This is kind of strange, because otherwise, he seemed like a little college professor, kind of meek and mild. But you charge him with doing something and he's going to do it. He's just going to do it!

**The ST Running A Government Of Reaction:
Develop and Control All Secret Intelligence,
And Brief The President On It *Every* Day**

Ratcliffe: Following from above—this “same organization is given the authority to develop and control all foreign secret intelligence”—define for us the term, secret intelligence.

Prouty: A lot of people have trouble with that. Secret operations of course are clandestine activities. So we divide the two. Secret intelligence is when you have to use spies, bribery, threats, murder, assassinations, in order to gain intelligence—in order to gain information or to protect information. Secret intelligence is a very special intelligence you aren't going to get any other way. And it's the key division of the intelligence sector.

It served its purpose for Dulles because he would say, ‘Look, if you're charging us with collecting intelligence’—which the law didn't do but he would put it that way—‘then, of course, in order to do it sometimes, we have to do these other things which are covert operations.’ And he kept pushing from secret intelligence into covert operations. It was a springboard for him. And so he was always

talking about secret intelligence as though that was the most important kind of intelligence. And then he was talking about covert operations so that he could get his secret intelligence. It was a kind of a professional tactic of his to get in—but in the vernacular, “secret intelligence” is what the Navy calls “Black intelligence.”

Ratcliffe: This essence of the ability of the Secret Team to exist at all in terms of this team or organization being able to, first, develop and control all foreign secret intelligence, and second, being able to then have full and unfettered access to the last authority to brief him on this controlled information—please comment on this complete control of this entire system that enables the Secret Team to function.

Prouty: It's a good thing you picked that up. It's more important than most people have any idea—if they know about it at all. Every single day, intelligence is collected from all around the world by all of our intelligence capacity. Whether it comes from the Treasury Department or the CIA or wherever. During the night, that is carefully boiled down to the essence of the intelligence of the day. Partly, because it completes the intelligence of yesterday and, partly, because something new comes in, and every once in a while, there is some more-or-less academic approach to open up a subject that needs to be described because it's very important.

The Agency has been given the responsibility of doing that evaluation daily and then to do the collation of all this and, finally, the early morning presentation to the President. It's a terrific job they do. And if you get used to seeing Walter Cronkite on TV every night, you think you're seeing the essence of the world news. Well you've seen nothing until you've seen this secret intelligence report that is delivered every morning to the President. It's beyond anybody's belief—it is so good, it's so important.

The Agency used to have a man named Kemp that was just astounding for this business. And some of their best men do this work. It's done during the night. So that in the morning, a pre-brief is given in the Pentagon, way down in the double basement of the Pentagon, in a big room there for about 50 security-cleared people. That doesn't mean they're all there each day—maybe only 35 or 40—but there are only about 50 people in the entire Pentagon—35,000 people—who have the special security clearance to hear this pre-brief before the President does.

The pre-brief is a dry run. It's all the briefers of that day and all of their material and it lasts, maybe, half-an-hour. And they make this briefing for the Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the others. They all hear this same brief that day. And then these key briefers leap into their cars, go to the White House, and brief the President. That's why it's called a pre-brief at the Pentagon. The President hears this entire briefing.

As you can see, that's a very formative thing. For instance, the Cabinet Officers hear that briefing. The President hears it. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of staff hears it. During the day, that becomes their agenda. Because, let's say something comes up during that day that involves Teheran, immediately they get all their Teheran experts on that subject. Much of what makes Washington run that day, whether people realize it or not, comes down from that pre-brief, through the Cabinet Officers, through the top people. The Cabinet officer picks up his phone as soon as he gets back to his office and says, 'Hey, Charlie, get into this for me right away, I want everything you've got on that'. And the next man, and the next man... And they go back and they tell the Navy do this, and the Air Force, you do this. Because the pre-brief is saying what's going on this day from all over the world. The newspapers don't even begin to get into the depth of this brief.

Then you begin to realize that to a considerable extent, the briefing of the President every day and the pre-brief system provides the Government with its agenda every day. And it's repeated the next day. And it's repeated the next day, and so on. So that the Government moves along this line because, as we said before, when you use intelligence to run your activities, you are reacting. You are responding. You are on the defensive team of a football game—you're not on the offensive team.

It is the power of this pre-brief everyday from the intelligence inputs that has been leading our Government since the forties, and has created a system of government that is not what government is supposed to be. Government should be leadership. Just like I was talking about the Defense Department. We have a Defense Department, we don't have a War Department. It's so different. That's why I say that the pre-brief, as given daily by the intelligence community—and usually with the DCI right there, and the way Allen Dulles preempted this role—well, it actually began with Bedell Smith—but, he preempted this role, and then moved intelligence right

into the White House and began to lead the Government every single day. It has an enormous impact on what we might call the political life of the United States. Whether we realize it or not.

Now another point. A working President has how many hours a day — 16? If you take up one of his hours in the morning, you've taken up 1/16th of the time of the most important man in the world. And the intelligence community has created a situation by which they preempt that time and he can't get loose from it. He's there. Now I don't know if each President has gone there every day. But, you see, the system's there every day. It doesn't matter who's there in person, really.

I think that we have not considered the enormous importance of intelligence as the guide for our Government and what our Government does and the fact that it runs on reaction. And then the classic idea of Government where the leader is up on a white horse, 'Follow me.' Do you understand? He's leading and he's taking the government down the road. We talk about Mr. Bush's first 100 days of leadership. I would imagine Mr. Bush hasn't missed one of these briefings. And I imagine that he's told his people, get on with that and do this. But you see, he's perfectly willing to accept it because he was a DCI. He's the first DCI to ever be President. This is the way he sees how the Government ought to run. And he's not ever going to leave that office. Plus the fact that his administration doesn't have any money in its checking account. This country is "over-drawn."

This is a very important subject. And this has been going on for decades. I went to these briefings for years. I must tell you they charge you up something awful. You come out of that room after hearing everything that's going on—everything from satellite photos to the global weather conditions—you get everything that's going on diplomatically, militarily, commercially—*everything* during that day in that pre-brief. That's powerful stuff. And you're so busy during the day catching up with the things that this pre-brief tells you to do that all of a sudden it's tomorrow and you hear another pre-brief. It sets the stage for what goes on every day. If you haven't been involved in it at that point where you hear it and get the motivation, it's very hard to experience the impact that it has on our government operations. I don't know what the government of England and France and Japan and then in Moscow are doing, but it wouldn't surprise me any that they're doing the same thing.

Ratcliffe: Did you attend these pre-briefs?

Prouty: Every day. I was one of, I think 52 people in the Pentagon, as I remember, that had the clearance to go. And in my work, there were many times when I was one of the briefers at the pre-brief. So I was involved in it both ways.

Ratcliffe: But your pre-brief—would you participate then in going over to the White House afterwards?

Prouty: No. If you're the briefer, you do. In my activities the Chairman would go. Or somebody like that. In fact, by the time the briefing team has been prepared for the White House, the group has been cut down to the Chairman, the DCI, and maybe one or two others. By that time, you're down to Cronkite, you're down to the last talk. That's the way it should be. The thing just goes right down to an apex until you're talking to the President. And it's a very important briefing at that point.

Ratcliffe: It is very distilled.

Prouty: Yes.

Understanding The Secret Team

Part III

Allen Dulles: Forging a Government of Reaction

Ratcliffe: I'd like to get into a more general subject here that is certainly central to discussing the rise and growth of Central Intelligence Agency and the Secret Team, in the person of Allen Dulles. You write at one point that Allen Dulles, "was a counterpuncher and a missionary. He was a meddler. He thought that he had the right and the duty to bring his pet schemes into the minds and homes of others, whether they were wanted or not."¹ I'd like you to discuss in general terms the mind of this man Allen Dulles. Why do you think he felt he had the right to do all these things and how do you think he justified this in his own mind?

Prouty: As a young man (just graduated from Princeton, I believe), he went to Paris with the Wilson peace conference group right after World War I. That is a pretty rich way for a young college graduate to begin his work in international affairs. And I'm sure that the experience had much to do with the rest of his life. John Foster Dulles and Allen Dulles were both senior directors of the biggest law firm in New York City at the time, Sullivan & Cromwell. Their earlier work of course made them very valuable to that international law firm, and also brought them into the law firm's business throughout the world. The way in which they handled business on the international scale was very much shaped by their experience with Sullivan & Cromwell.

1. *The Secret Team*, p. 212,
<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp9.html#p212>

The Sullivan & Cromwell offices had the major U.S. legal contacts in Germany during Hitler's period. We couldn't say they were essentially pro-Nazi, but they didn't close their offices in Germany until well after the start of World War II. The fact that they were still there during the war became quite an embarrassment to the U.S. government. To think that here we were, very anti-Hitler, anti-Axis, and yet this major U.S. law firm was still operating there. This law firm was in a sense dominated by these Dulles brothers, whose idea of international affairs and international business was shaped by the law firm's clientele and by their own global activities.

At the same time, John Foster Dulles was either a founder of the World Council of Churches or one of its major guiding spirits. Whenever he was not in the government or otherwise assigned to some mission, he traveled all over the world as a principal spokesman for the World Council of Churches. Now I make no brief for the Dulles Brothers view of the churches or of their religion. I think it was Episcopalian really, but I'm not sure. But this was the platform upon which the Dulles brothers spoke many, many times around the world. And in that sense they turned their political views, their financial views, their diplomatic views into an essentially missionary spirit. They felt that wherever they went they were bringing the word of the United States—the word of capitalism, free trade and what have you, around the world with them.

This was very true in the period right after World War II, and may have had something to do with Truman's selection of Allen Dulles to study the intelligence agency with Jackson and Correa because, if anyone was accustomed to international affairs, intelligence activities, covert activities (because of his OSS experience), Allen Dulles certainly was. Put these all together and, regardless of the individual himself or his family relationships (which were strong, of course, because both his brother and sister were strong in the State Department), you produce a person (called Allen Dulles) who is a missionary, a diplomat, a financier, a lawyer—a really unusual individual for this period. Then you bring him into the government as the Director of Central Intelligence, and he calls upon all this background and associates.

From my experience with him (which for seven or eight years was rather considerable), you could feel this power in the man. This was the way he worked. He felt that he had a perfect right to preach

capitalism as he saw it, or anticommunism as he saw it, throughout the world.

It was people like Allen Dulles who really created the North/South confrontation which was actually East/West between communism, but North/South with regard to Third World countries, where either they should shape up with us or else they were declared “communist.” There's no black in the middle, no area in the middle where they could ignore them. There's no neutral. In the old days, India tried very hard to be a neutral country. And this Dulles system just wouldn't permit them to be neutral. They had to be communist or they had to be capitalist, one way or the other.

This is the nature of Dulles. When you worked with him, it was either communism or the West. You can't describe precisely these things, but it's in all the literature since World War II. It's in everything we were doing. The Agency was motivated along those lines. Especially as you saw Dulles move into these things that we were talking about, through his ability to control the morning briefings, guiding the government along this reactive channel. Because when Dulles became the Director of Central Intelligence one of the first things he did in the Agency was to abolish the DDA. We've talked about the DDS, the support and the logistics; we've talked about DDP, the clandestine operation; and of course DDI was the Deputy Director of Intelligence, which is the ordinary intelligence business. But the CIA had had a DDA. DDA was administration, planning, management. He abolished that. He saw no use for it. If he saw no use for management, planning, administration—that role in the Agency—then you can see that what he was going to do was let his eyes and ears (his intelligence area, his covert area) find things to do and then do that, whatever it was.

So he would react to things. And with that system that he applied, he brought it into the entire government. After several years, the government itself was becoming a government of reaction. This is the main point about having a CIA in a government like ours that makes it very dominant: It assumes the title without even trying—because it's easy to respond with a reaction. If you get punched, you punch back. That's easy. This is Mr. Dulles in a nutshell. And his shadow having fallen over the government for so many years has created a government which does react rather than respond dynamically.

This is very true in this decade of the eighties in our government, and I think it is this straitjacket that Kennedy was trying to remove from the office of the Presidency. Kennedy was definitely making moves to rid the government of this reactive motivation. Of course he fired Dulles in late 1961, that was the first step.

Ratcliffe: But after he was elected he didn't yet see what would happen until something like the Bay of Pigs came along to make him wary of such a reactive straitjacket.

Prouty: I think Kennedy, having great confidence in his own ability, realized that he didn't have to fight the ten rounds of the championship bout all at once. He'd take them in order. He lined up the program that he saw through his first four years as a chance to begin to really take over the government in his name and in what he wanted to do. Then during his latter four years he planned to make moves that would set the course of our history for many, many years. And of course, as a lot of people have pointed out, he had Bobby in the wings and Teddy in the wings and then their children in the wings. They would have had a Kennedy Dynasty for years. At least, that's one way to look at it.

But I think Kennedy rebelled against this business of the reaction to things. He wanted to do some things. This of course put him in direct conflict with Allen Dulles and with the CIA and with that method of operation, which really dated back to Walter Bedell Smith. Walter Bedell Smith is the one who started the pre-briefings shortly after he had been appointed DCI by Truman. So we must not say that this was truly Dulles' origin.

This is important for historians. They should go back a little further and see that Walter Bedell Smith—who was Eisenhower's closest confidant during World War II, who left that job to become Ambassador to the Soviet Union (which is quite an unusual assignment for a General), and then came directly back from being the Ambassador to the Soviet Union to being the Director of Central Intelligence—should not be overlooked for the enormous role that he played. Then he stepped down from being the DCI to become the deputy to John Foster Dulles at the Department of State so that Allen Dulles could move into the slot in the DCI. I would not say that the Dulles brothers formed all this themselves. I would say that Walter Bedell Smith and his associates, including Eisenhower, had a lot to do with all of this evolutionary process.

Ratcliffe: Even though it was Truman, in 1950, who recalled Bedell Smith from Moscow to take over the CIA, once this was the hue and cry in the country about how we'd been caught with our pants down in Korea when the invasion happened.

Prouty: That is a part of the greater problem of how the whole country—how the whole world rolled over from the alliances of World War II into the Cold War (World War III/Cold War) of being anticommunist and Pavlovian anticommunist, unreasonable anticommunism: everything that we didn't like was communist right away—anything the Soviets did was against the West. And to create that direct opposition right out of the ashes of World War II, and for what most people would say were very unreasonable reasons. Nothing that had been done in Moscow changed this. They had been our partners in war and all of a sudden we were opposed to them. But I don't want to leave anyone with the idea that this began solely with Dulles. Dulles perfected it of course. Dulles was the epitome of the person that fit that role, but he was not the first man. Bedell Smith was ahead of him.

Dispersion of the OSO, Creation of the Office of SACSA

Ratcliffe: We've discussed briefly before, your office—the Office of Special Operations—being transferred in either late '61 or early '62 out of the Office of the Secretary of Defense and into the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I'd like your ideas about the importance and significance of this change with the concurrence of your office being transferred from OSD to the Joint Staff and how, to quote you directly, “as a progression of this first move, the Joint Staff created an office called the Special Assistant for Counterinsurgency and Special Activities, or SACSA.”²

Prouty: There had been an Office of Special Operations in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, ever since its establishment in 1947-48 under Secretary Forrestal. That office was there to take the directives from NSC that had to do with covert operations and translate them into Defense Department action.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 407,
<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp22.html#p407a>

When Kennedy was elected, General Erskine had been working on an Eisenhower-directed study to establish, in the Defense establishment, a Defense Intelligence Agency. It was quite apparent that, although the CIA existed, it did not emphasize military intelligence gathering adequately for the intelligence careerists and professionals in the military. They felt that a common Defense establishment (DIA) would improve the military intelligence area. In many ways it would counterbalance the CIA for their own benefit. General Erskine, the long-time head of the Office of Special Operations, is the one who wrote that study.

When that study was concluded after Kennedy's inauguration—and I believe almost on the day of the Bay of Pigs exercise, if I remember the date it seemed to me it came on almost the identical day—it was approved by Secretary McNamara, shortly after the General had given it to him. Shortly thereafter General Erskine, who had then been in the Pentagon for more years than any other Assistant to the Secretary had ever been there, retired.

The question for McNamara then was: Should he retain OSO as it had been and try to put another man in there, or should he divide it into other functions? First of all, OSO was responsible for the overview of NSA. In the technical world that had developed in those latter years, with satellites, U-2's and SR-71's and all that, much of that work had moved over into what we called DDR&E (the Deputy of Defense for Research and Engineering). So that area of responsibility was transferred from OSO to DDR&E. That took away one big role from OSO. Another function in the Office of the Secretary of Defense that had moved was ISA (International Security Agency), and much of their role was in connection and coordination with the State Department. So that responsibility, which had been in OSO, was moved to ISA.

Then you get to this area of Special Operations (the support of the clandestine activities). The active work that was required for this task, for the most part took place in the services. But the three services had always been running each office independently. During the five years I ran that office in the Air Force, there was an Army counterpart and a Navy counterpart, and although we worked together frequently, it was more or less an *ad hoc* arrangement. We worked together, like for the Bay of Pigs, because we had to. It was a necessity. But we didn't work together on policy matters or on budget matters, which are so important. Each service did that independently.

So I was called in by General Wheeler (who at that time was the Director of the Joint Staff; this was a couple of years before he became the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) and asked what I thought about bringing the Special Operations function into the JCS. And of course I immediately approved it because I saw the rest of the OSO office going. In fact, they had gone and I had the only office left there, with a functional job but with no title. My boss General Erskine had gone. General Lansdale was doing some special work for Deputy Secretary of Defense, Mr. Gilpatric, and was making trips to not only Vietnam but to Central America at that time (which for Lansdale was quite a new thing).

I told General Wheeler that I thought it would be a fine move to set up Special Operations under the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and to create an office that would unify the work of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force (including the Marine Corps). General Wheeler agreed with that and arranged a meeting with Mr. McNamara.

When we went up to see him, Mr. McNamara said, 'I will take care of getting the increase in the manning allotments for the Joint Chiefs of Staff (which were limited to 400) sufficient to create this office, and you can go ahead and set up the office.' So I moved from the physical area of the Secretary of Defense downstairs to the JCS area. An Army officer was assigned to my office, along with one or two staff, and a Navy officer, along with one or two staff. We had probably eight or ten people. And we established the Special Operations branch of what became SACSA—the Office of the Special Assistant for Counterinsurgency and Special Activities.

The SACSA development was very interesting. Nothing had existed in the Joint Staff like that before. This was a "Special Assistant" to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for Counterinsurgency and Special Activities: two roles that are not traditionally prime military roles. But during the Vietnam era they became extremely important. This function brought with it another very important office that you hear little about, and that's the office that handles Cover and Deception. Deception is a very important type of Special Operation.

You create things that you want to have discovered that are wrong: so that Moscow would think we had a gun that worked the way it worked and it didn't work, or a rocket that worked the way it did and it wouldn't work, or that we sent people to some place to do a

job that they'd think we were going to do and we were never going to do it. This is important because when we set up the Bay of Pigs—on account of Deception, if the Russians found out about that or if Castro found out about it—they wouldn't know whether that was Deception or whether we were going to do it.

Deception is an extremely important function, rarely talked about. I don't know of anybody who's ever written about it properly. And at the same time that my office was moved to the Joint Staff to unify Special Operations for the services, the men who had been working for years in Deception unified their office in the same area. In fact, they were right next door to me, and we used to work together quite a bit because it was important that we do that to have Deception effective throughout the military services.

This left the basic function, called counterinsurgency which developed from the Special Forces (from the Green Berets and from that doctrine). This was a move by the military to get into an area of CIA activity, especially in Laos and Vietnam. And the other side, the Special Activities part of SACS, was simply to cover—like saying “and so forth”—to cover anything else that was coming up of an unusual nature.

These transfers started with an Army General, General Craig, who stayed only about a month or two in the job as Chief of SACS. His problem was that, being a straight-line Army general, he had difficulty making objective decisions regarding either CIA or Special Forces, and the Air Force's Special Air Warfare units, and so on. Whereas a neutral general might have been able to make decisions more easily. In that period of time, because they were very formative decisions, they moved to another man. The interim man after that was another Army general, who had considerable experience with Special Forces but was called for another job by the Army. So he stayed about two months.

Finally they brought in a Marine major general, Victor Krulak. Krulak was ideal. He had no biases with respect to this function. He was straight Marine Corps, and, as far as he was concerned, Special Forces, Special Air Warfare, the Navy Seal teams, all of that and the CIA's work—as he said, ‘That's just an offshoot of the Marine Corps, so I know all about that stuff.’ He was good. What was new to him was the Deception work and the Special Operations work. We worked closely together for years and that function developed accordingly.

DOD Adoption of a Counterinsurgency Role in the late Eisenhower Years

The counterinsurgency role has been identified with Kennedy. I think the better way to read it would be that the counterinsurgency role was coming into the Defense Department from the CIA. It was either a matter of their getting into it or the CIA was going to overwhelm them. And it bloomed during the Kennedy period. Pretty good proof of that is that although the Special Forces center at Fort Bragg is called the Kennedy Center, it actually had its inaugural first class during the Eisenhower period. In fact, it was Mr. Douglas, Deputy Secretary of Defense, who went down there to inaugurate the school and the first classes. I was down there with him, so I know the date for sure. The Kennedy Center was not really the Kennedy Center; it was operating earlier than Kennedy's election. Which shows that counterinsurgency and that kind of thing did not begin with Kennedy. It began before Kennedy.

Ratliffe: You mention further on, “The important thing to understand is that the much-heralded office of SACSA had very few military responsibilities. It was almost entirely CIA oriented.”³ This brings up this whole question of direction—not only the importance to the Secret Team in general of an office like the Special Assistant for Counterinsurgency and Special Activities, but besides General Krulak—there's this situation of Maxwell Taylor coming back into the government after leaving in a huff. He resigned in 1958?, '59? — during the Eisenhower administration. He was the Chief of Staff of the Army—and left in a huff because of disagreements. Taylor wrote a book called *The Uncertain Trumpet*, which you indicate you felt very strongly was fronting for this idea of “flexible response.” But more directly the whole linchpin of counterinsurgency as being this new form of operations that apparently, as you indicate, was more to increase the scope of CIA operations than to, in effect, do what it did—which was to change the military's posture from a traditional military fighting stance to this sort of counterinsurgency focus or intent.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 407,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp22.html#p407b>

Prouty: The shift from Eisenhower to Kennedy, first of all, as far as the bureaucracy was concerned, was most unexpected. The Pentagon was all ready for Nixon just like, as we see today, the Reagan-Bush era—it was expected. The bureaucracy was ready for Bush to come in and simply keep things going. We had the same feeling in 1960. And those of us at that time in the Pentagon could see that everything was moving toward a Nixon continuation of most of the Eisenhower program—with some differences and with a strong bent towards CIA, as Nixon had in those days.

That didn't happen. And yet the infrastructure was all in place. The “Special Forces” increase at Fort Bragg was in place. The Navy Seal teams were already in place. I had opened up a big base for the CIA at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, and we had moved CIA aircraft down there in 1959, a year before the election. We had the Air Commandos established and stationed right next to Eglin, at Hurlbert Air Force Base. Everything was already in place. There wasn't anything the Kennedy administration could do to change that. As a result there had to be some top echelon to govern, or to direct, their activities. But SACSA was not a command situation. What SACSA did was provide the Joint Chiefs of Staff with the information necessary so they would understand the functional employment (or they would be able to make use of the functional employment) of these rather large organizations which were in existence around the world.

NSAM 55—JFK's Attempt to Get CIA out of Clandestine Operations

With the arrival of Kennedy, the first thing that had to be gotten out of the way was this Bay of Pigs operation. We've discussed that. After the Bay of Pigs, he asked General Taylor to make a review of the Bay of Pigs and write up for him what he thought his administration should know about that kind of operation in the future. He wanted to get the CIA out of that business. The Taylor “Letter To The President”—and I must emphasize that every word of that letter had the approval of the other members of Kennedy's Cuban Study Group (meaning Allen Dulles, Admiral Burke and Bobby Kennedy—Bobby Kennedy most importantly)—the Taylor “Letter” really moved the Kennedy administration closer to counterinsurgency. Because what Kennedy did—and this was one of the most significant acts of the Kennedy era, of the Kennedy 1000 Days—was that he took

the precise words of this Taylor Report (this Taylor/Burke/Dulles/Kennedy report) and made them into a National Security Action Memorandum, which was a Directive from the White House. It was NSAM No. 55 and it was accompanied by two essential follow-on NSAMs, 56 and 57—all three of which contained the language of the Taylor “Letter.” They were not new creations by somebody else, they were the language of the Taylor “Letter.”⁴

Among other things, NSAM 55 directed that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Joint Staff, be “the Advisors to the President in peacetime as they would be in wartime.” Most people who are not familiar with the full meaning of that don't realize that, in time of war, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the No. 1 Advisor to the President, the Commander in Chief. Not the Secretary of Defense, not the Secretary of State, nobody else—the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs—that's the law.

When Kennedy said, “You are my advisor in peacetime as you would be in wartime,” he is saying to the Chairman, ‘You are my Advisor for clandestine operations, and all the other operations being carried out in peacetime.’ He not only put that in words, but the very technique he used to deliver it to the Chairman was impressive.

I can't help but remember that, because NSAM 55 was delivered to me in an envelope from the White House and I was the one charged with the responsibility of briefing it to the Chairman. It arrived in my hands from the White House and no notation on it whatsoever that a copy had gone to the State Department, to the Secretary of Defense, to the Director of Central Intelligence—nobody. I had never seen a paper like that from the White House before, i.e. with a single addressee. It's just not protocol. It isn't what we do. But Kennedy wanted to emphasize—by writing this letter directly to General Lemnitzer and saying “You are my Advisor in peacetime as you would be in wartime” and let the other men find out the next day from copies (which we of course made immediately)—that this was what the President had done.

I can't overemphasize the shock—not simply the words—that procedure caused in Washington: to the Secretary of State, to the Secretary of Defense, and particularly to the Director of Central Intelligence. Because Allen Dulles, who was still the Director, had just lived through the shambles of the Bay of Pigs, had sat through all

4. See “Appendix E” on page 335 for copies of all three of these NSAMs.

the hearings that were presided over by Maxwell Taylor when they reviewed the Bay of Pigs and now he finds out that what Kennedy does as a result of all this is to say that, 'you, General Lemnitzer, are to be my Advisor'. In other words, I'm not going to depend on Allen Dulles and the CIA. Historians have glossed over that or don't know about it.

That NSAM No. 55 was more important during the Kennedy era than anything else except the assassination. In fact it may have caused a major move toward that deadly decision. It said more about Kennedy's plans for the government of the United States than anything else he had signed his name to at least until NSAM 263 in October '63. This is where the Kennedy administration put its print on what it intended to do with clandestine operations.

Chairman of the JCS: Exit Lyman Lemnitzer, Enter Maxwell Taylor

It didn't work exactly as he intended it, because of some of the people involved. General Lemnitzer was not a Cold Warrior. After I had briefed General Lemnitzer, he said, "Prouty, put that in the file. We'll think about it." He was not about to put that up on a pennant and march around the city with it. He was not going to be the government's Cold Warrior. But, he would be if directed. He would perform his duty as he had always done. But he did not fit the role of the Cold Warrior.

The next factor was that his replacement as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was Maxwell Taylor, the man who wrote that crucial directive. Here was Maxwell Taylor writing NSAM 55, the President approving NSAM 55, putting his name on it and making it a White House Directive, and then that Directive sitting in the office with Maxwell Taylor, in the job that he intended to create for himself. Therefore the Maxwell Taylor review of the Bay of Pigs problem became the *Mein Kampf* of the Maxwell Taylor era in the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Just like the Dulles-Jackson-Correa report of 1949 being the *Mein Kampf* of the CIA.

Anyone who studies Kennedy's role leading up to Vietnam and as far into Vietnam as he went before he died, must keep in mind that he's the one who said the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was to be his Advisor in Cold War. Now of course, being an Advisor in Cold War is not exactly the equal to being a Commander in a Cold War, but it leads directly toward that function.

This was a major change, at least in the way things had been going during the Eisenhower-Dulles era, as we moved into the Kennedy and McCone era. McCone replaced Allen Dulles within a few months. Bissell was released, General Cabell was released, and they started off with a new group of people in the CIA. I cannot emphasize enough how important NSAM 55 was in the Kennedy "1000 Days," and also how important it is to realize that most historians have omitted it completely in their studies of the Kennedy legacy. It gives a completely different view of Kennedy's objectives. Several people have printed that Kennedy told Mansfield, among others, that he was going to "break the Agency into a thousand pieces." But he had already broken it. With NSAM 55 he had already told Allen Dulles, 'I don't need you as my Advisor.' That's explicit. People need to think about that because that was important. That's where the SACSA organization came in, ready-made, with people who had a lot of experience.

For instance, the Navy representative in my office Captain John Bowell had been one of the founders of the Navy Seal team concept. The Army assistant was equally qualified and, among others, there was Al Haig, and people like that. They were not just people brought in casually. They were experienced. Without delay the Army work at Fort Bragg began to increase into the predominant number of Green Berets that we saw later in the Vietnam War.

So we're dealing here with a period that was most interesting. Much of this moved forward like a glacier, with the Bay of Pigs to sharpen Kennedy's attention, and then his action right away to 'Get Even!' and to take over control: 'I'm not going to have another Bay of Pigs.' He put the JCS in charge of Cold War activities and removed the CIA from the scene. This was his plan, to be fully implemented during his second term after the 1964 elections.

However, there was one problem. Kennedy knew or found out that, Maxwell Taylor was not exactly his hip-pocket Cold Warrior. Maxwell Taylor had prior understandings with CIA. And characteristically, he wanted to dominate that field himself. He visualized himself operating in somewhat the way Allen Dulles had. Or, another way to put it was, he was not your conventional military man at that time. In fact, here's a personal observation on that. A Lemnitzer JCS meeting was a friendly, efficient, well-managed meeting with a thorough discussion of each subject. A Maxwell Taylor JCS meeting was quiet; Taylor delivering the subject and then

there was almost no discussion. He'd say, 'Any more on that, gentlemen?' No. 'Next subject.' It was just like a meeting in a funeral parlor.

It's hard to understand exactly what that meant. But for those of us sitting in the second row and listening to the Chiefs under Taylor after we had spent so many years listening to them under Lemnitzer, it became clear that Maxwell Taylor did not represent the typical military man at that time.

So what Kennedy may have hoped to achieve may not have been successful because of the individuals involved. Taylor was not the right man to do that. Kennedy planned to move on that later. This all gets quite complex. This era can't be studied enough if anyone wants to understand the Kennedy legacy.

The central point here is that it was not Taylor who stayed on to fight the Vietnam war. It was Wheeler. Had it worked the way Taylor wanted it to work, he would have stayed on throughout the Vietnam War and become the military leader (and he hoped victor) of the Vietnam War. Because as Chairman he would have Westmoreland and Abrams and all those people working for him. I think that's what he thought his role would be.

Ratcliffe: So your sense then of this: perhaps if Taylor had retained the Chairman's position of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and been able to, in effect, reside over a victory he would have seen be implemented through the use of counterinsurgency warfare tactics.

Prouty: During World War II he was a paratroop leader. In other words, he was more like the old Army would say, a cavalryman. He was a man ready to adapt new tactics and to fight new kinds of war, and Taylor would have moved in that area. In an era of hydrogen bombs and satellites and all that sort of thing, it may be that he was the last of a dying breed, just like the old horse cavalryman ... that's exactly where I started in the late thirties.

Bay of Pigs Post-Mortem and the Dynamics of Personality: Allen Dulles, Maxwell Taylor, and Bobby Kennedy

Ratcliffe: This is right to the point in terms of Taylor coming in to the government: he was on this Bay of Pigs post-mortem committee. You write about Allen Dulles' role in the committee, set up by Kennedy, arranging

... for witnesses who would provide background briefings of the new Agency drift into counterinsurgency. The broad plan for counterinsurgency as a marriage of the CIA and of the U.S. Army had been laid down during the months of the Eisenhower administration. It remained for its proponents, mostly men of the ST, to sell it to the Kennedy team....

Throughout this complex process, his [Allen Dulles'] primary target for conversion to the CIA was General Maxwell Taylor. Here was the right man at the right time for Allen Dulles' exploitation and for use of the ST.⁵

We have then described Taylor coming in and perhaps having his own ideas and hopes or ambitions for how he could move up. And you have written in the book that Bobby Kennedy had been very taken by this man Taylor, and apparently in his talks each night, going back to talk to his brother, must have conveyed this sense of his fascination and interest in Taylor to John Kennedy. Then in effect, somehow, Kennedy doing just what (in the way you seem to write) Dulles would hope he would do—which was to bring Taylor into the White House, to bring him in first as the Special Assistant to the President for Counterinsurgency?

Prouty: No, Military Assistant.

Ratcliffe: Military Assistant. And then being promoted to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Was it in effect, that by that point the inertia of “the right man at the right time” being something Kennedy then picked up on and somehow fell for it?

Prouty: Not quite in that view. Remember, Eisenhower had been in the White House for eight years, and he had followed Truman following WWII. That was a long period of time with everything going in generally the same “Post WWII-type” direction. Then

5. *The Secret Team*, pp. 106-7,
<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp4.html#p106-7>

Kennedy came on the scene and initiated a much different course in the ways of the Government.

A good example of this was the way he handled the post-Bay of Pigs investigation with his appointment of the Cuban Study Group. Kennedy put Allen Dulles, Adm. Arleigh Burke, Gen. Maxwell Taylor and Bobby Kennedy together in one room. He could not have created a better group for that purpose. In some respects, they were opponents on almost every score. Then when you add to this his sheer genius of calling in the former Director of Central Intelligence, Gen. Eisenhower's long-time European aide and the first post-war Ambassador to Moscow, Gen. Walter Bedell Smith as premier witness, his choices for this important Cuban Study Group review could not have been better for his purpose. This worked for Kennedy. His mind could assimilate this. Smith tipped the scales in JFK's favor.

This is a good example of where Kennedy's years of Congressional experience, which I am afraid many historians have discounted, paid off in a big way for him. People have forgotten that Jack Kennedy had been in Washington as a member of Congress since the 1946 as both a Member of the House and of the Senate; and had grown up in the Court of St. James as the son of Joe Kennedy, the powerful and wily U.S. Ambassador. That's an education!

With these Cuban Study Group choices he was getting ideas and testimony from the experts. Allen Dulles' role in this Group was that he was the only man there who could make up the witness list. I had worked with many of those people for years. At that time their hearing room was only a few doors down the hall from my office in the JCS area. That area of the Pentagon is composed of little narrow hallways with no windows outside. Many of the witnesses would come in and sit in my office and have a cup of coffee until they were called into the room.

I began to notice who the men were that they were calling. Some of them had not worked on the Bay of Pigs; they were old-time Dulles implants from years back who might have had some peripheral assignment with the Cuban Brigade, but not basically. What Allen Dulles and the Agency were doing was using this opportunity to sit there every day with Bobby Kennedy, and every day with Maxwell Taylor to do some basic orientation.

It was heavy; and it paid off in some important ways. When you read sections of their Report to the President you'll realize that this type of indoctrination went all the way back to Dulles' old Dulles-

Jackson-Correa philosophy. Dulles had a very willing hand in Maxwell Taylor, who had gotten out of the Government in a “huff” during his Eisenhower years. Now, with this new Kennedy group immersed in the Bay of Pigs problem, it was Taylor's opportunity to move in, and he did just that. He got friendly with Bobby—in fact one of Bobby's children is named Maxwell Taylor Kennedy. Bobby was very influenced by Taylor, and Dulles was influencing Taylor from his side.

Arleigh Burke, a rather stoic individual, did not join too much in the conversation but saw the sense of humor of the whole scene, and just sat there. I knew Arleigh Burke quite well—he's the finest Chief of Naval Operations the U.S. Navy ever had and a very competent person in his own right. But he had no ax to grind in this committee. He simply tried to keep things honest.

As this interrogation progressed, it went longer than we ever expected. Allen Dulles saw that he was becoming effective in this business of indoctrinating Bobby Kennedy and Maxwell Taylor. It appears to me that Bobby Kennedy saw both sides of this. He was no neophyte. He went along with some of this listening to everything that Allen Dulles said, but at the same time I think the Kennedys had decided that Allen Dulles was through. I think they had also decided that Taylor was a strong man, that they would stay with him. He would be in their control. He would not be out of control as Dulles might have been.

Bay of Pigs Report: Taylor's Letter to the President and the Origin of NSAM Nos. 55-57

Historians will tell you that there was no report from this group. As a matter of fact, I myself researched for it. I tried to get it in government files in those days. I couldn't get it. I had NSAM 55, but I never realized that NSAM 55 was the report. I had it as a Presidential Directive, and I had to read it to General Lemnitzer as a Presidential Directive. I didn't know that it was—almost verbatim—the words of Maxwell Taylor in his Letter to the President.

The secrecy surrounding that report, and other things to do with the Bay of Pigs, was remarkable. But I won't address the Bay of Pigs problems at this point. I'll stay with this NSAM 55 and the Taylor Report. Even those of us working intimately with these papers had no idea who had written NSAM 55 for the President. Of course the President didn't write all his papers. Did McGeorge Bundy write it?

Did Sorensen (his special Legal Advisor and General Counsel) write it? Who wrote it? We were all trying to find out who wrote this very powerful paper. We thought it was an individual paper, NSAM 55. We didn't realize that it had been extracted, practically verbatim, out of the Taylor/Dulles report.

Years later, someone was researching files in the Kennedy Library and came across a box of letters from that era that had been assembled by the GSA. They were relatively nondescript. Some were stamped "Classified". A researcher connected with Harvard University sent me a copy of this Taylor letter and said could I help him identify the letter and its significance? As I read the first paragraphs of one of its Recommendations I realized that this Taylor letter to the President was NSAM 55. Then I realized that this entire letter to the President was actually the Report of the Board.

In the intervening time, I had had lunch with Admiral Burke one day in Washington and I asked him, "Admiral, I was just down the hall from the hearings while you were running this review of the Bay of Pigs effort with Bobby Kennedy and Allen Dulles and Maxwell Taylor. I have a hard time believing that there was no Report as a result of your meetings all through that time. You had to make a report to President Kennedy." We're good friends. He looked at me, smiled, and said, "You know, Prouty, we didn't need to write a Report to the President." He said, "That little son-of-a-bitch Bobby was there all the time." And he really made his point because, after all, if Bobby Kennedy was in the room, what do you have to tell Jack Kennedy? I believed him.

Years later when I found this Report that had been found in the bales of records that the GSA had assembled, and had not been identified otherwise, I found the same words. Arleigh Burke didn't lie to me about the report. He just didn't tell me that it wasn't a "Report," it was a "Letter." We need to dwell on it, because it was so important in the Kennedy era and to the Kennedy legacy. It explained the role of the Kennedys, and it explained the role of Maxwell Taylor. It explained how they intended to move into this area of the Cold War without an Allen Dulles and without the CIA. Remember what we said: "There was no law that said the CIA should be in covert operations!"

The NSAM 56 and the NSAM 57 that accompanied this (but were properly distributed to the Secretary of Defense and the DCI and all the rest) were very powerful documents as well. It wasn't just the

one document that came down; it was a whole family of documents. They were all familiar to Taylor, they moved Taylor into being the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I believe that if Kennedy had not been killed, all of them would have been implemented while Maxwell Taylor was Chairman of the JCS. The arguments over these things, the policy developments over how this would be done, carried on well in to and through the year 1962. And by 1963, when you might have expected these things to become operative, the President was killed. Then during the Johnson administration, no one ever mentioned this subject any more.

There was so much security over these things, and so much more publicity about the negative aspects of the Bay of Pigs itself, that few people have bothered to go back and look at these very dominant papers that revealed the true intention of the Kennedy administration that certainly would have gone into effect in a second four-year term.

Ratliffe: There are some spin-offs of this that have me wondering what you meant, and of their significance. One is, you write about this postmortem set of hearings in terms that Allen Dulles knew that JFK and RFK “had learned a lot from the Bay of Pigs; and he now knew where the Kennedys' Achilles' tendon was and he had hold of that vital spot.”⁶ What did you mean by “that vital spot”? What were you speaking of?

Prouty: Let me explain something that is a rather practical matter here. I wrote the draft of my book in 1970. I revised it in '71 after the release of the Pentagon Papers because I had then access to all of the Pentagon Papers material. I did not have this original Taylor Report in those days. So I cannot use my knowledge today to tell you why I wrote as I did then and keep the proper story in line.

In those days it was clear that the Kennedys were making this change, but we didn't have the evidence that showed that it was Maxwell Taylor, with valuable assistance from General Walter Bedell Smith who had done this. If I had known that when I briefed General Lemnitzer, you can imagine how explosive that would have been. If I'd have said, ‘Look, this is what Maxwell Taylor told Kennedy and here's what we're going to do’, that would have been a hard thing to tell General Lemnitzer. Because General Lemnitzer and

6. *Ibid.*, p. 118,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp4.html#p118>

Maxwell Taylor were totally different personalities. General Lemnitzer had followed Taylor as the Chief of Staff of the Army. It wasn't that they weren't friends. It's just that they had great differences in their personalities and in their methods of operation within the military. You cannot go back through the years and change things that are dyed in the wool, because I wrote the book based on that earlier information and I learned some of these things later.

Ratcliffe: More to the point then here, regarding Lemnitzer when he left the JCS, you wrote:

Then President Kennedy made a most significant move, one perhaps that has had more impact upon events during the past ten years than any other that can be attributed to him or his successors. He decided to transfer General Lemnitzer to Paris.⁷

What do you think his rationale was for that?

Prouty: Lemnitzer was the preeminent commander at that time, at least based on seniority and rank, and Kennedy was always Europe-oriented himself. His father had been Ambassador to the Court of St. James. Lemnitzer was the strongest and best man on duty to take over the post that Eisenhower had held in Europe. Lemnitzer certainly was qualified. I think that was a good assignment. On the other hand Lemnitzer was not going to be the man to run the Vietnam war. I don't think Kennedy had any idea that he'd have to have a strong military commander to run the Vietnam War. He planned to have no American build-up there. He wanted the best man in Europe that he could get and Lemnitzer was the best man.

Ratcliffe: One other point. In the book you write:

From 1954 through 1963, all American activity in Vietnam was dominated by the CIA. Although Lansdale and his key men such as Charles Bohanon; Lucien Conein (the U.S. go-between at the time of the Diem *coup d'état*), Bill Rossen, Arthur Arundel, Rufus Phillips, and others were listed in the Pentagon Papers with military rank, they were all in the employ of the CIA and were operating as CIA agents.⁸

7. *Ibid.*, p. 119,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp4.html#p119>

I'd be curious if you had knowledge in any of these cases, what did each of these key men of Lansdale's do? What were their particular areas of expertise?

Prouty: As we know, there is a book about Lansdale's life, his biography, that explains some of this. Many of these men had worked with Lansdale when he was in the Philippines and when he had been given the authority to work within the Philippines in a covert activity designed to overthrow the President of the Philippines, Quirino, and in his place put a new president, Ramon Magsaysay. Lansdale's assistants then were Bo Bohanon—and Valeriano, a Filipino. Conein was in Vietnam at the time. I don't think Conein worked in the Philippines. I was flying in and out of the Philippines at the time and met many of these people that were involved.

When Lansdale was assigned to Vietnam as Chief of CIA's Saigon Military Mission, he pulled together many of his Philippine team, including Filipinos as well as Americans. He brought into it Arthur Arundel, Rufus Phillips and many others, who were what we call “psychological warfare technicians,” as well as other specialists, for the role that Allen Dulles had assigned the undercover Saigon Military Mission in Vietnam. We must remember that, although it was known as the Saigon Military Mission, it was not a military mission and most of its work was not done in Saigon. It was simply a cover arrangement that the Agency had created in early 1954 as they prepared for the development of South Vietnam as an independent nation and for the introduction of Ngo Dinh Diem, as President of Vietnam. This job was assigned to Lansdale very much as he had been assigned the job of producing Magsaysay as President of The Philippines.

Ratcliffe: Did Kennedy think that all these men were affiliated with the DOD instead of the CIA? Or did you have any sense of that?

Prouty: We'll have to watch the dates here. During the years we are talking about, the fifties, Kennedy had nothing to do with this. However he knew about it. Later, the CIA's Saigon Military Mission was still there. But after the Geneva Agreement in 1954, the introduction of Diem that same year, and the escalation of our

8. *Ibid.*, p. 196,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp8.html#p196>

activities in Vietnam, the role of the Saigon Military Mission was paramount to all the other activities that were going on in Vietnam. During the Kennedy era, Lansdale had been in the Pentagon from 1957 to October 1963 when he retired. Things had changed greatly in the Kennedy years.

Ratcliffe: So it was not a continuum of events.

Prouty: That's right.

Understanding the Military Assistance Program (MAP)

Ratcliffe: There is a great deal to discuss in all of this. I'd like to get into a few more key areas. One is the Military Assistance Program. I'm going to quote briefly from something in the latter part of the book where you were describing

A special Presidential committee had been formed early in 1959 to study "Training Under the Mutual Security Program" and to "provide instruction [to recipient countries] in concepts or doctrine governing the employment of the military instrument, in peace and in war."... this committee was laying it right on the line that the Government should be stepping into the Mutual Security program with "military" training, including the development of paramilitary capability in the recipient nations. The only way this could be carried out would be to mount clandestine operations in every country where this was to apply. By this period, the CIA knew that it was ready, equipped, and in a position to do this in any "counterinsurgency-list" country, as it had been digging its way firmly into the MAP since the earliest days of the Greek and Turkish aid campaign.⁹

Could you briefly discuss the creation and background of the Military Assistance Program? And how, over time, through CIA agents working within it, and the agenda of overall attempted control by the Agency of its reach and scope, recipient countries found themselves hostages to their own armies—because of the domination of the ST agenda combining the focus of political, social and economic directives, all under the vast authority of our military,

9. *Ibid.*, p. 363,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp19.html#p363>

which set up these countries' own military-based governments? (Admittedly, a convoluted question.)

Prouty: In order to unravel all that, which is an enormous story, and is very important to understand, I'll point out here that I printed the document you're talking about from the White House (it was a White House document, a very long one) as an appendix to my book.¹⁰ And anyone seriously interested in that most important subject should turn to that, because I can't go through 20 or 30 pages here, and all of the things that it meant, in detail.

After World War II there were a number of people in our government who believed that the way to stabilize any other country (especially those in the Third World) was through the strengthening of its army. They believed the army to be a modifying influence in the government. So that, no matter who was running the country, they'd more or less do what the army said. That's quite an imaginative concept—because it doesn't work that way, of course. The army puts up a dictator and then they run the country themselves.

The Little Red Book's Influence on General Stilwell and Lansdale

But this was the idea. You might say it was the idea that Lansdale had when he brought Magsaysay to the top in the Philippines. Because in doing that, what he and his Agency supporters planned to do was to create an element within the Philippine army that would sustain Magsaysay through several terms in office, hopefully using elections from one to the other, but using the army to make sure the elections went right. It's hard to describe it and make it all sound sensible, but this is the way they were working. They were saying, 'Look, if you create an army that is very stable and has no great ambitions, they'll keep the country going, they'll take care of this responsibility as a force in the middle.'

I found out later they were all reading Mao Tse-tung's *Little Red Book*. They all believed that the army was a school of fish living in the water and the water was the people. It might work for Mao Tse-tung, but I'm not so sure it's going to work in Nicaragua or in Greece. But they were writing this kind of document. The two authors of that

10. Appendix III: Training Under the Mutual Security Program,
<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STappendix3.html>

paper you're referring to (one was General Stilwell and the other was General Lansdale) had become greatly enamoured of the *Little Red Book*. I know when I worked with Lansdale, year in and year out in the same office, I'd hear him quote that darned thing—he could quote it—no matter what situation we were talking about, he'd have some quotation from the *Little Red Book*. So to understand this White House paper you have to get into that context.

MAP as a Sensor to React To

The other side of the idea was that this had much to do with the CIA's philosophy that you react to events. Have the U.S. military out there in all these countries as Military Assistance Program people. Then they're the eyes and ears in that country to see if things are going the way you want them to go. That's what they really meant, that the Military Assistance Program would be a kind of sensor, kind of an intelligence organization, telling you that things are all right in Greece, and things are going fine in Peru. Or alerting you, like they did in Indonesia—that's how they found out that they thought it was time for a rebellion in Indonesia—because the Military Assistance people told them so. Of course the CIA operation failed miserably. We can't go through this in a few minutes, but it is extremely important. And it is central to the philosophy of that era, as applied by CIA and by CIA's close associates and allies, not only within the U.S. military, but in other militaries allied with them around the world, like the British, the Australians, the Canadians, and so on. It was part of the Cold War mechanism.

Obviously, it hasn't worked. Because a reactionary government is hard to run through another agent. It's what we've tried to make work. That's why we've seen sometimes what we thought were loyal governments overthrown, even though they were anticommunist—Trujillo, for example. If you want to have an anticommunist in power, you couldn't get a better anticommunist than Trujillo, and yet we removed him. It was part of this same thing. It was a very impersonal-type approach and probably an imperfect approach. But I simply printed it as it was written: this doctrine as presented by General Stilwell and General Lansdale and as approved by the Eisenhower era White House, at least in those days—1958-1959.

Ratcliffe: So this was in the late Eisenhower period during his second term.

Prouty: Yes. It was the Eisenhower period. I'm sure Kennedy people did not endorse it in later time.

MAP's Ultimate Manifestation: Iran

Ratcliffe: One other follow-up on that. You write at about the same point:

Under the cover of the Bay of Pigs operation, much bigger moves were being made. All over the world the MAP training program was picking up volume and momentum. Thousands of foreigners from all 40 countries [that the U.S. was trying to establish this in] converged upon the United States for training and indoctrination. The new curriculum was either the one at Fort Bragg or like it. The Army interest in political-social-economic programs, under the general concept of “nation building”, was gaining momentum. For every class of foreigners who were trained and indoctrinated with these ideas, there were American instructors and American soldiers who were being brainwashed by the very fact that they were being trained to teach this new doctrine. To them, this nonmilitary, political, social and economic theme was the true doctrine of the U.S. Army. A whole generation of the U.S. Army has grown up with this and now believes, to one degree or another, that the natural world of an army lies in this political field.... They believe the army is the chosen instrument in nation building, whether the subject be political-social-economic or military. In many cases, due to the great emphasis the CIA placed on training the police forces of certain foreign countries, a large number of American servicemen who were used for such training became active in what was really police work and not the scope of regular military work.¹¹

To me, it is so fundamental, this idea of what we saw so much of in the sixties and seventies where we sensed as a nation (some of us at least) that these police agencies in other countries that were being so repressive were somehow operating under our tutelage, and with our support and blessings.

Prouty: The best model of this theory is Iran. Under this philosophy, we moved into Iran after 1949 in large numbers. The Agency was involved all over in Iran—everywhere. The Agency founded the

11. *Ibid.*, p. 394,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp22.html#p394>

Iranian airline and many other organizations like that. The military had all kinds of radar detection devices up near the Caucasus Mountains for scanning into the Soviet Union. This provided the backbone of a lot of activity in Iran. But, it led to programs where we actually imported thousands of Iranian young men, selected to be leaders in Iran then and for future years, and they went to technical schools in the United States, they went to Fort Bragg, they went to all kinds of schools. They were actually given very, very useful training from their point of view and then were put back into Iran.

In the later years of this program—into the mid-seventies and on—the CIA had enormous dossiers of people in Iran. They knew every person who would be of use in any area—with special training in electronics or academically or medical, so on—because we had brought them over here for some kind of training. Iran was probably the test bed for this to its extreme. The Shah was right in the middle of it.

As I wrote in another article, one of the most important assignments made by Nixon when he was President was that of Richard Helms, the former Director of Central Intelligence, as Ambassador to Iran. We completely converted Iran into this type of dream, which is an offshoot of the *Little Red Book* of Mao Tse-tung. As a result, we got what we planted, we sowed the seeds and we got it.

Now, the people in Iran who are in power have access to the same people that we've trained here. They know more about us than we do about them. This is something people don't realize about the problems we're having today. They wonder how the Iranians can do this and how the Iranians can do that. Behind the screen of this man Khomeini, all these thousands of Iranians that we've trained are totally familiar with our system—just like Noriega in Panama. Just because there was a *coup d'état*, doesn't mean these people forgot the things we trained them to do. Now we're paying the price by having well-trained individuals in many of these countries who have turned that training against us or at least have said, 'Look, we understand you better than you think we do. Now lay off us.' Like Noriega's saying.

To a degree, even what's happening in Nicaragua is an outgrowth of this. Because, if you teach the people that the army is the chosen instrument to control the country, and then they do that, and the army does take over, they think that's what we were telling them to do. It's a very interesting and predictable development. We need to think about it very much because it has shaped what we've been doing in

many countries. If you look very carefully at what the men who started this movement were writing and doing—and I mean by that the White House report written by Stilwell and Lansdale—then you'll begin to get a perspective of what has happened since those years, and why it happened. I think most of us would not really expect the Army to be the leavening instrument in any political scramble, like in Chile, for example.

Allende was elected by the people and then he was killed by Pinochet. Which one should we, as Americans, be supporting? Pinochet is the man we trained. Allende, we said was a Communist, a Socialist, and so on. So, we reap what we sow when we create that sort of thing. That's really what I'm trying to say in the book—that this is the way things were going within the world of the Secret Team.

This also reveals that, when the Kennedy administration began to realize some of the activities that were going on—how they had been going on—they began to make major changes. They began to stop some of these activities. It's that kind of pressure—that universal pressure not any given point, but that universal pressure against the system that was heavily implanted—that led to Kennedy's death.

The Secret Team: Far Beyond the Capability of the CIA

Ratcliffe: It would appear so. I'm trying to catch a few final items in the remaining 20 minutes we have. One is, in terms of Kennedy, you write: “Kennedy knew that he had been badly burned by the Bay of Pigs incident and, by June of 1961 [with these NSAMs 55-57,] he and Bobby knew that he had been let down by the ST, or Secret Team.” And in parentheses you say, “I carefully switch to the ‘ST’ label here because, in all fairness to the CIA, it was more than the CIA that really created the unfortunate operation.”¹² Can you give us a summation of how the ST is, in your eyes, larger than the CIA, and what other groups, if such can be named, it comprises.

Prouty: If you analyze the Bay of Pigs operation very carefully, you will see that its components were far beyond any capability of the Agency unless they had the very willing and active support of the rest of the government. And the rest of the government in a Secret Team mode, not in a regularly established air arm of the Air Force, nor a

12. *Ibid.*, p. 116,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp4.html#p116>

regularly established sea arm of the Navy, with Navy logistics. For instance, in the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Navy logistics behind all that was enormous. People didn't realize it, but it took place. The same thing occurred with the Bay of Pigs—the Navy was there. They weren't called upon, they shouldn't have been called upon, but they were there. Even the State Department was somewhat involved in the political side of this: Who would follow Castro? Who would be the chosen people to follow Castro? And there are large financial expenditures in such an operation.

These activities don't take place within the CIA alone. And it's important to see the CIA that way. The CIA is always merged with the rest of the government that's taking part in these actions. Because this was true over such a long period of time, there were people who were very familiar with and well-trained for these operations. Every time a covert activity came up, they were involved again. This is the Secret Team. They can carry out these activities.

With the Iran-Contra exposure, you can see that the Secret Team even bred the Enterprise—people who were making money off this deal. It went beyond even getting the job done. They were doing it so well that they had money to spare. It's exactly what I was talking about. It's almost as though we ran the Bay of Pigs operation as a commercial venture, hoping that when they took over Cuba some of the Brigade leaders would regain the casino rights and everything else would be back to normal in Cuba. As a matter of fact, I think I said something there that's ahead of myself.

A stock broker called me from Washington a few days before the Bay of Pigs was planned to take place and said, “Colonel Prouty—he just happened to know me, he didn't know my job, but he said—Colonel, can you give me any explanation why, all of a sudden, people from the Pentagon are calling me buying sugar stock?” Sugar stock had dropped to pennies, because Castro had boycotted American sugar down there and the companies had lost a lot of money. But, all of a sudden, people who knew about the prospect of the invasion were buying sugar stock \$10,000, \$20,000 at a time, and sugar stock demand was going up well before the Bay of Pigs landing. They were running it as a commercial venture.

There were more enterprises then. It's inevitable. If you were dealing with these things, you would do that. You can't say that the Bay of Pigs was 100% a CIA operation—much of the government becomes involved—any more than you can say the Vietnam war,

from '45 to '65, was simply under the operational control of CIA. From '65 on the CIA was still there, more than ever, but the military moved in and the military took over. It became too big for the CIA.

An Impossible Contradiction: Covert Operations Must Be Deniable

Ratcliffe: Please discuss this crippling and devastating contradiction: that covert operations have to be deniable. Because the Commander-in-Chief must otherwise (if they are undeniable) accept responsibility for involvement “in an illegal and traditionally unpardonable activity.”¹³

Prouty: The U.S. was operating, from 1954 on, under an NSC Directive that required that any and every covert operation leave room for the U.S. government to plausibly disclaim its role, that it was not involved.

Take the U-2 that went down in the Soviet Union. If you'd had a chance to study that plane, you'd find that every single instrument in the plane—the cloth in the fabric of the pilot's clothing, the tires, everything—had no names whatsoever—didn't say “Goodyear Tires” or something like that. Everything in it was scrubbed clean, in order to retain deniability. We could say, ‘We had nothing to do with it.’ Of course the U-2 of May 1, 1960 was a faulty operation. But I cite that.

Aircraft that I operated, for instance, in aerial overflights to supply the rebels fighting for their lives and for their country in Tibet—every marker on those airplanes had been changed—cleaned off and scrubbed off. We called them “sanitized.” It cost us millions of dollars to sanitize these aircraft. Because we had to deny that we had anything to do with it if the plane went down. This is in a sense ridiculous because you can't do it—the type of planes we use were made in the United States, and so on.

Ratcliffe: No one else could build a plane like that.

Prouty: But a lot of people used them. We used C-130 aircraft that were employed all over the world. That made that plane effective in those operations, but if you did get caught anyone could quickly

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 102-3,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp4.html#p102-3>

analyze it and determine who would be doing this. It comes down to the United States or one or two others at the most as the operator. That aspect of deniability was required by NSC directive. We spent millions of dollars trying to carry it out. However, once the operation gets above the bonfire stage you can't hide it. When they told us we were going to Indonesia with a covert operation and they asked me for 42,000 rifles, that was not covert. You can't deny responsibility when 42,000 American-made rifles show up in Indonesia. There's a bit of hypocrisy in that prospect.

Early in the Eisenhower era when that NSC directive was written, they never intended operations to become large enough to get out of hand. Even the Bay of Pigs, as I have stressed earlier, was intended to be no more than small aerial drops, over-the-beach activities—never an invasion. The invasion idea was started by the CIA after the Kennedy election in November of '60. So I find nothing wrong with these statements about the fact that the government attempted to truly keep these operations covert.

But we haven't addressed NSAM 57 which speaks of covert activities up to a certain size that may be assigned to CIA. Above that size they may be assigned to the military. They recognized in that era that there are only certain small operations that should be assigned to CIA. After that it's a military job. You might just as well hoist the flag and say, "Americans are coming." You can't deny it, and you can't hide it. And if you have to put up with this kind of action, which is a denial of the national sovereignty of your target country no matter who it is. Whether it's Iran or Peru or Indonesia, what you are really doing is denying the sovereignty of another nation. That's criminal among the family of nations. So this is an important consideration here, but in covert activities you try to live with that.

Ratcliffe: But it's such a paradoxical statement of our times: given that they are illegal, that they do violate whatever nation's sovereignty that we move within without their approval, and then that there have been these incidents where the true nature of it—to some degree at least—has become known and they've become compromised and can't be denied.

The most blatant example recently is when Neals got North to admit that everyone except the American people knew what North knew about these things, and that the only persons North was concealing it from was from the American public. No one else. The

bankrupt nature of that type of admission and how damaging it was for a “democracy” has never been addressed. There's never any analysis of the real impact or implications of what that actually means.

Another example is the way we withdrew from the World Court: ‘We'll solve the problem by just withdrawing from the court that rules against us—that says that we committed an illegal act when we covertly bombed the harbors of Nicaragua.’ How much longer do you feel we can go on with this kind of illegality?

Prouty: I have read this in other books (and I only say that to soften the blow), and I believe thoroughly that there is no longer anything called “sovereignty.” It doesn't exist. We are kidding ourselves if we think sovereignty exists any longer. Consider the fact that Soviet satellites circle over our country every half-hour, obtaining almost any information they want. Go into the world of finance and the world of communications and the world of transportation, the whole global aspect: Walter Wriston himself, Mr. U.S. Banker, has written a book called *Risk and Other Four-Letter Words* in which he says categorically that we live in a one-world financial communications sphere and that there is no such thing as national sovereignty. We need to think about that, and understand it.

We reside in that global community now. That's the way things are. The idea that there are such things as covert operations is kind of an old-time deal, it's like going back to the horse-and-buggy. I think people who want to dwell on the fact that sovereignty ought to exist because it's a blessed event, ought to realize that's gone, and I feel sorry for them. I've had a lot of people argue bitterly with me over that point, but how are you going to deny it? How's Walter Wriston going to deny it?

So what we're really doing is most uncertain. It's undefined. Only recently I re-read something that I had written previously: that we are no longer going to be able to resort to warfare to settle international disputes. Nations historically, are built on warfare. Nations retain their ability to control their people on the basis of the fact that they have an enemy somewhere and they must prepare for war. That's traditional. That goes way back. But that's ended.

In place of that, covert operations are one side of it, but not a very good one. The other side is the enormous power of the economy today. Here in the United States, at least up to now, we have had the

advantage in economic power, just as we used to have the advantage in nuclear power. I think that this will be where the major struggles are to be fought, and I think that's why there's a realignment now coming about, because it serves no purpose for nations to sit, each on one side of the world and the other, with hydrogen bombs, and thumb their nose at each other. We both know that, barring a mistake, an absolute stupid mistake, there's no point in launching hydrogen bombs.

So, a lot of the documents that the government wrote in the fifties, took place in the Kennedy era in the sixties, or that I wrote in the seventies, and so on, are really caught up by time. We live in the eighties and we're getting into the nineties. And the warfare from here on out is going to be economic.

It bothers me considerably to find that for the last decade we have had a President who reduced our economic position to a terrible deficit and handed over to his successor a checkbook with an overdrawn account. This means that the United States is not going to be able to write any checks or to carry out initiatives, because we're broke. In the days when you're going to run an economic war, the worst thing that could happen is to be broke. These are the things we need to think about today.

I'd just as soon give up the whole idea of The Secret Team because I don't think we're going to be calling on that kind of an operation any longer. I think the shambles of the Iran thing and the Contra thing is the end of it. I think that episode wrapped up that kind of work. It doesn't accomplish anything. And the secrecy surrounding it does just what you said: while we kept the secret from the American people, the rest of the world was laughing at us. This will be overwhelmed by our present situation in the economic world. We are broke! If we don't do something about that, we're going to have many more serious problems than we've had looking down the guns at nuclear weapons.

Ratcliffe: One final question then. Looking at the momentum or the inertia of something like The Secret Team, as far as the support of the defense industry that Eisenhower warned about, which he had learned about so painfully when his Crusade for Peace had been shattered by Powers going down right before he went to see Khrushchev—I'd like to challenge you here to give a sense of how this might come about. It seems that the inertia is still so much there. How do you get people

who have for years profited and gained so much by our kind of defense/military iron triangle system to stop that?

Let's consider the creation of the U-2 plane by Lockheed, largely through the doggedness of Vice President Kelly Johnson successfully selling the idea for this product to the Air Force. What about the fact that, "This was a classic example of how a project that should have been military, because it was too large to be clandestine, became covert simply as an expedient and that the reasoning was that in peacetime it could not be military because it was clandestine, so it was to be directed by the CIA, the typical Secret Team tautology."¹⁴ ?

Prouty: That's a good way to put it. That's one of the things that I am saying is behind us. Because, for instance: look at the problems the government is having attempting to introduce the B-1 and B-2 bombers into some reasonable strategy. There's no role for them. There's nothing to do with them. And the fact that they're so-called "stealthy" (or at least the B-2 is supposed to be stealthy), means only stealthy in an environment of radar. It makes more noise than old bombers used to and we used to hear our old bombers before the radar was developed. You see, a lot of these things are developed to sell the product. So, the idea of going back to that world is behind us. It's not going to stop.

What we're going to do for enormous profit is move into the energy and food eras. We shall spend as much time dominating the production of energy and the selling of energy products, and food production, as we used to spend on B-2 bombers and things like that. The government doesn't stand still, and we're not going to be defeated by anybody. But the weapons are going to be different. There's more talk today about Malthusianism. There's more talk today about biological warfare and ethnic cleansing. There's more talk today about mind control. These are weapons, again, but it's a different kind of war. We can say that all of these things that were written in the fifties and the sixties certainly existed, but I don't see them replicated in the nineties and after the year 2000.

The big war will be over the energy supplies, transport and food supplies. Of course, with respect to energy supplies, that war started in 1973. The Arab oil embargo was given the same treatment that covert operations were. The only people that didn't know what was

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 154-5,

<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/ST/STchp6.html#p154-5>

really going on in the Persian Gulf were the American people. We were just paying for it at the gas tank, but we didn't know why. These are very critical things, but that's going to be the future of this business. We must all keep in mind a true quote from Rudyard Kipling: "Transport is civilization."

Ratcliffe: That's a good conclusion of The Secret Team. Thank you.

C H A P T E R 3

A Very Special Operation:
The Assassination
of President Kennedy

A Very Special Operation

Part I

Ratcliffe: It's now Monday, May 8th, and we're here again with Fletcher Prouty today to discuss the Kennedy assassination on November 22, 1963, including examination of the types of power groups, or power-group base, that seems to have its hand in all this and how this was a very seminal event for post-World War II directions in United States Government policies and agendas.

What Would Entail Conducting A Proper Murder Investigation?

I'd like to begin with an open-ended question, positing: Knowing what you know now, if you were put in the position of being in charge of investigating Kennedy's assassination the day after he was murdered, when almost everyone in any way involved was still alive, and you had subpoena power, etc., what witnesses would you call and what leads would you pursue?

Prouty: That certainly is a fundamental question. Of course we all realize that a trial for the act of murder, in the United States, by law, by tradition, is the function of state governments. What should have been done immediately was to have the State of Texas begin to solve that murder, without any delay in court.

The body of President Kennedy should not have been moved from Texas. The autopsy should have been completed by the same people that were there when he was brought into the hospital. The police should have been the same police that were on duty when the President was moving through town. The very next day those policemen—all of them—should have been convened in a meeting so

that everything they knew would be put down and recorded immediately including the long conversations that had been had with Lee Harvey Oswald the night that he was picked up. Because most of us will recall that he was not picked up on the charge of having shot the President. He was picked up on a collateral charge of having something to do with the death of a policeman named Tippett.

It's rather interesting to note that some newspapers printed the story that Officer Tippett had been sent to arrest Oswald—and note that was immediate printing—that was before the cover story came in. Later papers went along with the cover story that Oswald for some reason got in an argument with Tippett and shot him. That had nothing to do with the original factual reports at the time.

First of all, if any of us were on the spot and were charged with solving that murder, we'd have done the same thing you do with any murder: we'd have policemen and detectives on the spot and immediately begin to ask the questions that would solve this murder which was clearly the result of the actions of several people, highly trained, and with a lot of other people in the area taking part in the business of this whole assassination. The cover-up is actually a larger operation than the shooting.

If this work had been done that way, the possibility is that there would have been no mystery, from the time of the autopsy right in the Parkland Hospital. Because it was clear that the President had been hit in the back (that's a wound produced by a shot from the back); that he had been hit in the throat (a wound by a shot from the front); that he had been hit in the forehead (that's a wound created by another shot from the side-front); that the back of his head had been completely blown off (that's made by a weapon that fired a bullet through his head and blowing off the back of his head); and that there was a bullet that hit a man named Tague who was a block and a half down the street. In other words, a low-trajectory bullet, not one from the sixth floor going down to hit the pavement—this one went a block and a half beyond the president's car (520 feet) and hit the curb, threw a fragment of the bullet, or curb, up that hit Mr. Tague in the face—and photographers took pictures of him with blood running down his face—that's another bullet.

So there's four bullets right there. That minimum number of shots disproves the entire Warren Commission Report. Police would have handled that information immediately. They would have gone to

the places where those shots originated from, and begin to solve the crime the same as any other crime.

There are reports of them locating a British 303 rifle, of a German Mauser rifle, and of this Italian Carcano rifle, from this same period of time—within hours. Any police department would have resolved that immediately by finding the rifle that had been fired, by matching it to the bullets, and discarding the other bullets. If the normal police activity that takes place in any small town in the country had been put into motion within moments of that crime, it would have been solved before midnight. And, we remember, Oswald was not even charged with the death of Kennedy until after midnight. So even that aspect of it is illusory. And then they interviewed Oswald all during that night and claimed that they never took any notes at all. That's fabulous. They couldn't have done that in a police service—unless the policemen were part of the conspiracy—then you say to the police: “You're part of the conspiracy—because why didn't you take notes?” You could have stopped that thing immediately. And, with the body there to match it to all this evidence, there would have been none of these things about “all the bullets from a single man up in...”

Now, as soon as you throw out the “Lone Assassin” scenario (and it has taken the press in this world 30 years to throw out the idea that Oswald was “the lone assassin”)—The House Committee Study (in the late seventies) came up with the idea that they are convinced, because they found more bullet—more rifle-firing-sounds on the sound tapes than three, that they think there was a conspiracy.

The newspapers haven't even picked that up. If you read a newspaper today, whether printed in San Francisco or Singapore, it says: “President Kennedy was killed by a lone assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald.” That is evidence of one of the most powerful cover-up situations ever created: that for 30 years they can force the media of the world—to speak like parrots with respect to the death of Kennedy—that he was killed by a lone assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald. They will not print anything else—although 99% of the people of this world believe that the President was killed otherwise. It's fascinating to think about how solid and how powerful this cover-up arrangement is.

Then when you begin to add to that the fact that the plan to kill a President can only mean one thing: that the people who made that plan intended to control the United States of America. Then you begin

to see that they have the power to kill the President, and to create the cover-up, and of course to take over the Presidency for the objectives that they had. Those things begin to clarify who did it, how they did it, why they did it. That's what you do with any crime. So, if I had been in charge of the investigation of the President's death in Dallas for the next 24 hours afterwards, I think within 6 or 8 hours we'd have solved the crime. There would have been none of this "lone assassin" business.

Now, the important point about having people realize that there was not a lone assassin is the next step: that, if there was a group, and if they conspired to kill the President, then they had an objective. A lone assassin doesn't have to have an objective. He can be a nut—somebody who just fired the gun and he's a nut. That's what they try to make us believe. But the minute you say there were people who planned to kill the President, whether it was Castro and his people, whether it was Khrushchev and his people, whether it was the Mafia and their people, or some other hate group, they had an objective. At least we are maturing in our thinking about Kennedy's death; by now we can say "the Mafia did it", or "Castro did it"—at least we are pointing the finger to groups that have an objective. I think within the next three or four years they will finally begin to come around to what this objective was. And we may become mature enough in this country by 40 years after Kennedy's death to begin to lay down exactly what happened at the time he was killed: that an extremely powerful group within the United States government set up the objective of killing Kennedy in order to control the progress of the government in the direction they wanted for the next eight-ten-twelve-years. There's no question about it, looking back.

In Context: August-November 1963

Ratcliffe: In that current scenario there are various groups that have at times been identified as the initiators of this murder. Stories have been put out positing Castro wanted to kill him, or the Mob, all of whom seem derelict in the ability—which was not of Castro or Khrushchev or the Mob's capabilities—to engineer events like getting the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to head up a commission to cover it up, or the complicity of the Dallas police department, or whoever else—the authorities either locally or federally—who played key roles in the post assassination alteration of stories and evidence to conform to a lone nut scenario.

Prouty: That's what I'm saying: when we finally mature ourselves enough to realize that the President was not killed by a lone assassin (who had no real motive)—the minute we move ourselves into saying that some organization did it (whether it's Castro, Khrushchev, Mafia, whatever), immediately we are saying there was a motive. Now the motive is that of a group, and their objective was the control of the government of the United States.

As soon as we think that a group did this, the next thing is to think of the environment in which it happened. A lot of things were happening during the 90 days before the President was killed.

He had made a speech at the UN, saying that he was not going to have NASA arrange the shot to the moon by itself, but he was going to merge our space agency in with the Russian space agency in a cooperative attempt to go to the moon. He thought that would be internationally palatable, it would help ease the pressures of the Cold War, and would really make progress for the world, as well as putting a man on the moon. That upset the tens of thousands of people who worked for NASA, and their industrial supporters throughout the industry, and a lot of other people who only believed in anticommunism and in the Cold War.¹ But Kennedy had done that, within 90 days before his death.

Another event that a lot of other people have not noticed, because it's a little more intricate, is that at the time Kennedy became President one of the biggest aircraft procurement projects ever designed was on the boards. The Eisenhower administration had not settled it and they handed it over to the Kennedy administration, assuming of course that they thought Nixon was going to be elected and he would solve the problem. It was called the TFX Fighter Program. With that much money (upwards of \$6-7 billion dollars I believe, which in those days was an enormous amount of money), there was enormous pressure on the selection of this TFX fighter.

Kennedy's selection process involved a consortium with the General Dynamics Company of California versus the proposals from the Boeing Company. In this process, the Kennedy administration drastically changed the method of weapons procurement that had existed since World War II. One of the active participants in this was Arthur Goldberg, the Secretary of Labor (a very politically astute

1. See "Kennedy Asks Joint Moon Flight By U.S. and Soviet as Peace Step; Urges New Accords in U.N. Speech," and "Washington is Surprised By President's Proposal", *New York Times*, Sept. 21, 1963, p. 1.

gentleman), who saw that the Kennedy election over Nixon was by a very, very narrow margin. What Goldberg proposed was that, if the companies bidding for the aircraft owned properties and factories in areas where Kennedy needed the vote, then the one with the most factories in the most needed areas should be given the contract, simply so that that money would flow in areas that would be politically expedient to Kennedy's reelection in 1964.

A lot of people were violently opposed to that procurement plan. Within the Pentagon, for example, Secretary McNamara set up a series of offices where, posted on the walls were Department of Labor county-divided maps of the whole United States—county by county, state by state. McNamara's staff would draw the colored markers on there—for every element of the General Dynamics proposal, they'd set a color up for the counties that General Dynamics covered, and for each Boeing proposal, they would do likewise.

By the time they got to make the decision on the aircraft late in 1962, they decided to purchase the General Dynamics plane versus, you might say, the more popular (at least within the military-industry complex) Boeing proposal. The final McNamara decision to give that contract to General Dynamics staggered the industry, and it's a very powerful industry to have in opposition.

In addition to that, and at the same time, Mr. McNamara's Deputy Secretary of Defense, Roswell Gilpatrick, was traveling around the country speaking at bankers' conventions and other important meetings, saying that from now on the Kennedy administration was going to see that procurement money was more wisely used and that the old power groups of the Eisenhower days were ended. Although that was a rather quiet series of events with respect to news, it was a most important area of opposition to the Kennedy administration. It was a very important area. So this is a second pressure point that eventually added up to the decision to do away with JFK.

In Vietnam, warfare was growing, but in 1962 and 1963 the Vietnam War was not a big issue. It was a small operation. The trouble in Laos was more important, the trouble in the Congo was more important. Vietnam wasn't the whole thing. We did more in anti-Castro work, you might say, than we did in Vietnam. So that, by hind-sight we think the Vietnam War in '63 was a major issue but it wasn't. By the summer of '63, Kennedy had properly analyzed that if the people of South Vietnam wanted to set up their own country and

run their own country, they were going to have to fight for their own country the same as our people did in the Revolutionary War against the British. It was the Americans that fought the British and did it themselves. And he thought that Vietnamization was the way to do it. We would provide the support and we would help them.

With that in mind, he set up the procedures to produce what became NSAM 263, of Oct 1963, in which he announced his Vietnam policy—we do not say “his Vietnam War policy,” because with NSAM 263 JFK was emphasizing that he was not going to support the idea of a Vietnam War.

He did announce publicly that, before the end of the year, he would bring 1000 troops home for Christmas, and by the end of 1965 he would have *all* U.S. personnel out of Vietnam. The use of the word “personnel” rather than “military” was intended. All personnel included—quite pointedly—the CIA people.

I worked on that NSAM #263 with my boss Gen. V. H. Krulak and others of his staff, and we have no question about the source and emphatic significance of the words of that paper because we had been instructed by the White House to see that this was clear: that 1000 men would be home by Christmas and all American personnel by the end of 1965. Krulak got those words directly, and in person, from the White House.

With this document on the record we all knew that Kennedy was not going to put American military in Vietnam at any time. That hit the news like a bolt of lightning. Many of us believe that inevitably, this was the major pressure point on the way to the “High Cabal's” (to use Winston Churchill's term) decision to assassinate JFK and to take over the reins of Government of the USA.

So there were those pressures. There were pressures in the education system. And there was sufficient pressure to see that certain groups would like to remove Kennedy, because by the end of '63, it was becoming clear that he would win the next election in 1964 and have another four years in office, that Bobby was right behind him, that Teddy was right behind Bobby, and on and on—a Kennedy Dynasty. There was a Kennedy regime being set up. I think that is the essence of the pressure that caused his death. Because it is that kind of pressure that could very easily weld itself together into an assassination program, where the assassination was being laid on in a professional manner as they are done in *coup d'états* around the world, where the hit men are professionals, they are covered by the

local police and removed from the scene, and they're gone, and then nobody knows who did it and they never find out about it. That's the way Kennedy was killed and those are the reasons for which he was killed.

Ratcliffe: In looking back at the actual execution of the murder—the planning and execution—what role, if any, do you feel the following government agencies (or individuals within those agencies) played. I want to just run down a list here. Start with the FBI.

Prouty: I'll just say first that no agency played a role as an agency. What happens in such things as this—in fact, we had a term for it, we called it the “Gold Key Club.” A certain small group coalesces and they are given an order to do something and it's not by agency. As a comparison: there was a program that had been constituted, I think in '62, called Mongoose. The objective of Mongoose was to remove Castro from office in Cuba. The people that were assigned to Mongoose (under the direction of General Lansdale), were from various agencies and various countries working together. Some others who were not from any agencies—they were hired employees from other specialties and other businesses that are competent in this business of establishing *coup d'états* and things like that.

So it's not correct to say that the FBI, the CIA, the Department of Defense, the State Department, had a role in this. To over-simplify, their people are bureaucrats. It could very well be (and I'm quite sure it was) that people from those agencies might have been called upon for certain special functions, but that isn't how these jobs are done.

Ratcliffe: So there wouldn't be much point in looking at it by agency as far as being able to identify anyone that you felt, “Oh, yes, that person must have had this to do with it or that to do with it—”

Prouty: Not that way specifically. Those things are done. I have worked on assassinations in other countries, or the removal from office of people from other countries, and it was not done agency by agency. It was done on the basis of a very clever group arrangement which would get the job done by people who are very proficient in that type of business—and totally unknown, or “faceless.”

Cancelling Secret Service, Military, and Police Units in Dallas and Inserting False Actors in Their Place

Ratcliffe: I would like to look at a few instances, though, of examining just what evidence did go down—particularly in terms of something like the Secret Service. Now, you served in some function during Eisenhower's term related to helping with Secret Service security for the President?

Prouty: The Secret Service is well-trained, and it has manuals that direct how they operate, for what is called Protection of the President. It's a small organization. In general practice the Secret Service is augmented, when necessary, with specially trained units from the U.S. military. Something we have noticed in connection with the assassination of President Kennedy was that certain of these Secret Service units and military units that should have been deployed along the streets in Dallas, that should have closed windows in Dallas, that should have welded manhole covers in the streets, that should have designed a route through the city that was safe, that these units were not there. They had not been assigned to Dallas.

For instance: they have a rule that says, if the automobile carrying the President cannot travel 44 miles an hour you have to go on another route. I argued with them one day just kind of jokingly, why 44?, why not 45?, why not? And they said: We have learned that, at 44 miles an hour, a gunman has great difficulty following the target and hitting the target, so that's simply a "best case" mathematical minimum level. What it meant was, if you had to go through the city at 30 miles an hour or at 15 miles an hour, you must take additional precautions. Well, they didn't even take those essential precautions that are required when the President was moving at about 6 miles an hour.

In the days before they went to Dallas (the Presidential Party had been touring in Texas), calls were made to certain military units and to certain Secret Service units, saying, "You won't be needed in Dallas." Maybe they were used in San Antonio, maybe they were used in Houston or Ft. Worth. To the military unit they said "We don't need you in Dallas." The assumption of that commander was that somebody else's military unit—there are a lot of these units—would be used. They never dreamed that it meant the city would be left open—as it was. As you know from the record, there were no Secret

Service and no military men with this special training in the Dealey Plaza area. The evidence of it is in the photographs.

One of the first steps the Secret Service would take in a place like the Dealey Plaza area where high buildings look down over the road is they would order all the windows to be closed and sealed. Put a seal on it that says to anyone working in the building: "Do Not open this window." Then you say, yes, but how are you going to control maybe hundreds of people? It's not hard. You put a man on the roof with a radio. You put others in strategic positions with sniper's rifles. You put another man down in the middle of the plaza on the grass, looking up, and he's got a radio. If he sees a window open, he broadcasts immediately: "third floor, fourth window over." The snipers cover the window and one of the team on the roof runs down there, sees why the window's up—some secretary opened the window to see the President go by—and he says: "Close that window!" And it's closed. You have radios. It can be done. It's not a big job. In fact, it's done every day. I went to Mexico City with a team sent to protect the President (President Eisenhower, in Mexico City), and you'd think, "my word, we can't get the President through here safely", but we did. There's no problem, if you do the job.

What happened to the Secret Service was not that the Secret Service didn't do their job. They weren't asked to be there to do the job. They were told: "Your unit isn't needed, you can go home", and then they didn't tell anybody else to do it. Very, very clever planning because it would make it seem as though the Secret Service didn't do their job but it wasn't their fault. Or that the Army—I have talked to the Army people involved, and they didn't know that there wasn't going to be the other Army unit there. They thought that if their unit isn't needed, the other one will be there. It's very hard for those trained people not to do their jobs. It's like, if you go out in the woods with a hunting dog, and all of a sudden the dog sees a pheasant and he starts running and you say "No." But the dog's trained to go for it, he wants to go for the pheasant—you have a hard job stopping him, this is his job. Well, this type of thing happened in Dallas in all of these things.

Then, added to this, there were false Secret Service there. Many, many witnesses who were on the ground in Dallas said something like, "I was taking pictures and a man who showed me the credentials of Secret Service took my camera and removed the film. He identified himself as Secret Service."

Or, others said that they met people there who identified themselves as police. In fact, there were pictures of policemen in the Dealey Plaza area, ostensibly Dallas policemen, but they're in stage uniforms—they're not in police uniforms. Their insignia don't match Dallas police, their shoes are different from Dallas police, they're carrying shotguns—something Dallas police don't carry, and so on.

Who put those teams together? And who put them in Dallas at Dealey Plaza at this time? What arrangements were made ahead of the President's murder that had all those actors there before the President was even shot? That's how you answer the problem of who killed the President, how he was killed, and why he was killed. What pressure groups were built up that could put a team of hundreds of people to work on this, and then cover their activity for 30 years?

I haven't even mentioned how other trained people, for instance, operated at the autopsy room—so that when the doctors, trying to save the life of the President, wrote down that they saw the whole back of the President's head gone from the gunshot wound, that they operated on a cut in his throat that was an entry wound, then, by the time they had the autopsy in the Bethesda Naval Hospital (eight or ten hours later), they reported wounds of entry in different places. They had completely shifted the autopsy around. Who arranged all that? Who arranged that entire cover story?

Mr. Zapruder, who took the film of the act of the assassination—just happened to be there with a movie camera—he happened to taking pictures of the President's car as it went by; somebody located him that night, and the *Life* Magazine people paid him—I don't know, \$50,000?—some big amount of money—for his film. Then, when the Life Magazine published extracts from his film, they reversed certain of the film slides to make it appear that the President's head went forward, when it really went backward. And so, who set up that cover story?

You see, the whole thing is shot through with cover stories. That shows an enormous power center behind the killing of the President—certainly not Lee Harvey Oswald, or Castro, or the Mafia, or some other nebulous group. This was an inside, powerful group that scheduled all these events so that they would come together with, not only the murder of the President, but the takeover of the U.S. government.

Ratcliffe: In some of your articles (which are compiled in the book, *JFK, The CIA, Vietnam, and the Plot to Assassinate John F. Kennedy*) you write about this situation of the security being so lax in Dealey Plaza, and no one being on the buildings, and none of the windows being closed, and all of the airtight procedures that the Secret Service had developed as an agency since they had been formed after McKinley's assassination—none of those procedures were followed that day.

Also Jim Garrison's new book, *On the Trail of the Assassins*, lays out evidence of the parade-route map on the front page of the *Dallas Morning News*—that morning, November 22nd—showing the parade going straight down Main Street, never indicating any turn onto Houston or then another turn onto Elm. In this context, the top-level Secret Service people would not even be aware of this last-minute change—because, as of that morning, newspapers were still indicating the parade route would go straight down Main Street. What is your sense of how the Secret Service was fooled. Or, who was somehow involved in this monumental setting up of the ambush site by rerouting the last-minute change in the parade route to accommodate this absolutely essential place to get the car to go slow enough to get a shot in?

Prouty: That's a very important detail that Jim Garrison has pointed out. Because, the Secret Service, along with its military assistants, studies the route that the President will travel over in any city—not just Dallas, any city—for at least 90 days ahead of time. They study all the idiosyncrasies of that bit of the city: where people could be hidden on a roof, what angle of fire they'd have from certain windows, what speed the car would be traveling at certain corners. And of course they try to reduce corners. They try to go perfectly straight and that's what the map in the paper showed, a straight route right through the city.

It is not Secret Service policy to change a route at the last minute. They've done too much work. If something comes up that causes them to want to change a route at the last minute, they're more apt to change the President's trip entirely—not even have him stop there. They did that just before the trip to Dallas. It was either a trip to Chicago or a trip to Miami where they had some problem, and the public was told that President Kennedy was suffering from a severe cold and could not make the trip. Well, the Secret Service isn't going to put him in a

position where he's doing something counter to their own best regulations. And they have very thorough regulations; they can keep the President alive.

So the fact that the parade route was changed and apparently changed even after the *Dallas News* had been told what the route was and after they printed a major map—what was it, about five-six columns of the front page? It was an enormous map on the front page of the paper. And then the route was changed in spite of that. This simply underscores the evidence that elements within the structure of the government, at a very high level, were able to get such things as that route changed. Despite the fact that they had told, for instance, the *Dallas News*, very shortly before the parade, that he was going to be on another route.

The important point is that, if the *Dallas News* knew that, the Dallas police knew that, the Dallas sheriff's office knew that, the Secret Service knew that, the military people working on the visit knew that—everybody else knew that the route went one way—and then all of a sudden when he made this drastic change around the triangle there and the car slowed to four or five miles an hour, it was a shock to all of these people there. But what is really amazing is you don't hear any of these people talking about that. And maybe hundreds of them were on duty that day and found that their jobs were totally ignored as the car went off on its own somewhere else, and yet there's been no word from them. They've been covered up totally. You see, it works both ways. The place was left vacant of its normal guard, of its normal observation and all that sort of thing; and then the men who were there and saw this happen have been kept from speaking about that ever since it happened. I don't know the witness of any man, from the Secret Service or any other place, who has tried to explain why that change was made. They just leave it hanging in the air like that as though, "Well, it's something we can't account for." It's part of the crime, just like everything else. And Garrison was right to point that out.

Ratcliffe: There are other discrepancies as well. There must have been a lot of people who did perceive a different parade route being defined on the spot that morning, because of course there was a great throng of people right at the corner of Houston and Elm, Zapruder was up on the pergola—

Prouty: But the streets were very close. It was a small triangle and the fact—as you notice in some of the pictures taken that people who had been on Main street were walking across the grass over to the other street. Really it was not that kind of a problem, from the viewer's point of view. What it was is, it put the President at a very slow speed, making corners that he should not have been making, and right under the guns (and I say *guns* on purpose) that had been placed there to kill him. It was an absolute ambush if ever I saw one, a real Wild-West ambush.

The Volume and Significance of the Photographic Evidence

Ratliff: You showed me the AP photograph you had the other day of some of the tramps that were picked up. And there were no recorded arrests besides that of Lee Harvey Oswald that day, when in fact, at least in this case, there were four or five photographs of three different people being led from the railroad yards, through Dealey Plaza, over to the Sheriff's Office. And yet there is no record of anyone else being arrested. But these people appeared to be being taken in. Although, as you said, some of the officers in those photographs are wearing stage uniforms, the emblems don't match, etc. In one photograph particularly, there's a person who is walking away from the camera—it's the only person in the photograph you can't see the face of—and one of the tramps in the front that he's just passed has a sort of smirk on his face. Could you comment about your interpretation of who that is in that photograph?

Prouty: The photographic evidence of that day, taken as a whole, is absolutely amazing. I believe it has been said that there's something between five or six thousand pictures taken including single slides from movie cameras and the rest. What various researchers have done is to take all these photographs and place them in a time frame, so you can see people standing in one place—and later here's the same person over there—and begin to identify some of these people and their movements.

So we have worked very hard on looking carefully at who is in these pictures. Well, there are several of them that are really outstanding. And one of the most amazing is this group of these three men who the news stories said had been removed from a boxcar in a rail yard right in back of Dealey Plaza and were being led from that boxcar by police directly in front of the School Book Depository

building to the Sheriff's Office, and that's the end of it. The trail ends. They weren't booked. There's no record of them at all.

Let's look at the pictures. The pictures do show three men that researchers have called "tramps." They're dressed in brand-new clothes; they've got new shoes on; they have new clothes on, they are not tramps. The police that are leading them (one in front and one in back) are in what we call "stage costume police uniform" because they are not Dallas police costume—police uniforms. These "police" did not even put hand-cuffs on these "murderers." Their insignia do not match. One of them has—very clearly—a hearing device in his ear. Their shotguns are not police shotguns, police don't carry shotguns. Furthermore, the Dallas police don't lead prisoners into the Sheriff's Office. The police and the Sheriff's Office work together, but their jobs are entirely different and taking prisoners to the Sheriff's Office is the last place the police would take any prisoners. So, all that part of it is very questionable, and theatrical.

When researchers had arrived at that point, one of them came to me one day and said: "Look. Of all the pictures we've studied, this little episode of these men being marched across in front of the school depository building where Oswald was supposed to have been, and across the street in Dealey Plaza where the President's car had just gone, into the Sheriff's Office: there's something wrong about these pictures."

So we looked at them very carefully. And in the very first picture, in addition to the two policemen and the three "tramps" as they're called, is another man. And he's walking in the other direction so that his side and his back is more or less to the photographer rather than face forward. There's something incongruous about it. How is it possible that anyone in Dealey Plaza at that moment would appear so relaxed? And here these men are probably being marched across there five minutes after the President was killed—everybody was running around, people were excited, sirens were blowing—and here's this man in a business suit just casually walking along. He doesn't even turn, he's not looking at anybody. Just walking and he happens to pass by these men as they're being marched along. At the very least he would be looking at these prisoners or looking at the policemen. Anybody would, especially at that time. This man is looking at nobody.

So we studied him a little while. As I looked at it—this occurred in '66 or '67—I recognized immediately that the studiously

unconcerned man is General Lansdale. Now, Lansdale is a very interesting figure in the Kennedy era. And I have known Lansdale. I worked with him off and on from about 1952 to 1963, sometimes in the same office in the Pentagon. He retired from the Air Force on October 31, 1963. That was less than one month before JFK's death. Well of course the picture could have been a hundred other people and I could be wrong. But I knew him very well.

Then I looked at the tramps themselves. And there's this strange little eye-catch between this man and the first tramp coming by. In other words, the first tramp, instead of being seriously concerned about the fact that he may be charged with the murder of the President, he's smiling. And the second tramp has a sort of a quizzical little look, and you can tell that he has looked at this man walking by, and he has the same kind of approach, as though he's just been reassured, everything's all right. The third man happens to be in back from the camera's point of view and you don't see him at all. But that little bit of expression is saying an awful lot at that moment. The police themselves have expressions that indicate more that, as if they were saying to somebody, "Say, Boss, am I doin' all right?", that kind of thing. In other words, was Lansdale walking down right in front of the school book depository building to reassure those people? Maybe his employees? Or somebody that's working for him? What's the significance of that? It's all in the pictures.

That happens to be my own interpretation. The men who had brought the pictures to me hadn't the slightest idea who it was. I decided at that moment that what was needed next was a lot of research. So I got some very clear copies of those professional pictures (these pictures were taken by a professional news cameraman). I got a clear picture. I started mailing the picture to acquaintances of mine and acquaintances of Lansdale, who knew him, without stating any of my thoughts. I simply would send the picture and say, "Can you tell me what this looks like to you? This was taken shortly after the death of the President, and I wonder if this picture calls anything to mind to you." You'd be amazed to find that from senior people, in the government (such as Lansdale was or such as I was at the time), I got immediate confirmation: "that's Ed Lansdale."²

Well now, I don't know why he was in Dallas. I can't go into that. His own records, on file, show that he was in Ft. Worth just before the Kennedy visit. But it's astounding that this man, who was Assistant

Secretary of Defense for Special Operations, after General Graves Erskine retired; who was the man who had more or less single-handedly set up Diem as President of South Vietnam; who, again almost single-handedly had set up President Magsaysay as President of The Philippines; who was considered probably the most significant person in the U.S. military/U.S. government on the subject of counterinsurgency, civic action, Special Forces, Green Beret troops—he had written the books that the Green Berets used in their courses down at Fort Bragg; what could have been his role at that time?

I had a very personal interest in that because, only a month or two before JFK's death, Lansdale had met me in the halls of the Pentagon and said that he had arranged for me to go as a military escort officer with a VIP party to the South Pole. Of course I didn't mind going, it was a paid vacation to the South Pole. But it had nothing in particular to do with my work, work I'd been doing for nine years in the Pentagon. There was no special reason why I should go, the work at the South Pole had nothing to do with special operations or covert activities. It was a perfectly above-board job. As a result of that meeting, I left for the South Pole on November 10th, 1963. I was in New Zealand on the way back from the South Pole when I heard about President Kennedy's death.

Why Lansdale asked me to go to the South Pole I have no idea. Or, was there some connection between this role that he may have been playing in Dallas and the fact that he would just as soon I be out of town? I reflected on that, especially when I began to realize that almost all of Kennedy's Cabinet had been out of town, that some 45 officials with the Cabinet were also out of town, in Honolulu and on their way to Tokyo. They were actually on their way to Tokyo when the President was killed. And over the years I have made a study of how many people, central to the inner workings of the secret government of this country, had been moved out of Washington at that time. It's a very, very interesting subject. I wish I could answer it. I don't know how to answer it. I'm sure the picture is Lansdale; others are sure it's Lansdale, and I have to leave it there.

2. See "Appendix D" on page 333 for a copy of the March 15, 1985 response to Fletcher Prouty from Victor Krulak (Commandante of the Marine Corps and Prouty's superior in the Office of SACSA) with Krulak's assertion, "That is indeed a picture of Ed Lansdale."

The Christchurch *Star*'s Impact Upon the Facts of the Assassination

Ratcliffe: This experience you had in New Zealand is very interesting to me in terms of the influence and scope of the kinds of stories that were flooding out of (I think it was) British AP as well others in the hours immediately after the assassination. Why don't you talk more about how you got the newspaper at the time and looking back on it now, how the paper's content doesn't make sense.

Prouty: This is an interesting aspect of the President's murder, and I'd like to know more about what was printed in overseas papers. But I was in New Zealand (specifically Christchurch) at the time the President was killed. I was with a U.S. Congressman and we were having breakfast at 7:30 A.M. Of course it was shocking news; but limited over the radio. They only announced that he had been killed and he'd been killed in Dallas. And that's all we knew for several hours.

Then the Christchurch newspaper came out. This was Saturday morning November 23, 1963 in Christchurch, New Zealand. It was an Extra. They were hawking it down the streets, and of course I ran out and grabbed the first copy I could get—which I still have.

It's very interesting because news that's printed immediately like that is more apt to come right from the true, eye-witness record than to have been massaged a little bit the way the weekly magazines had it, or even some of our own newspapers where they had access to things—their own telephones and all. And of course I understand completely that world news today is in real time, there's no shortage of information. But the problem of researching and digging things out of files takes a certain amount of time. So this first paper on the street is really a most important statement of the way things were handled with respect to news immediately after—or even before—the President was killed.

So we read the paper, the Congressman and I—there's a big picture of Kennedy in the paper, obviously—and a story about Kennedy and his 1000 Days in Washington and the significance of those events. The other half of the paper is devoted to what reporters right on the scene had sent out from Dallas. One report, either

attributed to a reporter from Reuters or British AP, said that he heard “three bursts of automatic weapons fire.”

Now, these experienced reporters, who have credentials to travel in Presidential processions like that, are highly qualified men. Many have been war correspondents and many have been in situations where they certainly know the difference between a single-shot rifle going bing-bing-bing over six seconds, or automatic-weapons fire where they're going brrrrrrrrrr like that, and they know something happened. So those few lines, where the paper printed that the President was killed by bursts of automatic weapons fire, say quite a bit. Later the Warren Commission tried to tell us that a lone gunman fired three separate shots over 6.8 seconds. That's the first point we noticed that had been corrupted by their “investigation.”

Then we read a little further down the column, and they began to talk about Lee Harvey Oswald. Now remember, on that date Lee Harvey Oswald was a nondescript American, ex-Marine, 23-24 years old. Of course, police have files on people and the newspapers have files, and with a little bit of research they can put these things together, and you can expect you'd get some information. But, what they printed about Oswald was very elaborate: that he had gone to Russia, he'd worked in Russia, he had defected to Russia, married a Russian wife, had come back and gone to work in Dallas, had worked with a Fair Play for Cuba Committee in New Orleans. It's almost like a book written five years later. There's enough information about Oswald to fill pages. Furthermore, there's a picture of Oswald, well-dressed in a business suit, whereas, when he was picked up on the streets of Dallas after the President's death, he had on some T-shirt or something. Just dressed average with a polo shirt or something like that on, but not a business suit with a necktie and all.

Of course I had no reason not to believe what I read in that first paper. These things I've studied since then. But even so you wonder, now where did the paper get that information so immediately, and such complete information? But the headline was even more important. It said: “This is the man alleged to have shot the President.” Well now, the police in Dallas had picked up Oswald in a theater on the grounds that he may have been the killer of a Dallas policeman named Tippett. It was nearly one o'clock the next morning before the Dallas police had finally issued the charges against Oswald long after the paper had been printed.

Who had written that scenario? Who wrote that script? Who had packaged all that information and distributed it, all over the world (if it got to Christchurch, New Zealand, it must have been everywhere else)? Who had handled all that type of information prior to the President's death?

Even this business of the “pre-arranged” news releases begins to tell you that a big organization—big enough to have planted this information ahead of the President's death—was involved in the murder of the President. We've talked about the Honolulu conference and that the Cabinet members were there. The speeches some of those Cabinet members were supposed to have made in Japan were actually printed in American newspapers on the day they were supposed to have made the speeches, even though they never went to Japan. Now that's not always too surprising because speeches are mailed out ahead of time. But it is surprising to think that, with the intervening death of the President, that something wasn't done immediately to recall that kind of thing.

So much news was already written ahead of the time of the murder to say that Oswald killed the President and that he did it with three shots. Still, events like the statement of automatic-weapon fire nullify some of that; this is the clash between the reporter on the spot or the man who just got this big pre-arranged release coming over the wires that said Oswald was the killer of the President. I suppose if somebody got newspapers from 100 different cities around the world, you'd be able to corroborate this even better, because the information fed to them was all work done prior to the shooting. Somebody had decided Oswald was going to be the patsy. And that's what the newspaper's were saying. Here's his picture, right in the Christchurch, New Zealand, paper—right along in the same issue with the picture of President Kennedy. Where did they get it, before the police had charged him with the crime? Not so much “where”, as “why Oswald?”

Ratcliffe: What is significant to me is that you said you got that paper by midday on Saturday, your time—put it at about 4:30 in the afternoon on Friday, November 22nd, Central Daylight Time—which was at least eight hours before Oswald was charged officially with the murder of the President.

Prouty: To put the times in perspective: JFK was killed in Dallas at about 12:30 in the afternoon. That corresponded to 7:30 in the morning in Christchurch, New Zealand. I got the paper before noon, which was, we'll say 7:30 to noon—that would mean, in Dallas, about 4:30 in the afternoon. Oswald hadn't even been charged by the police with the murder—with the shooting of the President—by 4:30 in the afternoon. How did the papers get the information to say that, before that time? Then the rest of the things that are in the paper also are equally unfounded. the paper was saying what the police were going to say some eight hours later. It had to have been a set-up job to put that information in the papers—and such a lot of information—I'm only quoting a few things. The articles that I'm talking about were on the front page. They also had follow-on in the back pages of the paper. It was filled with facts about Oswald that most people didn't know for days and days in the rest of the country.

Ratcliffe: And the significance that those stories were coming from British AP, whereas the story about the bursts of automatic gunfire were from a Dallas dateline.

Prouty: Directly from Dallas. Yes. Yes. And did you realize that the same “three bursts of automatic weapons fire” is what CBS used when they broke into all of the network programs with the first news of the assassination? The very same words. Why haven't we heard an explanation of that message and its source?

So there are intervening procedures there. But again, we understand that news can originate anywhere in the world in real-time. That's not the problem. The issue is the content, how the content could have been collated and put together immediately. If anybody wants to study this in a rather interesting parallel, read the newspapers immediately after the allegation that President Reagan was shot by Hinckley right on the streets of Washington, and you'll see that it took hours and hours for information to fall out of the papers with regard to Hinckley and his background. Whereas the information that came out about Oswald was out right away, in minutes. It doesn't make sense.

Ratcliffe: To be able to lay things like this down and have the planted stories ready to go before the actual events themselves transpired, certainly indicates some level of tremendously powerful influences or

interests operating behind the scenes—powerful, in fact, mostly because of their invisibility. Because it's so hard to pin them down, to point at any group or interest that could be a likely candidate for a lot of this type of organization, planning, and real-time dissemination of false stories and whatever else—to produce the stories that then became “the truth.”³

3. For an extensive analysis of the on-going cover-story and some of the techniques employed to discredit sources like Fletcher Prouty, see “Appendix F” on page 341.

A Special Operation

Part II

The Existence of a High Cabal or Power Elite

Ratcliffe: You write in the *Freedom* magazine articles [which became the initial “raw material” for the 1992 *JFK* book] about this High Cabal (others have called them the Power Elite or the Cryptocracy): this group that people like Buckminster Fuller and Winston Churchill have referred to as very real and influential existing largely behind the scenes. We were discussing the other day the significance of the philosophy that derived from knowing that the world was finite, with the explorations of Magellan, who wanted to keep going west to see what he would find—and how such knowledge formed institutions like the Haileybury College and then the British East India Trade Company. Can you reiterate that marvelous description—your sense of this changing world view once it was known that the world was no longer flat, that it was a closed unit.

Prouty: There is no shortage of experienced writers who, for various reasons, allude repeatedly to, I like Churchill's term best, a “High Cabal.” This is attributed to Churchill by Lord Denning in his very good book, *A Family Affair*. Lord Denning corresponds to our Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the senior law officer in the United Kingdom. In the book he recounts a story about World War II and the heavy bombardment in England and in Europe. Denning states that his brother, who was an officer with British Naval Intelligence, was working on duty late at night in an underground subterranean area that was between Ten Downing Street and an underground shelter where Churchill used to stay during bombing attacks. The Navy,

being as alert as ever, stocked this area where Commander Denning was working, with a few high-quality bottles of brandy.

When, on many occasions, Churchill would walk through their office, the Commander would invite the Prime Minister to sit down and have a brandy. One particular night, after there had been a heavy bombardment on London, and they knew that Rotterdam was under attack, Churchill was sitting there sipping his brandy and he said, almost as if speaking to himself, "You know, an all-out battle on land, and heavy battles in the sea, and this total bombardment over Rotterdam and over London, the High Cabal is operating here". And he referred to this being the wishes of the High Cabal. Now unfortunately, Lord Denning doesn't go any further with the reminiscences of his brother. But maybe they didn't go any further. Maybe Churchill just said that much.

I was at the Cairo Conference, where Churchill was. I was in his group; I was close enough to directly witness some of what was going on. I flew the British staff officers back and forth from where some of them stayed in Palestine during the Cairo Conference and talked with them a lot about the progress of the conference. Later I was at the Teheran Conference, where Churchill was. I lived across the street from Churchill when he was convalescing. (After these conferences he had a case of pneumonia in Marrakesh, Morocco.) Now I can't say that Churchill was any intimate of mine, but I was close enough to observe people that worked with him, and the military people who worked for him. I talked with them a lot. And we had the feeling that Churchill, certainly, is a senior person (as was Roosevelt, as was Stalin) in the world, but that there seems to be a level that maybe he listens to. Maybe this is what Denning was referring to—because Churchill describes a High Cabal.

He's not the only one. Buckminster Fuller, a rare individual, has spent more time, at the invitation of Congress, before Congressional hearings than any other individual, with the probable exception of Admiral Rickover, advising Congress on different issues relating to the government. But interestingly enough, he has spent more time in the Kremlin as an advisor to the Soviets than he has in our own Congress. He worked with President Kubitschek in setting up the new Brazil. A rare individual. A man who knows the world and knows the leaders of the world. He writes about a "power elite," and that the apparent leaders, as we see them throughout the world, are certainly national leaders, but they're not the top echelon, the High Cabal.

In history you will find that the Chinese, as far back as 2,000 years ago, speak of a High Cabal that they call the “Gentry”—and that the Chinese seem to have accepted that as a fact of life. Even though they had their emperors and their monarchs and leaders, they realized there's an echelon above that which directs some of the events that other people know nothing about. It's Fuller who hits the nail on the head. He says that the secret of the High Cabal is—of course, it's control of power, but it is also the understanding that their most valuable asset is anonymity: that nobody can identify them. In that sense, you begin to talk, you begin to think: maybe they're just like angels or like ghosts, people say they're there, but, are they really?

I don't think it's that. In fact, I think that perhaps what people think of in terms of ghosts or angels, may be the reality that there is an echelon within our world, a small structure, that does really determine how things go. And I wouldn't argue the point. Because in my own experience in more than 80 countries—and I have talked directly to presidents of countries and people on their level—I have this feeling that they're taking their instructions from some other place. Now that may be personal, but I notice it in the writings of others as well.

Magellan's Circumnavigation of the Globe: The Philosophy That Derived From Knowing the World Was Finite

You wonder what is the source or the origin of this. I don't know how long we want to say mankind has been on Earth, but let's say 30 or 40 thousand years—maybe longer in certain manifestations, but we'll settle for that. Over this 30 or 40 thousand years, society has lived on an Earth that wasn't flat, wasn't round, all it was was an expanse. Because there weren't enough people to fill it up at any given location. They had no problem with space. They didn't even think about the word “property,” in the sense of real property, real estate. They simply lived there.

If hostility grew between two communes, two villages, one or the other would be forced to move a little bit. There's always some more space over there. And they weren't bothered with our retroactive view of that: that they had a flat-land approach and that we know the world is round and therefore they were pretty stupid. It wasn't that. It's just that they had another place to go. If they had to graze cattle, they'd move a little further. And if, on one of these moves, they ran into

some other people they had never met before, then they accepted there were other people on Earth. But they were all on the same expanse. They didn't know whether the expanse was flat or curved or what it was.

They did know that it came to a shoreline, that there were oceans. And they were prone to follow shorelines, as the South Asians did thousands of years ago as they progressed north across Bering Straits (which at that time was a land bridge), down through North America, and even into Central America. If you dig in the mummies' tombs, in the burial grounds of Peru, you will find that on their huacos—the ancient bowls and jars that they made—are figures of people who have slant eyes, Oriental eyes. That meant, when a person was making the jar, she made the jar in the image of the people that she knew—with slanted eyes. They didn't know there were any other people.

But, in all of this civilizing of mankind over these 30 or 40 thousand years, there occurred finally an event that changed the entire prospect of their history. And we can't always say, “Well, they didn't have written history.” Evidence from China is that their written history goes way back—far, far back—much more so than we think. But that's not all of it. History forms each generation as they remember the important things it distills. In the voyages around the world, navigators—especially, we think, in the area of the islands of the South Pacific and around Indonesia and that area—the navigators began to be able to find their way across the Pacific to other islands, to other lands, and then back again.

The leading, most important people in those countries in those days were the navigators, because they could come and go, they could find their way. They knew the stars, is what it amounted to; they understood the winds. And gradually these navigators began to say that, perhaps we could go further around the world and keep going. This became a prospect—something they could do—like we think we can put a man on Mars and we know we can do it.

In Portugal one of these navigators was named Magellan. He got in trouble somehow with his own government, or else he couldn't be supported by his own government and he went over to Spain. The Spanish king decided he would support Magellan's expedition in which he wanted to start out going to the west and keep going to the west—which seemed like a good idea—he wanted to try it anyway. Others had gone to the west, like Columbus, and they hit shore and

turned around and came back, so that we found “India,” but he had only gone part way. But the people didn't have the idea in those days that they could keep going except going in a flat way, and when they hit land they figured they'd been there. They didn't think of the Earth in terms of a sphere. It's quite important.

So, not only did the royalty of Spain agree to finance Magellan's voyage (it was several ships), but, interestingly enough, the bankers of Antwerp, in Belgium, poured money into this because they could see it as a means of taking over new lands, new wealth, gold, tin, silver, and all those spices and other trade goods. So they financed his trip, and three ships took off.

Years later, in the same harbor back in Spain, one single ship named the *Victoria* returned. When the *Victoria* landed and they told how Magellan was killed while they were in the Philippines, they also reported that they had discovered new territories, all the way along their voyage. That they had gone west all the time and had completely circumnavigated the earth which must therefore be a round globe. There's one fact about a sphere that everybody knows: its surface is finite. If you have a basketball you can measure to the nth degree how much surface area it has. And if you have an 8,000-mile-diameter globe you can measure to the degree how much surface it has.

This majestic realization changed the mind of man as a group, more than any other single event that happened in the 40,000 years we've been here. Because from that moment on, these bankers in Antwerp, and their associates, and the kings and queens of Europe, began to realize: If this earth is a sphere, it is then finite. And if it's finite, there's only so much land, there's only so much tin, so much gold, so much spice. And they looked at the world as something that belonged to them—if they got there first.

The Development of the East India Companies and “Proprietary” Colonies

This started a significant train of thought in the educated, financial, politically powerful groups of the world, particularly the European world. It was expressed most easily in the terms of the East India Company development. They had the British East India Company, the Dutch East India Company, there was a Spanish East India Company—I think there were eight of them—and, interestingly enough, there was a Russian East India Company. I forget what they called it, but the Russians explored the coast of Alaska and California.

The Russians, in conjunction with shippers from Boston in the China trade, carried out a sea otter business (in the fur of sea otters) from California back to Canton, China, and on into Europe. It was one of the most valuable, one of the most profitable, sea ventures of the time.

So all of these countries were doing this together. They all immediately set out to explore the world, to inventory it and to own it. The leaders in this were the British. And the British East India Company became dominant in this worldwide exploration. They achieved this dominance by their view that anything they discovered was theirs, and that the king could commission them to set up a proprietary colony—wherever they discovered land—a British proprietary colony. Now what that meant was, they could introduce their religion to the colony and their armies to the colony—and then do business in the colony. But the word “colony” was not exactly accurate, because they used everything from total slaughter of the people they ran into to total friendship, depending on how they got along with those people.

But their idea was whatever part of the world they went to was theirs. Property for the other guy was zero and property for them was total. As I said previously, in an earlier day the navigators were the senior elite people in the country. The elite people now became surveyors. If we think of history in that period, we ask ourselves: What was George Washington's business here in the United States? He was a trained surveyor. He worked for Lord Fairfax and other landowners solely because the king had granted them a charter, from London, to come to North America and take over land between one fix on the beach and another. Then have men like George Washington, with their surveying instruments, just draw lines heading for the west, not knowing where the Pacific Ocean was but going in that direction.

The concept that everything in the world belonged to the East India Company (or, to the King of England, or the King of Holland, or the King of Germany) was really a strange development, arising from the realization that the Earth was spherical and therefore finite and that they must acquire property. Mankind was beginning to develop the concept of the ownership of property.

This continued for a century or more until it became an enormously big business. These East India Companies were dominating countries like India, even countries like China. They were dominating North America, and so on, as they moved around the

world. The British again led the others in training people for these jobs. They created a college, called Haileybury College, where they not only trained the people in the financial aspects of all this business work all over the world, but in military—special military, you might say. They weren't trained to be world conquerors in the Alexander the Great or Julius Caesar mold; they were trained to run a constabulary, to control these countries they took over, and to help their business partners (in the East India Company) carry out their business enterprises in those countries.

In addition to that, they trained missionaries. Because they soon realized that, in the rest of the world there was, from their point of view, no religion: they were all just pagans. This reminds me of the Vietnam days—that any Vietnamese was a mere gook. Well here these people all over the world were mere pagans. And of course, you can't live in a world with pagans. You have to bring your missionaries and convert them to Christianity.

So this became a role. And they used to go into these “proprietary colonies” with their missionary leaders first and try to peacefully set up, their arrangements for living with these people, for converting these people, and actually taking over their land and taking over their businesses. But if the missionary half of their business didn't work by itself (because they were overwhelming these people anyway with their strength and their power and their money and their imports), then they would bring in their military. So, one way or the other, they just took over land all over the world, took over business, took over people.

Inventorying Earth: Haileybury College and the Roles of Malthus and Darwin

In the process, their masters (the top people, the governor of the East India Company) realized that what they were really after was to learn what the assets of the entire Earth were. And in a most interesting development, they set up an economic studies department in the Haileybury College. Economics is not an old profession (not an old science, as some people want to call it). For Head of the Economics Department they installed a man named Thomas Malthus. The interesting fact was that Malthus was given the job of inventorying Earth—an absolutely incomprehensible job when you figure that this happened at the turn of the century, about 1800 (1800, 1805, somewhere in there). The East India Company had been started

around 1600. So for two centuries they'd been doing this work, preparing themselves for this business. They had become an extremely lucrative company. But now they were getting serious: they wanted to inventory Earth. And Malthus was given that job.

As he progressed in this study, Malthus came up with his theory that the world was going to come to an end because mankind was increasing at a geometric rate and food was increasing at an arithmetic rate, and that mankind would overwhelm the production of food quantities not too far in the future. That was a necessary theory for these people in this East India Company because, as they inventoried Earth, it made it an incentive for them to have the food, to have the resources for themselves but not for the other people. It began to create almost what we have in the Cold War today: an “us or them” mentality. The more friction there is in an “us or them” situation, the more motivation there is on your side to get the job done, including armies, missionaries, and all the rest of the powerful tools we have.

This moved along for another 30 or 40 years, and among the men that Malthus sent out to help inventory Earth was Charles Darwin. Darwin went all over Latin America and beyond, studying birds, butterflies, and everything he found and then he came back. He began to report that there are all sorts of life growing in and on this Earth. And he came back with picture books of all the different birds he found, the fish that he found, and a great deal else, from all over the world. Then he began to organize these species of the world.

As he began to tell this to his colleagues in the East India Company and at Haileybury, they began to get formulate the question of what, after all, is the origin of species? Where do they come from, and what keeps them going, and how do we get one species here and another one there? We know that Darwin wrote this book called *The Origin of Species*. The interesting point is that he was rather reluctant to write this book. He was a true professional. He saw his business in certain terms, but he knew he hadn't proved anything about the origin of species; he didn't want to call it Origin of Species. In fact if I remember, it's about page 53 before he gets into that part of his book. But it's an interesting point. He did proclaim that, among all the species, or among the internal groupings within the species, those that were fittest survived and those that weren't presumably didn't survive. It was an interesting observation that he came up with.

Looking at the situation of the East India Company, these two men played an important role—a very important role for them in their day and for us 150-200 years later. The first conclusion was that mankind is increasing too fast and food is going to give out. Second, in the event there is this conflict and that we can't all live, the fittest are going to survive. If you put the two together and think about it, what it means is if you have the better army, the better business, more power, and your people can conquer the others—even to the point of genocide—that's perfectly all right. Because they're going to die anyway and, because they died, they certainly weren't the fittest, we're the fittest. What it did was to begin to inculcate in the minds of these leaders, these top leaders and these extremely wealthy people, that there's nothing wrong with genocide. Furthermore, they had their own missionaries right along with them to show that all this is perfectly all right: this was the plan, this was the way the world was made.

It's startling to see what conclusions were drawn from the realization that the Earth is spherical, therefore finite; that it needed to be inventoried, that certain powers needed to control all of the property of Earth. As we progress through the years, we're talking about days that aren't too far behind us. In all the thirty to forty thousand years of mankind, we're only talking about that narrow little space between 1600 and 2000—400 years. And since new ideas spread very slowly, the first 200 of those 400 years really don't count for much. Those were the years when they were exploring, finding the Earth they didn't even know existed, getting used to the fact that you could go to the west coast of California from England, and so on—that there was a route, that you could make the trip. That took about 200 years.

By the time they got that organized, then they got themselves involved in the Napoleonic Wars of Europe, much of which had to do with this business of conquering Earth, inventorying Earth. And you're not too far from World War I, and you're not too far from World War II. In other words, what I'm saying is: this cycle is not over. We haven't finished the inventory of Earth, we haven't finished who owns what.

But we have defined the idea of property. Property now, right down to the last inch—the middle of Tokyo, a square foot of ground is selling for thousands of dollars. There are sections of this that are quite interesting. I read in the newspaper not too long ago that some property in Africa had been taken from native groups and they

decided to give some of it back. And the section of that property was called the Jesuit Square. As I recall what I read (and I wish I had the figures here), I think the Jesuit Square is about 15,000 square miles. In other words, as these missionaries moved ahead in this inventory process and just assumed ownership of this land, they were taking over so much land that 15,000 square miles was just a square. Like, what do we call a square mile?—640 acres is a square mile, a one-mile square, isn't it?

This figure is the same figure that was used when the Spanish East India Company began to go into what we now call New Mexico, Arizona, and Southern California. In the old land titles it still speaks of Jesuit Square. This was a formal application of the missionary role on into these so-called unexplored countries. Everything was from the point of view of Europe. The fact that there were hundreds of thousands of people living somewhere was not acknowledged. It was called “unexplored.” They simply ignored the fact those people were there; it wasn't explored by British. Like the discovery of America. We keep saying Columbus discovered America—and the British explorers came, and so on to the Pilgrims coming to America. My god, America was overrun with people! But the Europeans discovered America. That's part of the overwhelming significance of this discovery that the Earth was a sphere.

At present we are living in what might be called the apex of this big curve. It certainly isn't over. We're still operating under the principles of Haileybury College—Malthus and Darwin—even though both of them are ridiculous. It's been proved today that our ability to produce food is 70 times greater per farmer than it was in the time of Malthus. It's been proved that Darwin never did discover the origin of the species—no scientist has ever described the origin of any species. But those two doctrines were implanted by the East India Company's mind-control techniques so thoroughly that we still believe them.

It was in 1862 that Lord Oliphant came back from his job as the ambassador to the Ottoman Empire in Turkey, imbued with the spirit that something happens to men's minds in seances. In England he then created the British Society of Psychic Research, which soon took over most of the higher positions in the British government. In fact Lord Balfour, for over 30 years, was either the head of the British Society of Psychic Research or one of his relatives or close associates was. And it's the American wing of the British Society of Psychic Research

which created Stanford University and the University of Indiana among others. For instance, Leland Stanford, the great railroad man on the West Coast, claims that he was in a seance talking to his dead son when his dead son told him to create a major university on the West Coast, and there we have Stanford University.

That's something of a humorous little story until you put it in this context. That these enormously powerful leaders, stemming from the East India Company, got into this psychic research arena and even began to impress upon the society of the United States, South Africa—other parts of the world—their own beliefs in the power of seances and in the power of mind control.

So to wind this up with a little anecdote: the governor of the East India Company in Bombay, India, was a man named Elihu Yale—Eli Yale. Yale heard that a small college in New England, specifically in Connecticut, was having trouble getting started. He donated something like \$10,000 (which was a lot of money in those days) to help found the college. And we have Yale University (comparable to Harvard) as a result of a gift from the East India Company, from Yale in Bombay, India. In his offices in Bombay (which still exist), on the wall there is the flag of the British East India Company. That flag has seven red bars and six white bars. In the corner it has a blue square, and in that square (or rectangle) is the emblem of the East India Company.

When the Bostonians attacked the ship *Dartmouth* and threw the tea in Boston Harbor at the Boston Tea Party, they took the flag down off the *Dartmouth*. It was the East India flag with the red and white stripes and the blue rectangle. They saved it as a memento of that battle. When George Washington went to Boston to assume command of the armies of the rebellion against England, he asked Betsy Ross to take the emblem off the flag and to put stars in its place. All Betsy Ross did that night was not create a flag. She simply snipped out the East India emblem and put in 13 little white stars. And the American flag is the East India flag. So when you hear people of what you might call “ancestral backgrounds” in this country demanding that we pledge allegiance to the flag, you may sometimes wonder if in their seances they don't see the East India flag, instead of the American flag, as the driving force.

They certainly did in the case of Cecil Rhodes, who became the controller of all of the South African area, and a multimillionaire in his day. It was Cecil Rhodes who decided to send emissaries of his

own to this country so that he could be sure that the teachings of the East India Company, and of Haileybury College, and of Malthus and Darwin, would be properly inculcated into the minds of Americans, by selecting Rhodes scholars year after year, and having them go to British colleges where they could then come back into our society and become leaders of the events.

All you have to do is look at the historical record to see that Cecil Rhodes's plans were carried out very well. Cecil Rhodes, again, was motivated by the same East India Company philosophy that since the world was a sphere, you had to get property. If you could get the property you would then own the world. And that is their driving force.

Ratcliffe: Pursuing one more step—and wrapping this all up in the next hour—your last discussions on the British East India trade company and their way of influencing thought exerted a central influence on the way people thought about things and continue to think about things.

Two Books: *The End of Economic Man* and *The Road To Teheran*

We were talking about some books the other day and I'd like to touch on two that seem particularly relevant. One you mentioned is by Peter Drucker called *The End of Economic Man*, written in the early thirties but not published until 1938 or '39. Since then he has become synonymous with the idea of management and capitalistic economics. Could you talk a bit about that?

Prouty: This is very interesting because most of us know Peter Drucker as an advisor and consultant to the biggest businesses in this country. He's synonymous with big business, with free enterprise, with multinational corporations and he just has a new book out and the *New York Times* scrupulously reviews many of the books he has written and overlooks entirely his first book which is *The End of Economic Man*.

Peter Drucker I believe is an Austrian, schooled in Germany and Austria, who grew up in the years during the growth of the Nazi Party in Germany, and I believe—I'm not absolutely sure—but I believe his family was Jewish. During that era, as a student in their major universities, he began to put together his idea that this Nazism that

was growing under Hitler would destroy forever economic man. And his family left Germany and Austria, as many did, and went to England where he published this book, *The End of Economic Man*.

His premise has been made by others as well, but I don't think any have stated it as clearly as he has: that what the Germans were doing was taking the German society of post World War I (when most people wanted no more war) and the Germany of the Weimar Republic—reasonably democratic in terms of Germany anyway—and this Nazism began to turn the German people into various classes of society most resembling a military structure, captains, majors, colonels, generals and so on. So that everything in Germany was being militarized—boy scouts were militarized, girl scouts were militarized, everything was militarized, and it was all being done with the money and the approval of the very powerful and wealthy people.

He goes into this in great detail. I can't recommend the book highly enough. Everybody should read it because he not only says this is what destroyed Germany, but that it's replication in any other country, England or the United States, would destroy those countries. I think anyone who reads *The End of Economic Man* today is going to think Peter Drucker was writing about the last decade of the United States as though next year was going to be the beginning of American Nazism or the equal of it. The two things fit hand in glove, but his book was written in 1939 not 1989. Difference in years notwithstanding, no one should omit that book. It's most important and so many things we are doing today appear to be running along that same current. We have war on poverty, we have war in the streets, we have war against AIDS, we have battles of this, we have everybody carrying automatic weapons up and down the streets—that's what he was talking about. So read the book.

Ratcliffe: Militarize even the war on drugs which seems to threaten so much of our—

Prouty: Everything is a war, not just a program to try to promote an anti-drug mind-set—everything is a war, as though war was exactly the way we ought to organize druggists and policemen and school teachers as majors and colonels and generals. And the students ought to all wear uniforms. This is what it was all about but I shouldn't talk too much about this because Drucker says this so well I want you to read Drucker's words and not my copy of his words. He describes it

best; it becomes frightening when you read the book, there is only one way to think about it.

Ratcliffe: The other book we discussed was something written by Foster Rhea Dulles, another one of the Dulles brothers.

Prouty: No, this is a mystery to me. I have a very good book about the Dulles family that speaks about everybody in the current Dulles family that we know of: John Foster, Allen Dulles, his sister Eleanor, their father and mother and her family and all that sort of thing. This man Foster Rhea Dulles is not mentioned anywhere and I have cross-referenced through every book I can locate, including *Who's Who* and *Writers in America*, and I don't find Foster Rhea Dulles. Even as a pseudonym, a *nom de plume* type of identity, I don't find that.

But the book is remarkable because it is entitled *The Road To Teheran*. It was written in either '45 or '46 and Teheran is the Teheran Conference of December '43. In this writer's mind he starts with American history back in the Revolutionary War, shows how closely Americans and Russians were related. For instance, John Quincy Adams was our ambassador, or at least our designate, to the court of Catherine the Great and Alexander back in Russia. They travelled to Leningrad, or Petrograd then, and their objectives were to open trade between United States and the Soviet Union and we did have an elaborate trade system. The shipping interests of Boston were widespread—one of the most important trade routes they had was to the Soviet Union, or to then Russia, old Mother Russia.

Dulles follows this through in a very interesting section in the book regarding the fact that the Russians had moved across the Bering Straits into Alaska (only along the coast, they had no interest apparently in Alaska at that time), down the coast of Western Canada as it is now, and down into what is today California. On the coast of California you can still see old Russian buildings preserved in some of the Park areas. He points out that the Russians who had come to those places were doing exactly as Jacob Astor's people were: they were hunting for fur and they were becoming as wealthy in their area as Jacob Astor was here in the United States as a great fur trader. The fur they traded in was the sea otter.

Interestingly the Russians who went down the California coast went there by dog sled and walking, and their trade was carried out by the shipping firms all the way from Boston. The ships would travel

from Boston to the California coast, pick up the sea otter skins by the boat load and move them into the markets, some in Asia and mostly in Europe. He puts in the book that in one ship load they would make between \$300,000 and \$400,000 profit. Of course three or four hundred thousand dollars in the 1700's is the same as tens of millions of dollars today.

The interesting point was that the Americans and the Russians were working in complete harmony. There was no contest between them. The Russians lived on the west coast, Americans lived and hunted on the west coast, and they were for all intents and purposes friendly.

The point here is that our history with the Russians has been friendly for years. He brings this history back into Civil War, when the Russians refused—no first of all during the Revolutionary War when the Russians refused to help the British. They would not provide Cossacks (their cavalry) to help the British against the Americans. Which means they were friendly to America. In the Civil War, the same thing. They would not play a role. In fact, the Russians tried to provide equipment to American ships to support the Union forces in the Civil War. Then up to modern times he has some interesting views of our relationship with Russia initially during the Bolshevik revolution which was then overthrown when Lenin began to take power.

The views as he presents them as history don't exactly coincide with this strong Communist bias that we've had. But remember he writes this in the forties when the Soviets were our allies during the war. As he carries this up to the Teheran Conference he more or less draws the conclusion that the agreements at Teheran were natural agreements—that America and Russia had more frequently been allies or friends or business associates than adversaries. And he leaves the book at 1944, the war ended in 1945, and we had the anti-communist brainwashing era in the late forties, but that's after his book.

So this is a very necessary book for people who want to understand the relationship between our two countries as we come into the present era and begin to understand each other more closely. It's not the equivalent of the book called *The Great Conspiracy* written by Alfred Kahn but it is as important. I think *The Great Conspiracy* in 1946, with a rousing introduction by Senator Pepper, is an even better explanation of American and Russian interests with

an unusual understanding of the intrigues from England and Germany that were involved in the Bolshevik Revolution and the fighting after that, even to the days after World War I when we had American troops in Vladivostok and events like that and what it was all about.

If we don't read books like *The Great Conspiracy* or *The Road to Teheran*, it is very difficult to understand this whole era of anti-communism which was more or less impressed upon the American people. There was no evidence that this was really the state of affairs except it is the traditional situation that any group in power in any nation has to have an enemy. For reasons that are not clearly understood, immediately after World War II it was decided that we had to have an enemy and that communism was it. Since the enemy was communism Russia and China without any other definition, became the enemy. And we've been brainwashed since. That may be changing today or it may not be changing, but I think it is because we also realize that military-type war is probably outdated now on account of nuclear weapons and that warfare from here on will be economic warfare. It will be just as tough, it will kill just as many people, it will cost just as much money, but it will be economic warfare.

The Changing Nature of Warfare: From a Military to an Economic Basis

Ratcliffe: A question occurred to me the other day regarding this sense of yours about the change of warfare. As you indicated, you feel the military industrial complexes' influence and pervasiveness will lessen as the new economic warfare intensifies. Particularly in the area of energy as it's currently going now, as well as in the area of food where you feel will become prevalent. What do you think will happen with respect to the organization currently in place that you define as the Secret Team that seems to operate in the industry of military production and trade.

Prouty: I think we have seen an absolutely perfect example of what we're talking about in what is called Arab oil embargo. In the decade leading up to 1973, the price of a barrel of oil that was more or less worldwide had been \$1.70. If you wanted to buy a 100,000 barrels of oil you paid 100,000 times a \$1.70. And you got the oil. At that price oil was profitable and the oil companies were making enormous profits. The producers like Saudi Arabia and Iraq and Iran and Russia

were making profits with their oil. And then all of a sudden they decided they were going to increase the price of oil and by “they” I mean the High Cabal, the people in great money.

It's nothing but a money deal, its nothing but a war, a war like that fought in Vietnam—it's for money, there's nothing else. We didn't gain a thing except we spent between \$250—\$500 billion dollars fighting a war in Vietnam.

And overnight, the price of oil went up. There was a battle between the Israelis and the Arabs. The story goes that the Arabs as a result of that war declared an embargo on a shipment of oil from the Middle East to the rest of the world and that made the shortage of gasoline in the streets and we could not get gasoline at our favorite gas pumps and we had to pay more and more and more.

We should look back at that carefully. The Arab-Israeli war was not conclusive. The Arabs gained on the first few days way into Israeli territory and then a couple of weeks later the Israelis came back and went quite a way into the Egyptian territory and then the war just ended. It was inconclusive. But all of a sudden the Arabs, according to the press, signalled an embargo on oil. Now that's the most ridiculous thing in the world because the only income these Arabs have is the sale of oil, and furthermore the oil that they produce comes from the ground all by itself under pressure from the earth. They don't have to pump it, they had no great big problem with supplying oil.

As a matter of fact I can show you copies of the *Congressional Record* in which oil experts from the Middle East reported that exactly at this time of the Arab oil embargo, the storage tanks at the Arab facilities whether it was Kuwait, or Iraq, or Saudi Arabia were overloaded and bursting with oil waiting for ships to come.

A few years later I was asked as a representative of American Railroad System to attend a conference in London at the Chartered Institute of Transport. Among the seminar groups that I met with there was one on petroleum transportation. A gentleman came into that room and lectured to only 8 of us who had come to that class—I was very glad I went to it—and one of the Englishmen in the room nudged me as the speaker was coming into the room and said, do you know this gentleman? I said no. He said, this man is a multi-billionaire ship owner.

It occurred to me and has since then, why would a multi-billionaire (in pounds by the way, more than dollars), want to come

into a room with 8 people and lecture on petroleum transportation? Though of course a very good reason was that it was all being recorded and would be printed in a book later and so his words would become part of the record and he was very proud of what he had been doing.

What he told us was the same thing as these people reporting to the Congress: that there was no shortage of oil. That what happened was a very well planned system was applied through the tanker industry, and they arbitrarily and absolutely controlled the movement of oil by not picking it up, until the price was right.

Now in 1973, the Middle East produced and sold 15 billion dollars worth of oil. By 1980, the same Middle East produced and sold 300 billion dollars worth of oil. The quantity of oil they produced was not much different. The cost of producing it was not much different. But the sale price was 15 billion dollars in '73 and 7 years later it was 300 billion dollars. I think anyone can understand that for \$285 billion profit it's worth doing almost anything in this world today. And that accounts for the Arab oil embargo, the shortage at the fuel pumps, and the fact that we Americans are paying \$1.30 a gallon for gas when we used to pay 29 cents a gallon for gas.

This kind of control is the new form of warfare. Now petroleum is not an absolute necessity of life. Energy is, and petroleum is a major factor in energy, but it is close enough to being a necessity so that this shortage of oil, this control of oil, really hurt people all over the world. And especially in the leading nations like ours because overnight they increased one of the major expenses we have in the cost of running an automobile. So this kind of war has as its battlefield the streets of America, the streets of Paris, the streets of London, where our automobiles are; where our trains run; where our airplanes fly.

It is a completely different battle for enormous profits and the control that those profits produce. Because once the price of oil goes up, the price of coal goes up, the price of natural gas goes up, the price of food goes up, and everything else. The cost of trucking becomes higher, and most of our food is moved by trucks. So that when the price of oil went up from 30 cents a gallon up to \$1.50 a gallon, all the rest of the price levels went up on the tide of oil. All escalated with the price of oil. And the cost of just plain living, day by day, escalated with the price of oil, and that price of oil was controlled by superpowers—superpowers control those industries. The catalytic

force in that was something as simple as the shipping industry. There is no way to get around the shipping industry.

This was also being explained at these meetings in London. That traditionally, oil from Iraq, the old oil fields of Kirkuk and Mosul, had travelled through a huge system of pipelines that went from Iraq, through Jordan, and to the port of Haifa in what was then Palestine. When the country of Israel was formed, one of the first things the Israelis did, for reasons that are not recorded, is close the pipeline terminus at Haifa. And Iraqi oil could not leave Iraq for the Mediterranean coast and for Europe. Most Iraqi oil is sold and consumed in Europe.

There are 8 other pipelines that extend from Iraq to the Mediterranean. They go to the Port of Sidon in Lebanon, and other ports northward all the way up to Syrian ports. We have seen those pipelines made dry by the Israeli attack on Lebanon. And we wonder why Israel should even bother to attack Lebanon, why Syria should be attacking Lebanon, and why poor old neutral Lebanon, which is nothing but the market garden basket of Europe, is brought to its knees by a perpetual war until we realize that war causes the pipelines from the Middle East to Europe to go dry. This forces the oil onto the ships and under the controls that have been devised by the shipping cartels. This is a fact of life. This is happening right now today.

The fighting in Lebanon is to keep the pipelines dry. The fighting between the Arabs and the Israelis is to keep the oil pipelines dry. Its not religious, its not political, the Arabs have no choice. The Israelis receive 2-1/2—3 billion dollars aid money from us a year, which is perhaps payment for their assistance. The Egyptians receive 2-1/2—3 billion dollars from us—the most foreign aid money we pay to any countries in the world, are to Israel and to Egypt. How does Egypt earn its money? It meters the Suez canal to oil and no oil goes through the Suez canal. So the movement of oil causes the tide of prices to rise all over the world, and part of the device is to keep the pipelines of the Middle East dry.

During the Iraq-Iran war, the Iraqis even attempted to build a pipeline through Turkey. They were forced so much to export oil, that they were exporting, I believe, almost a million barrels of oil a day by truck through Turkey. Now, that's not profitable. That adds a terrible cost to oil. They couldn't get it down the river through Abadan because their Persian Gulf ports had been destroyed. The Iranians couldn't get oil out of Iran, their ports had been destroyed. They were

bargaining with Turkey to run a pipeline across Turkey out of Iran, and again billions of dollars being spent on that pipeline, which raises the price of oil beyond its economic levels. So the war between Iraq and Iran was simply to create a shortage of oil from those two countries which would create a higher price because of the lesser amount of oil available around the world.

It's this kind of economic control of a major commodity, oil, that is the new type of warfare between nations on earth and we are going to see more of this because it produces such enormous profits. When the Middle East was making \$300 billion in 1980 on the oil it exported, that represented about 40% of the world's total, meaning the rest of the world was getting maybe \$400 billion for selling its oil. Oil that only 7 years earlier would have sold for \$16 to \$18 billion. The profits are enormous. They are unbelievable.

Human History and the Composition of the High Cabal

Ratcliffe: I'd like you to discuss more of what you mentioned before regarding your sense of the High Cabal as a unit or group originating perhaps more from an Oriental base of historical roots rather than from a European base. You were telling me the other day about this story of the Chinese travellers who went to the Middle East to study the knowledge of the Arabic people and their whole approach in the way they ran their exploration and your sense of the High Cabal originating in an Oriental cultural basis.

Prouty: We are so prone to study history in a linear fashion from the United States we go back to England, we go back to France and Germany. We go to Rome, we go to Greece, back to the Middle East and to Babylon. And it ends there as though the world began there. If you asked 90 out of 100 Americans where Adam and Eve were born, or appeared, they would say the Middle East. Because almost every formal study of history trickles back that way as though Asia, or Russia, or Indonesia didn't exist. There were no people there. Africa is a great big nothing in terms of history.

Just as a little clue, I was in Kano, in the heart of Nigeria one day. It happened to be one of their celebration days, and there were black men, leaders of Kano, riding horses with coats of linked mail on the horses. And the men were wearing coats of mail armor just like the old medieval knights of yore, like King Arthur's men. I asked some of the people standing there as this parade went by, "Where did these

come from, Hollywood, or something like that?” And they said, “No, don't you know?” And a very fine young man sat me down and told me that hundreds and hundreds of years before, the remnants of a lost Crusade, medieval people from Europe, had wandered into Africa and were defeated and captured and that these natives had these original old coats of mail of the horses and of their riders. Now, in Nigeria, they never had horses, they wouldn't need coats of mail because they didn't have horses.

This proves that in Africa, way back in the time of the Crusades, there were people strong enough to defeat the Crusaders, and also to recognize that the loot they captured from those people was worth keeping as historic evidence. In other words, Africa existed in history. In fact another thing I learned from this man I was talking with is that their language is the original language of the Rosetta stone. And the Rosetta stone which was used to translate the hieroglyphics of Egypt had been unfathomable to European scholars until all of a sudden a group of Nigerians travelling in Cairo saw the Rosetta stone and although they couldn't read the hieroglyphics they could read the language on the other side. And they read the language, told the scholars about it, the scholars translated it into English, and then they decoded the hieroglyphics. That's how they solved the story of the Rosetta Stone, and were able to decipher the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics.

The people from Nigeria had this ancient culture which produced the language which is on the Rosetta Stone and for centuries nobody could translate the Rosetta stone forgetting that the Africans had that history and that culture and our history books leave them out with a big zero. We don't know anything about Africans in history. Well, this is true even more so, even to a greater degree when we think about China, and India, and Indonesia, and southeast Asia. They have ancient history.

The history we study through Europe, and back to the Middle East, runs back what? 1000 years before Christ, 2000 years before Christ. Easily the history of India and southeast Asia goes back eleven or twelve thousand years. Easily the history of Indonesia goes back thousands of years and the history of China is almost limitless. It is quite obvious that the Chinese culture, to include the manufacture of such things as cast iron, or the ability to print on paper, goes back long before such things were even contemplated by anyone in even the Middle East or in India.

For reference I would recommend everyone read and study the books of Dr. Joseph Needham of Cambridge University in England. There is a whole series of books and they are absolutely indispensable to an understanding of the true history of man on earth. One of the interesting areas of Needham's work, and some of the other studies of the Chinese people in those days, was that the Chinese had mastered the ability to sail in the oceans as the Portuguese had later on. And the Chinese would follow the coastline down from China, down around southeast Asia, down around Malaysia, and back up to the Burmese coast, across the Bay of Bengal to Calcutta, down the east coast of India, past Ceylon and around the tip of India and on up to Bombay and even around to Arabia and East Africa.

And the story goes that as the Chinese visited port cities on their trips along, it was like a party. As they pulled into port they would stand out there and waive banners and hold gifts in their hands. They would sing songs and they would dance. They wouldn't carry firearms. And the people there met them the same way. They were welcome to stay for years or to stay whatever length of time they wanted, and they opened up trade, and sailed back and forth between these places.

Until one day they arrived in a certain area of the east coast of Africa and they were treated with hostility. And they found out that was as far as the Portuguese had gotten coming around from Portugal around Africa and using guns every time they went ashore, burning villages, stealing whatever they wanted.

And it showed that the Chinese method of exploration had been a party with official ambassadors with presents for the local rulers and all, and the Portuguese system was to use guns and shoot the people.

So we see quite a difference in these cultures and this has led even to a better understanding of their overland exploration. The Chinese having this enormous land mass to their west, had the same interest in exploring the west as we did, wondering how far the west went. The Chinese actually travelled with ambassadors, official people from their government, in parties of 15 or 20, as far as Bagdad. And there such parties would meet the leaders of Bagdad, they would talk and understand each other. The Chinese seem to be very adept at languages and if they didn't know the language, they would sit down and study it and study everything these people had.

There was a very intriguing story of a party that the rulers of China sent back to Bagdad with a very learned leader and some 15 or

20 scholars with him. He would sit and listen to the intelligent people of Bagdad as they explained how they did this, how they did that. Like arithmetic—the Chinese had not learned the Arabic base for arithmetic, or for mathematics that spread all over the world. And the Chinese were taking notes in shorthand and they would listen and take notes in shorthand and as fast as the Arabs could talk to them they would transcribe it.

This had been going on for a while—a while meaning years—when another group of Chinese came and reported that the King, or the emperor, wanted the first group to come back—for some reason they had to go back. By this time the elderly Chinaman had become good friends with the leader in Bagdad and he said, “Look, I have to return to my country, but I know there is much that we haven't finished studying.” He said, “I would like you to give me 7 of your best scholars, each in their own trade, their own specialty, and ask them to dictate to me from their books”. And he said, “I want to write it down and take this back to my emperor.” And the Arab chief said, “You mean, you are going to write down what 7 men tell you simultaneously?” He said, “yes.”

And he did. And after he had been copying for 3 or 4 hours the chief stopped his people and then he asked the Chinaman, “this man from section 3 over here, read back what he told you.” He turned his pages, read it back perfectly. “OK, this man, No. 5, read it back.” The Chinaman without fault had been taking down the shorthand listening to 7 people simultaneously. I use the figure 7, it might have been 8 or 10. Dr. Needham tells the story with great thoroughness.

What this says is that the Chinese had perfected, and we believe today, they retained this even more so than they had in those days, the ability to write a shorthand that could translate simultaneous lectures, not just one. And simultaneously probably to the number 7, 8, or 9. Dr. Needham gives the exact figure because he has seen it done.

What this means is that when you put all these together—their culture, their art, their trading, their ability to make cast iron, and bronze, they drilled for oil at 2,000 feet using bamboo pipe—they were not backward people. This without any question puts the Chinese at a level in history certainly equal to, but probably higher than, the levels of Europe and the Middle East.

Now when we educate ourselves enough to understand that, and as we have said earlier when we also understand that leaders of this world recognize a High Cabal, I think it is ridiculous, since I myself

cannot disbelieve the existence of a High Cabal, that the High Cabal very probably includes Asians and more probably is led by Asians. I wouldn't argue that, I don't know how to explain it, except if you watch rain fall, you notice it all runs in accordance with gravity. Well, if you study mankind, you notice there is a sort of gravity in the day-to-day world of mankind, and I don't think it is all happenstance. I think that there is direction from, as Churchill says, the High Cabal. But I also believe that the High Cabal, which can include people from of course any region of the world—I don't think they recognize countries—I think the world is just the world for those people, and I believe that it would be strongly manned with Chinese or even probably led by Chinese.

Building a Bridge: Trusting Ourselves to Know How to Work and Live Together

Ratcliffe: Fascinating. One last item (we have about 20 minutes here), is the story you told me on the first day I arrived which I found so fascinating of yourself in a class of young officers and this assignment you were given to build a bridge. I'd like you to recount that for us now.

Prouty: It has interested me for many decades, this idea of politics, and this idea of leadership that is thrust upon us, and whether or not this idea is the same as actual human experience and understanding of true leadership. If people are stranded on a desert island, they don't hold an election. They suddenly realize a certain person has a little more experience, a little more gift than the others and they follow him.

The armies of the world are traditionally pretty well trained, pretty well disciplined. Before World War II we saw in the U.S. Army certain things that I'm afraid we don't see today. It got diluted in the great mass movements of World War II and since. But there were people there who tried to impress this previous understanding upon those of us who had been called in before World War II—when the Army was small. I think the military forces of the U.S. before World War II were about 116,000 if I remember—and when you figure that 10 million men were flown to Vietnam during the Vietnam War and at any one time we had as many 550,000 you can see what I am talking about.

115,000 in the Armed Forces were not many people. But they were very skilled. And when a new officer, regardless of age, rank or so on, was assigned to a division, the Army had a custom of division officer training. And this division officer training was rather unique as we look back today. Although you'll find such training at Harvard Business School or other places where men are taught how to govern, how to lead people, and so on, how to run a business.

One of the events I have never forgotten because it was so effective, it was just absolutely effective and what we saw deeply impressed us, was that after this group of about 60 men had been together for a week or so, listening to lectures from some of the old time colonels and sergeants and warrant officers, one of the courses they taught us rather superficially, but very interesting, was how to put together a trestle bridge.

In those days, a trestle bridge in the army was all prefabricated including the posts that hold it up, the pilings at the side of the river to hold it up, and the planks on the top, and how they all fit together. The bolts and the nuts and the whole structure was prefabricated but it had to be put together precisely, or it wouldn't work. And every brook or river isn't the same width so you had to be able to lengthen the bridge and sometimes the banks were higher than others so you had to raise the bridge. The bridge could do that—the prefab's structure was such that it would accomplish that.

There was about a week of courses on the trestle bridge where most of it was taught on paper. Every once in a while they would take us out to a shed and show us the pieces that it consisted of, but we had never worked on it, we just knew what was what. One evening just before sundown, they picked up the whole class, about 60 men, piled us into a couple of army buses and began driving us somewhere without saying where we were going. We had no idea what we were going to do. And they drove us, and drove us (their only objective was to wait until it was dark) and finally stopped in the countryside somewhere beside a rather large field.

We all got out of the buses and a sergeant said, "Gentlemen, your exercise for the evening lies in that field. Its a trestle bridge." We were all with an armored division. He said, "there are two tanks in the field. You are going to build that trestle bridge across a river that is on the other side of this field. You are going to drive the tanks across that bridge and your dinner for the evening is over there, on the other side of the river. You are not to swim over and get dinner. You won't have

dinner unless you drive the tanks across the trestle bridge.” Then he said, “Now I have one more request. Any of you people that smoke, I want you to give me your matches and your cigarette lighters. You are to have no flashlights. Hand it all in right now.” And he collected everything. He said, “Anybody who wants to light up a cigarette, come see me.”

Then he sat down quietly with another sergeant and never said another word. He didn't say who was in charge. He didn't say anything. He just walked off. So there was 60 people standing by the side of the road, and he had mentioned “trestle bridge,” so some of us went out into the grass and sure enough we stumbled over a couple of pieces here, and a couple of pieces there. They were very neatly packed up, there was no problem with that. And a few others walked over to see what the river looked like and it would be my estimate that it was about 40 feet across, something like that, and the banks were 7 or 8 feet on either side. We could see a bonfire on the other side and a tent was pitched so we knew that our dinner was over there.

Nothing happened very quickly except a little commotion. People talking to each other, “But how do we get this bridge out there?” Then finally 3 or 4 men who knew each other said, “Hey, well at least we got to get this stuff over to the river. Let's start carrying it over there.” And another group said, “Well we'll carry these things over there.” And gradually some action just sort of came.

But then from among the group, all of a sudden one man began to say, “Look, when you're carrying this over, put this here because this is the piling for the beginning of the bridge.” And then, “Look, you 5 fellers swim across and we'll get the other piling over to you by”—the river wasn't all that deep and you could carry it over there—“but you get on the other side and work over there while we're working on this side.” And finally one man was just saying to each group, “Okay, put it here, do this, let's do this.”

Everybody was cooperating beautifully. There was no problem and in an unbelievably short time we had actually got that bridge across the river. We had men beginning to lay the planks on the top, and the cross beams that hold those planks, and the bolts to tighten them down. And gradually we started walking across it with men carrying the planks and the bridge held them up fine.

Once we got the planks down more men started going across with other things and finally this man who had been more or less leading these just nondescript people—there were chaplains there,

there were doctors, we weren't engineers, in fact there wasn't an engineer in the crowd—finally said, “Well let's take a look at the strength of this thing.” So we all stood on one side, it didn't tip, we all went to one end, it didn't tip. We all walked around using our weight to try to decide. We knew tanks were very heavy.

Finally we said okay. It took one man to drive a tank but there was a place for another man to handle the radio and things like that (which you'd ordinarily call the gunner), and we used a third man in the turret to direct the tank because the people inside can't see very much. So we got two crews of 3 men who could handle the tanks. The first crew drove the first one around and with great care we aimed the first tank across the bridge and it went. Nothing happened. The second crew took the second tank, drove it across, and all the rest of the fellows went over with it and we had an absolutely magnificent dinner.

The next day in class the old colonel that was running this school came in and he said, ‘Gentlemen, I want to tell you something about yesterday's exercise.’ He said, people have lived in communities ever since the dawn of time. They never had an election, they never had politics, they never had a religious hierarchy. What they had was themselves, usually the elder led the village because he obviously had experience. If he had been disabled or if he wasn't quite as bright as others, they could push him aside, but usually the elder led the community and he would get things done. But if it came time to go on the hunt and the village was hungry and they really needed some animals, some food, a certain group would break off and among that group they knew who was the best hunter, they knew who was the best tracker, they didn't stop and have an election. There was no boy scout captain, there was no election, they just did the job. The women the same way. Some women could build the houses better than others or some could make cloth better than others.

And he said, that's the way communities—that's the way armies—really run. He said the group will find its leader inevitably. He said sometimes when an army is in a terrible battle, and the colonel has been killed and the major has been killed, probably a sergeant will get up and say, Follow me. After citing examples of this from history he said, Gentlemen, what we did yesterday was to prove to you that an absolutely nondescript, untrained group will follow that fact without any agreement, without any election, without any assignment. We didn't assign the leader, we didn't ask you to elect the

leader, we didn't say that so and so was an engineer and he has the experience. We left you in the dark and told you come over there and have dinner with us. He said, 'Don't ever forget that because military organizations as well as ordinary civil organizations follow those rules. The other rules are more or less applied to our society but these are the basic rules. You need to know that in a war.'

I have never been through a class that had quite the impact on me as that one did and I guess not reluctantly but it did surprise me as I was the officer that led the group across the bridge. Simply because I said to these people who were already beginning to go, Let's put it here and then let's do this, and the group wanted some kind of instruction.

I would gladly have yielded to somebody else, but it wasn't necessary. The bridge got built. I think as I look back at it that much of the problem we have in society is that we don't trust ourselves. The people we elect are most likely not the people that can do the job anyway. Or the people that we might even follow as to quote religious leaders, don't necessarily know all the things that are best for us.

As Buckminster Fuller says the two most powerfully disruptive forces in mankind are politics and religion. Now he doesn't mean politics as I have described it in the village, and he doesn't mean religion as in the basic facts of religion. He means these structured systems we call politics and call religion that really are a form of mind control. In this century I think that as much effort has been applied in certain areas of our leadership to gain mind control over the people of the world as they have over any other kind of control. I think that the very history of an organization we call the British Society of Psychic Research (and its very strong American offshoot) is evidence of the fact that today people are not asked to think. They are told what to think, whether it makes sense or not. I think this is a most fundamental fact of our life today.

Ratcliffe: Thank you very much Fletcher Prouty.

Epilogue

“All the world’s a stage, and all the men and women merely players ... “

—William Shakespeare

As You Like It, Act II, Scene 7

Special Operations emerged out of the worldview of a small group of very powerful and invisible leaders, at a time in history when the USA was the only major act left standing on the planet. At that time, the USSR (with its radically different worldview, posing a strong challenge to private ownership) was working hard to develop internally while also continuing to play the “colonial game” by taking over eastern European countries to serve as a buffer against western capitalist nations. In this climate, to the powerful and wealthy elites, Special Operations seemed like a reasonable course of action, allowing them to circumvent bureaucratic red tape while carrying out their various agendas.

Over the course of time, this small unit expanded and multiplied until it became a major force—stepping into the big time with the assassination of President Kennedy. It continues on to this day doing Lord only knows what. In general the activities of Special Operations support the worldview of this small, invisible group of people. Bucky Fuller understood very well this dynamic and the true interests of such behind-the-scenes, supremely ambitious and forceful individuals.

The efforts of Special Operations are but one part of an entire *modus operandi* which involves shaping the news, manipulating the public’s thinking and in general, pushing the agenda of this tiny, invisible group of the super wealthy and super powerful. In tandem with the somewhat more visible elites who sit on the boards of major corporations (energy, mass media, public relations, financial, entertainment, munitions, telecommunications, ag-biotech, and

manufacturing industries) this tiny percentage of the U.S population channels vast amounts of money into the political coffers of *both* parties to ensure political support, whichever party comes to power. This is one reason why campaign finance reform is so utterly vital to improve the health of American democracy.

In all of this, two important factors offer some hope. First is that each individual who wakes up and realizes what is going on—and steps forward as an *ad hoc* leader, committed to making a difference—*can* make a difference. And, as more and more of us—who realize that reality is not what we’ve been told—come together to pool our collective knowledge and wisdom, we are creating a new story which is more closely linked with serving life and *its* interests.

History, Herstory, Ourstory. We all participate in the creation of our collective experience. And we each have a unique and potentially critical role to play in the drama and adventure of life. Every one of us has limitless abilities to respond to the current “act” in life’s unfolding drama—to ad-lib and improvise in an inspired and creative way to meet the challenges and possibilities of each moment.

Today, post-industrial culture’s commercialized story-telling is a vapid substitute for the rich, earthy texture of past stories. Dished up as authoritative, objective, disinterested “news”, society produces hypnotically-apocalyptic, morbidly fascinating entertainment to preempt and substitute for our own lived experiences. Long ago we distilled and crystallized our existence through telling stories around the fire, the doorway of human imagination thrown wide open to the infinite star-filled roof overhead.

Between the pollution in the air and the glare of lights, that star-studded roof stretching to infinity is too often invisible now—one more physical reason for our estrangement from direct experience with the natural world and from a sense of continuity with our collective past. We unconsciously collude in this with our daily gluttony of newspapers, television, radio, and magazines. Together, these forms of corporate-controlled stories exert a tremendous influence over not only how we see the world (as well as what we think) but also *how* we think. Indeed, we have come as far as humankind has ever strayed from experiencing our oneness with the natural world of *being* to emphasizing this impersonal world of *having*.

Daily, repetitive programming of “important news”, stitched together with an infinite stream of ads—the culture of materialism’s

bedrock with its core “You’re not good enough” message—indelibly colors how we relate to our world and to ourselves. The flood of advertising also reinforces a collective cult of consumption. All of this may look innocent enough as cheerful cartoons of happy children exhort us to buy. But highly paid marketing experts spend hundreds of billions of dollars each year to devise ever more sophisticated ways to “manage perceptions” and get us to buy products or ideas. In short, advertising and news constitute mind control programs manifesting to an ever-greater degree of effectiveness.

In this process we have become so insensitive to the alienation which underlies our lives that we seem willing to do almost anything to escape or at the very least postpone facing this paramount fact of our age. Physicist David Bohm expressed this situation well in one of his seminars on Thought and Dialogue in Ojai, California:

I think our whole society tries to stabilize itself by starting out to destroy sensitivity to incoherence starting with very young children. If people could see the vast incoherence that is going on in society they would be disturbed and they would feel the need to do something. If you’re not sensitive to it you don’t feel disturbed and you don’t feel you need to do anything.

I remember an instance, a daughter was telling her mother, “This school is terrible, the teacher is terrible, very inconsistent, doing all sorts of crazy things,” and so on. Finally the mother was saying, “You’d better stop this—in this house the teacher is always right.” Now she understood that the teacher was wrong obviously, but the message was, it was no use. Even the message may have been right in some sense, but still it illustrates that the predicament is that in order to avoid this sort of trouble, starting with very young children, we are trained to become insensitive to incoherence. If there is incoherence in our own behavior, we thereby also become insensitive to it. (November 4, 1989)

In the past, our stories were deeply personal, sensitively and intimately connected with nature and with the stories of others. Today, those stories have been stolen by the mass media. This is reinforced by the school system, which was developed in large part by the same elite power-brokers who wanted docile, unthinking workers in their factories. So, kids go off to school and learn to sit

still, memorize someone else's ideas and stories, and to obey orders. Only a small fraction—10-15 percent—are trained to be the leaders. But their agendas are rigidly shaped by the money they are paid as leaders. Those who challenge the hegemony of this silent structure are bought off, marginalized, or eliminated.

When American society as a whole came close to the point of understanding this hidden “story”, President Kennedy, Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy were all killed in a relatively short period of time. This shocked the nation, scared people in profoundly disturbing ways and shut down the public psyche about the possibility of true transformation of society.

It is important not to disregard the impact the murder of John Kennedy had on the adult and coming-of-age population of the world starting at that time and continuing to the present. As occurred for both my parents, particularly within my father, many people experienced a form of psychic death on November 22, 1963. Charles Bohlen, whose 40-year career in the Foreign Service included an extraordinary experience with and understanding of Soviet-American relations, wrote about his sense of the significance of Kennedy's death:

Emotions are often difficult to recall, but I well remember feeling, as I sat under the soaring arches of the great cathedral, that the future had collapsed on the present. Here I was, with thirty-five years of experience in the Foreign Service and extremely skeptical about the great men in public life, yet completely crushed by Kennedy's death. I still feel that a great future was extinguished by his death.¹

After more than 35 years the actual purpose for which the assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy took place still haunts our society. That a future of possibilities with JFK living out his full term as President did indeed collapse on the present is a fact many cannot fully and truly come to terms with. To do so would mean acknowledging the fact that Kennedy was murdered intentionally and that his murderers got away with the crime. As Fletcher Prouty has written in a number of venues, the purpose of the murder of President Kennedy was to take over the power of the presidency and set the

1. *Witness To History, 1929-1969*, Charles E. Bohlen, 1973, p. 504.

heading of the ship of state on a different course than it was taking with ‘the youngest man ever elected to be the President of the United States’. By writing this I may be dubbed one more “conspiracy theorist” by media pundits who themselves live in a fantasy world where *coup d’états* are “standard fare” in other “inferior” countries, but in the great United States of America, such events simply do not take place. Fletcher said it best near the beginning of the “Guns of Dallas”,

This control mechanism did not start in 1972 with Watergate. It began, in a tentative way, in the Korean War era, when the military and the executive branch found out how easy it was to fool the Congress and the American public. And with that recognition, power-hungry and money-mad industrialists began to usurp more and more power. And when those rifles crackled over Dealey Plaza, in Dallas, Texas on November 22, 1963 and John F. Kennedy’s brain was splattered across the road, they had made their move into the big time. They took over control of the President and of the Presidency. The man they had killed was no longer a problem and they had made certain that his successor, Lyndon Johnson, heard and remembered the sound of those guns. It is the sound of those guns in Dallas, and their ever-present threat, which is the real mechanism of control over the American government.²

Anyone who reads *The Secret Team* carefully with an open mind will understand how aborting President Eisenhower’s Crusade for Peace—with the downing of the U-2 flown by Gary Powers³—and assassinating President Kennedy were events intentionally planned and executed to serve the interests of those in the conventional munitions and armaments industries as well as in the nuclear power-weapons industries who most assuredly did *not* want to see a lessening of Cold War tensions that would decrease their profits. JFK

2. “The Guns of Dallas”, Gallery, October, 1975, p. 44,
<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/GoD.html#control>

3. This mission was flown in direct contravention to Ike’s standing orders that there be no such overflights of the Soviet Union at that time. See also, “The Sabotaging of the American Presidency”, by L. Fletcher Prouty, *Gallery*, January, 1978,
<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/SAP.html>

was intentionally murdered because he was trying to lessen Cold War tensions just as Eisenhower had tried to do at the end of his Presidency. And, the fact is that those responsible for instigating and then covering up the truth about these events achieved their own goals of continuing the Cold War arms race escalation *even after* Gorbachev said “Let’s stop”. These are ugly truths that we are still unable to publicly acknowledge. To do so would lay bare the lack of legitimate authority of over three decades of political leaders.

Given all this, ever since Oliver Stone’s *JFK* movie came out, I have increasingly come to feel that we are moving more and more into an era where the age of the leader is over. It is as Laurens van der Post observes: “There is a very profound reason why there are no great leaders any more. It is because they are no longer needed.”⁴ Van der Post expresses his understanding that greater consciousness and awareness must now be created within each one of us. Each must become a leader, following the light within. As we each reconnect with our own core of being, and as we connect authentically with others, a new community is being born.

A second note of hope is sounded by the crisis in our biosphere which is forcing *all* of us—including the invisible power-brokers—to wake up to the urgent need to transform radically the way we humans interact with our physical world and with each other. If we continue on our present course of destruction, our planetary home will no longer be able to sustain human life. Even the wealthy and powerful need oxygen, healthy soil and food. Their children and grandchildren will suffer along with all other children unless we change the course of human events.

The great fork in the road we now face is this: do these invisible power-brokers attempt to continue working behind the scenes to create a new world order (which is neither new nor an order), or do we seek to fulfill the visions of the more enlightened of our founding fathers, who saw that each one of us has something important to contribute to the fabric of life.

In freedom, each person is empowered to fulfill her full potential as a unique and divinely created being. In true freedom, each individual is empowered along the lines Thomas Jefferson called for in his famous quote, “I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves; and if we think them not

4. *A Walk With A White Bushman*, Laurens van der Post in conversation with Jean-Marc Pottiez, 1986, p. 68.

enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education. This is the true corrective of abuses of constitutional power.”⁵

Special Operations continue to this day, expanded far beyond the ideas of the original conceivers. They continue to use public monies, channeled in carefully concealed ways, to carry out actions the public would never approve. They continue to act as an independent force. To whom are they accountable? Working on behalf of what vision and what values?

The imperative is for us to wake up, come together and create a new vision for humanity and the earth—something that will earn for us the praise of future generations, who will look back on us and feel toward us the way we feel toward the more enlightened of our founding fathers. But this time, the transformation is beyond any country, any race, any religion, any limited group. For humankind to survive, we must come together as never before and create a new story which we can begin to live into, day by day. Krishnamurti states this necessity clearly:

When you call yourself an Indian or a Muslim or a Christian or a European, or anything else, you are being violent. Do you see why it is violent? Because you are separating yourself from the rest of mankind. When you separate yourself by belief, by nationality, by tradition, it breeds violence. So a man who is seeking to understand violence does not belong to any country, to any religion, to any political party or partial system; he is concerned with the total understanding of mankind.⁶

Fletcher Prouty has done a great service in helping us understand the nature of Special Operations. For people everywhere of goodwill, the task now is to join together, focusing our infinitely expanding talents and energies on building a truly sustainable civilization for the benefit of *all* life on earth.⁷ For, as my friend, author and educator Norie Huddle says, “Together we can do what no one of us can do alone.”

5. Letter to William C. Jarvis, September 28, 1820.

6. Jiddu Krishnamurti, *Freedom from the Known*, 1969, pp. 51-52.

7. For a list of organizations dedicated to this course see Appendix G.

Appendix A

Prefaces to 3 Editions of *The Secret Team*

This Appendix includes replicas of the Preface to the original 1973 First Edition of *The Secret Team*, *The CIA and Its Allies in Control of the United States and the World*, the 1997 Electronic Edition reprint published on Len Osanic's essential CD, *The Collected Works of Col. L. Fletcher Prouty*¹, and an updated version Fletcher wrote to include in this book as further explanation of how the The Secret Team was at the center of the Vietnam War Era.

1. See <http://www.prouty.org/cdrom.html>

Preface to the 1973 First Edition

From President to Ambassador, Cabinet Officer to Commanding General, and from Senator to executive assistant-all these men have their sources of information and guidance. Most of this information and guidance is the result of carefully laid schemes and ploys of pressure groups. In this influential coterie one of the most interesting and effective roles is that played by the behind the scenes, faceless, nameless, ubiquitous briefing officer.

He is the man who sees the President, the Secretary, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff almost daily, and who carries with him the most skillfully detailed information. He is trained by years of experience in the precise way to present that information to assure its effectiveness. He comes away day after day knowing more and more about the man he has been briefing and about what it is that the truly influential pressure groups at the center of power and authority are really trying to tell these key decision makers. In Washington, where such decisions shape and shake the world, the role of the regular briefing officer is critical.

Leaders of government and of the great power centers regularly leak information of all kinds to columnists, television and radio commentators, and to other media masters with the hope that the material will surface and thus influence the President, the Secretary, the Congress, and the public. Those other inside pressure groups with their own briefing officers have direct access to the top men; they do not have to rely upon the media, although they make great use of it. They are safe and assured in the knowledge that they can get to the decision maker directly. They need no middleman other than the briefing officer. Such departments as Defense, State, and the CIA use this technique most effectively.

For nine consecutive, long years during those crucial days from 1955 through January 1, 1964, I was one of those briefing officers. I had the unique assignment of being the "Focal Point" officer for contacts between the CIA and the Department of Defense on matters

pertaining to the military support of the Special Operations¹ of that Agency. In that capacity I worked with Allen Dulles and John Foster Dulles, several Secretaries of Defense, and Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as well as many others in key governmental places. My work took me to more than sixty countries and to CIA offices and covert activities all over the world—from such hot spots as Saigon and to such remote places as the South Pole. Yes, there have been secret operations in Antarctica.

It was my job not only to brief these men, but to brief them from the point of view of the CIA so that I might win approval of the projects presented and of the accompanying requests for support from the military in terms of money, manpower, facilities, and materials. I was, during this time, perhaps the best informed “Focal Point” officer among the few who operated in this very special area. The role of the briefing officer is quiet, effective, and most influential; and, in the CIA, specialized in the high art of top level indoctrination.

It cannot be expected that a John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, a Richard Nixon, or a following President will have experienced and learned all the things that may arise to confront him during his busy official life in the White House. It cannot be expected that a Robert McNamara or a Melvin Laird, a Dean Rusk or a William Rogers, etc. comes fully equipped to high office, aware of all matters pertaining to what they will encounter in their relationship with the Congo or Cuba, Vietnam or Pakistan, and China or Russia and the emerging new nations. These men learn about these places and the many things that face them from day to day from an endless and unceasing procession of briefing officers.

Henry Kissinger was a briefing officer. General John Vogt was one of the best. Desmond Fitzgerald, Tracy Barnes, Ed Lansdale, and “Brute” Krulak, in their own specialties, were top flight briefing officers on subjects that until the publication of the “Pentagon Papers,” few people had ever seen in print or had ever even contemplated. (You can imagine my surprise when I read the June 13, 1971, issue of the Sunday *New York Times* and saw there among the “Pentagon Papers” a number of basic information papers that had

1. Special Operations is a name given in most cases, but not always, to any clandestine, covert, undercover, or secret operations by the government or by someone, U.S. citizen or a foreign national ... even in special cases a stateless professional, or U.S. or foreign activity or organization. It is usually secret and highly classified. It is to be differentiated from Secret intelligence and in a very parochial sense from Secret or Special Intelligence Operations.

been in my own files in the Joint Chiefs of Staff area of the Pentagon. Most of the papers of that period had been source documents from which I had prepared dozens—even hundreds—of briefings, for all kinds of projects, to be given to top Pentagon officers. Not only had many of those papers been in my files, but I had either written many of them myself or had written certain of the source documents used by the men who did.)

The briefing officer, with the staff officer, writes the basic papers. He researches the papers. He has been selected because he has the required knowledge and experience. He has been to the countries and to the places involved. He may know the principals in the case well. He is supposed to be the best man available for that special job. In my own case, I had been on many special assignments dating back to the Cairo and Teheran conferences of late 1943 that first brought together the “Big Four” of the Allied nations of WW II: Franklin D. Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, Chiang Kai-shek and Joseph Stalin.

The briefing officer reads all of the messages, regardless of classification. He talks to a number of other highly qualified men. He may even have staff specialists spread out all over the world upon whom he may call at any time for information. Working in support of the “Focal Point” office, which I headed, there were hundreds of experts and agents concealed in military commands throughout the world who were part of a network I had been directed to establish in 1955-1956 as a stipulation of National Security Council directive 5412, March 1954.

In government official writing, the man who really writes the paper—or more properly, the men whose original work and words are put together to become the final paper—are rarely, if ever, the men whose names appear on that paper. A paper attributed to Maxwell Taylor, Robert McNamara or Dean Rusk, of the Kennedy era, would not, in almost all instances, have been written by them; but more than likely would have been assembled from information gathered from the Departments of Defense and State and from CIA sources and put into final language by such a man as General Victor H. Krulak, who was among the best of that breed of official writers.

From 1955 through 1963, if some official wanted a briefing on a highly classified subject involving the CIA, I would be one of those called upon to prepare the material and to make the briefing. At the same time, if the CIA wanted support from the Air Force for some

covert operation, I was the officer who had been officially designated to provide this special operational support to the CIA.

If I was contacted by the CIA to provide support for an operation which I believed the Secretary of Defense had not been previously informed of, I would see to it that he got the necessary briefing from the CIA or from my office and that any other Chief of Staff who might be involved would get a similar briefing. In this unusual business I found rather frequently that the CIA would be well on its way into some operation that would later require military support before the Secretary and the Chiefs had been informed. During preparations for one of the most important of these operations, covered in some detail in this book, I recall briefing the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Lyman L. Lemnitzer, on the subject of the largest clandestine special operation that the CIA had ever mounted up to that time: and then hearing him say to the other Chiefs, "I just can't believe it. I never knew that." Here was the nation's highest ranking military officer, the man who would be held responsible for the operation should it fail or become compromised, and he had not been told enough about it to know just how it was being handled. Such is the nature of the game as played by the "Secret Team."

I have written for several magazines on this subject, among them the *Armed Forces Journal*, *The New Republic*, the *Empire Magazine* of the *Denver Sunday Post*, and *The Washington Monthly*. It was for this latter publication that I wrote "The Secret Team", an article that appeared in the May 1970 issue and that led to the development of this book. With the publication of the Pentagon Papers on June 13, 1971, interest in this subject area was heightened and served to underscore my conviction that the scope of that article must be broadened into a book.

Within days of *The New York Times* publication of those "Pentagon Papers," certain editorial personnel with the BBC-TV program, "Twenty-Four Hours", recalling my "Secret Team" article, invited me to appear on a series on TV with, among others, Daniel Ellsberg. They felt that my experience with the Secret Team would provide material for an excellent companion piece to the newly released "Pentagon Papers," which were to be the primary topic of the discussions. I flew to London and made a number of programs for BBC-TV and Radio. Legal problems and the possible consequences of his departure from the country at that time precluded the simultaneous appearance of Daniel Ellsberg. The programs got wide

reception and served to underscore how important the subject of the “Pentagon Papers” is throughout the world.

I have not chosen to reveal and to expose “unreleased” classified documents; but I do believe that those that have been revealed, both in the “Pentagon Papers” and elsewhere, need to be interpreted and fully explained. I am interested in setting forth and explaining what “secrecy” and the “cult of containment” really mean and what they have done to our way of life and to our country. Furthermore, I want to correct any disinformation that may have been given by those who have tried to write on these subjects in other related histories.

I have lived this type of work; I know what happened and how it happened. I have known countless men who participated in one way or another in these unusual events of Twentieth Century history. Many of these men have been and still are members of the Secret Team. It also explains why much of it has been pure propaganda and close to nationwide “brainwashing” of the American public. I intend to interpret and clarify these events by analyzing information already in the public domain.

Few concepts during this half century have been as important, as controversial, as misunderstood, and as misinterpreted as secrecy in Government. No idea during this period has had a greater impact upon Americans and upon the American way of life than that of the containment of Communism. Both are inseparably intertwined and have nurtured each other in a blind Pavlovian way. Understanding their relationship is a matter of fundamental importance.

Much has been written on these subjects and on their vast supporting infrastructure, generally known as the “intelligence community.” Some of this historical writing has suffered from a serious lack of inside knowledge and experience. Most of this writing has been done by men who know something about the subject, by men who have researched and learned something about the subject, and in a few cases by men who had some experience with the subject. Rarely is there enough factual experience on the part of the writer. On the other hand, the Government and other special interests have paid writers huge amounts to write about this subject as they want it done, not truthfully. Thus our history is seriously warped and biased by such work. Many people have been so concerned about what has been happening to our Government that they have dedicated themselves to investigating and exposing its evils. Unfortunately, a number of these writers have been dupes of those cleverer than they or with sinister

reasons for concealing knowledge. They have written what they thought was the truth, only to find out (if they ever did find out) that they had been fed a lot of contrived cover stories and just plain hogwash. In this book I have taken extracts from some of this writing and, line by line, have shown how it has been manipulated to give a semblance of truth while at the same time being contrived and false.

Nevertheless, there have been some excellent books in this broad area, among them *The Invisible Government* by David Wise and Thomas B. Ross, *The Secret War* by Sanche de Gramont, *The Craft of Intelligence* by Allen W. Dulles, *The Real CIA* by Lyman B. Kirkpatrick, Jr., and many others. A partial listing does injustice to those other excellent scholars, reporters, and writers who have worked in this field. But many of these books suffer from various effects of the dread disease of secrecy and from its equally severe corollary illness called “cover” (the CIA’s official euphemism for not telling the truth).

The man who has not lived in the secrecy and intelligence environment—really lived in it and fully experienced it—cannot write accurately about it. There is no substitute for the day-to-day living of a life in which he tells his best friends and acquaintances, his family and his everyday contacts one story while he lives another. The man who must depend upon research and investigation inevitably falls victim to the many pitfalls of the secret world and of the “cover story” world with its lies and counter-lies.

A good example of this is the work of Neil Sheehan and his associates on *The New York Times’* Pentagon Papers. The very title is the biggest cover story (no pun intended) of them all; so very few of those papers were really of Pentagon origin. The fact that I had them in my office, that I had worked with them, and that I had written parts of some of them proves that they were not genuine Pentagon papers, because my work at that time was devoted to support of the CIA. The same is true of General Krulak, Bill Bundy, and to a degree, Maxwell Taylor and others.

To look at this matter in another way, the man who has lived and experienced this unnatural existence becomes even more a victim of its unreality. He becomes enmeshed beyond all control upon the horns of a cruel dilemma. On the one hand, his whole working life has been dedicated to the cause of secrecy and to its protection by means of cover stories (lies). In this pursuit he has given of himself time after time to pledges, briefings, oaths, and deep personal conviction

regarding the significance of that work. Even if he would talk and write, his life has been so interwoven into the fabric of the real and the unreal, the actual and the cover story, that he would be least likely to present the absolutely correct data.

On the other hand, as a professional he would have been subjected to such cellularization and compartmentalization each time he became involved in any real “deep” operation that he would not have known the whole story anyhow. This compartmentalization is very real. I have worked on projects with many CIA men so unaware of the entire operation that they had no realization and awareness of the roles of other CIA men working on the same project. I would know of this because inevitably somewhere along the line both groups would come to the Department of Defense for hardware support. I actually designed a special office in the Pentagon with but one door off the corridor. Inside, it had a single room with one secretary. However, off her office there was one more door that led to two more offices with a third doorway leading to yet another office, which was concealed by the door from the secretary’s room. I had to do this because at times we had CIA groups with us who were now allowed to meet each other, and who most certainly would not have been there had they known that the others were there. (For the record, the office was 4D1000—it may have been changed by now; but it had remained that way for many years.)

Another group of writers, about the world of secrecy, are the “masters”—men like Allen W. Dulles, Lyman Kirkpatrick, Peer de Silva and Chester Cooper. My own choice of the best of these are Peer de Silva and Lyman Kirkpatrick. These are thoroughly professional intelligence officers who have chosen a career of high-level intelligence operations. Their writing is correct and informative—to a degree beyond that which most readers will be able to translate and comprehend at first reading; yet they are properly circumspect and guarded and very cleverly protective of their profession.

There is another category of writer and self-proclaimed authority on the subjects of secrecy, intelligence, and containment. This man is the suave, professional parasite who gains a reputation as a real reporter by disseminating the scraps and “Golden Apples” thrown to him by the great men who use him. This writer seldom knows and rarely cares that many of the scraps from which he draws his material have been planted, that they are controlled leaks, and that he is being

used, and glorified as he is being used, by the inside secret intelligence community.

Allen Dulles had a penchant for cultivating a number of such writers with big names and inviting them to his table for a medieval style luncheon in that great room across the hall from his own offices in the old CIA headquarters on the hill overlooking Foggy Bottom. Here, he would discuss openly and all too freely the same subjects that only hours before had been carefully discussed in the secret inner chambers of the operational side of that quiet Agency. In the hands of Allen Dulles, “secrecy” was simply a chameleon device to be used as he saw fit and to be applied to lesser men according to his schemes. It is quite fantastic to find people like Daniel Ellsberg being charged with leaking official secrets simply because the label on the piece of paper said “top secret,” when the substance of many of the words written on those same papers was patently untrue and no more than a cover story. Except for the fact that they were official *lies*, these papers had no basis in fact, and therefore no basis to be graded top secret or any other degree of classification. Allen Dulles would tell similar cover stories to his coterie of writers, and not long thereafter they would appear in print in some of the most prestigious papers and magazines in the country, totally unclassified, and of course, cleverly untrue.

Lastly there is the writer from outside this country who has gained his inside information from sources in another country. These sources are no doubt reliable; they know exactly what has taken place—as in Guatemala during the Bay of Pigs era—and they can speak with some freedom. In other cases, the best of these sources have been from behind the Iron Curtain.

In every case, the chance for complete information is very small, and the hope that in time researchers, students, and historians will be able to ferret out truth from untruth, real from unreal, and story from cover story is at best a very slim one. Certainly, history teaches us that one truth will add to and enhance another; but let us not forget that one lie added to another lie will demolish everything. This is the important point. Consider the past half century. How many major events—really major events—have there been that simply do not ring true? How many times has the entire world been shaken by alarms of major significance, only to find that the events either did not happen at all, or if they did, that they had happened in a manner quite unlike the original story? The war in Vietnam is undoubtedly the best

example of this. Why is it that after more than thirty years of clandestine and overt involvement in Indochina, no one had been able to make a logical case for what we had been doing there and to explain adequately why we had become involved; and what our real and valid objectives in that part of the world were?

The mystery behind all of this lies in the area we know as “Clandestine activity”, “intelligence operations”, “secrecy”, and “cover stories”, used on a national and international scale. It is the object of this book to bring reality and understanding into this vast unknown area.

L. FLETCHER PROUTY
Colonel, U.S. Air Force (Ret'd)

Preface to the 1997 Electronic Edition

Like it or not, we now live in the age of “One World”. This is the age of global companies, of global communications and transport, of global food supply and finance and ... just around the corner ... global accommodation of political systems. In this sense, there are no home markets, no isolated markets and no markets outside the global network.

It is time to face the fact that true national sovereignty no longer exists. We live in a world of big business, big lawyers, big bankers, even bigger money-men and big politicians. It is the world of “The Secret Team” and its masters. We are now, despite common mythology to the contrary, the most dependent society that has ever lived, and the future of the viability of that infrastructure of that society is unpredictable. It is crumbling.

As one of the greatest historians of all time, Ibn Khaldun, wrote in his unequaled historical work *The Muqaddimah* of the 14th Century:

God created and fashioned man in a form that can live and subsist only with the help of food ... Through cooperation, the needs of a number of persons, many times greater than their own number, can be satisfied.

As this One World infrastructure emerges it increases the percentage of our total dependence upon remote food production capacity to the mass production capability and transport means of enormous companies operating under the global policy guidance of such organizations as the Chartered Institute of Transport in London, and the international banking community. As individuals, few of us would have any idea where to get a loaf of bread or yard of fabric other than in some supermarket and department store ... and we are all dependent upon some form of efficient transport, electric power, gasoline at the pump, and boundless manufacturing capacity and

versatility. Let that system collapse, at any point, and all of us will be helpless. A cooperating, working system is essential to survival; yet over-all it is a system without leadership and guidance.

At the same time the traditional family farm, and even community farms and industries, have all but vanished from the scene. This has created, at least in what we label, the advanced nations, a dearth of farmers and of people who have that basic experience along with that required in the food and home products industries. Furthermore, as this trend is amplified, the transport of farm produce has become increasingly assigned to the trucking industry, which has its over-land limits ... mostly as applied to the tonnage limits of rural bridges, and the economical availability of petroleum.

As a result, something as simple as a trucking industry strike that keeps trucks out of any city for seventy- two hours or more, will lead to starvation and food riots. None of us know where to get food, if it is not in the nearby supermarket; and if we do have a stored supply of food locked in the cellar, we shall simply be the targets of those who do not. Food is the ultimate driving force. Under such predictable conditions, there will be waves of slaughter and eventually cannibalism. Man must eat, and the only way he can obtain adequate food supplies is through cooperation and the means to transport and distribute food and other basic necessities. This essential role is being diminished beyond the borderline. The lack of food supplies has already resulted in a form of covert genocide in many countries. Other essential shortages unavoidably follow.

As Rudyard Kipling has said: "Transport is Civilization." The opposite is equally true, "Without reliable transport we are reduced to the state of barbarism."

These are fundamental statements of fact. In such a world, the Secret Team is the functional element of the dominant power. It is the point of the spear and is neither military nor police. It is covert: and the best (or worst) of both. It gets the job done whether it has political authorization and direction, or not. In this capacity, it acts independently. It is lawless. It operates everywhere with the best of all supporting facilities from special weaponry and advanced communications, with the assurance that its members will never be prosecuted. It is subservient to the Power Elite and protected by them. The Power Elite or High Cabal need not be Royalty in these days. They are their equals or better.

Note with care, it is labeled a “Team”. This is because as with any highly professional team it has its managers, its front office and its owners. These are the “Power Elite” to whom it is beholden. They are always anonymous, and their network is ancient and world-wide. Let us draw an example from recent history.

During the Senate Hearings of 1975 on “Alleged Assassination Ploys Involving Foreign Leaders,” Senator Charles C. Mathias’ thoughts went back to November 22, 1963 and to the *coup d’état* brought about by the surgical precision of the death of President John F. Kennedy, when he said:

Let me draw an example from history. When Thomas Becket (Saint Thomas Becket, 1118-1170) was proving to be an annoyance, as Castro; the King said “Who will rid me of this man?” He didn’t say to somebody, go out and murder him. He said who will rid me of this man, and let it go at that. (As you will recall, Thomas Becket’s threat was not against the King, it was against the way the King wanted to run the government.)

With no explicit orders, and with no more authority than that, four of King Henry’s knights, found and killed “this man”, Saint Thomas Becket inside of his church. That simple statement ... no more than a wish floating in air ... proved to be all the orders needed.

Then, with that great historical event in mind, Senator Mathias went on to say:

which might be taken by the Director of Central Intelligence or by anybody else, as Presidential authorization to go forward ... you felt that some spark had been transmitted ...

To this Senator Jesse Helms added:

Yes, and if he had disappeared from the scene they would not have been unhappy.

There’s the point! Because the structure, a “Power Elite”, “High Cabal” or similar ultimate ruling organization, exists and the psychological atmosphere has been prepared, nothing more has to be said than that which ignites that “spark” of an assumed “authorization to go forward.” Very often, this is the way in which the Secret Team gets its orders ... they are no more than “a wish floating in air.”

This book is about a major element of this real power structure of the world and of its impact upon the CIA and its allies around the world. It is based upon much personal experience generally derived from my military service from mid-1941 to 1964: U.S. Army Cavalry, U.S. Army Armored Force, U.S. Army Air Corps and Army Air Force, and finally the U. S. Air Force; and more specifically from my special assignments in the Pentagon from 1955 to 1964. At retirement, I was the first Chief of Special Operations with the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. All of these duties, during those Pentagon years, were structured to provide “the military support of the world-wide clandestine activities of the CIA.” They were performed in accordance with the provisions of an Eisenhower era, National Security Council Directive No. 5412/2, March 15, 1954.

Since this book was first published in 1973, we have witnessed the unauthorized release of the Defense Department’s official “history of United States involvement in Vietnam from World War II to 1969” popularly known as the “Pentagon Papers,” “Watergate” and the resignation of President Nixon, the run away activities of the “Vietnam War,” the “Arab Oil Embargo” that led to the greatest financial heist in history, the blatantly unlawful “Iran Contra” affair, and the run-away banking scandals of the eighties. Many of these were brought about and master minded by renegade “Secret Team” members who operated, without Presidential direction; without National Security Council approval so they say; and, generally, without official Congressional knowledge. This trend increases. Its scope expands ... even today.

I pointed out, years ago in public pronouncements, that the CIA’s most important “Cover Story” is that of an “intelligence” agency. Of course the CIA does make use of “intelligence” and its assumed role of “intelligence gathering,” but that is largely a front for its primary interest, “Fun and Games” ... as the “Old Boys” or “Jedburgh’s” of the WW II period Office of Strategic Services (OSS) called it.

The CIA is the center of a vast, and amorphous mechanism that specializes in Covert Operations ... or as Allen Dulles always called it, “Peacetime Operations.” In this sense, the CIA is the willing tool of a higher level High Cabal, that may include representatives and highly skilled agents of the CIA and other instrumentality’s of the government, certain cells of the business and professional world and, almost always, foreign participation. It is this ultimate Secret Team,

its allies, and its method of operation that are the principal subject of this book.

It must be made clear that at the heart of Covert Operations is the denial by the “operator,” i.e. the U.S. Government, of the existence of national sovereignty. The covert operator can, and does, make the world his playground ... including the U.S.A.

Today, in the mid-1990's, the most important events of this century are taking place with the ending of the “Cold War” era, and the beginning of the new age of “One World” under the control of businessmen and their lawyers, rather than under the threat of military power and ideological differences. This scenario for change has been brought about by a series of Secret Team operations skillfully orchestrated while the contrived hostilities of the Cold War were at their zenith.

Two important events of that period have been little noted. First, on Feb. 7, 1972 Maurice Stans, Nixon's Secretary of Commerce opened a “White House Conference on the Industrial World Ahead, A Look at Business in 1990.” This three-day meeting of more than fifteen hundred of the country's leading businessmen, scholars, and the like were concluded with this memorable summary statement by Roy L. Ash, president of Litton Industries:

... state capitalism may well be a form for world business in the world ahead; that the western countries are trending toward a more unified and controlled economy, having a greater effect on all business; and the communist nations are moving more and more toward a free market system. The question posed during this conference on which a number of divergent opinions arose, was whether ‘East and West’ would meet some place toward the middle about 1990.

That was an astounding forecast as we consider events of the seventies and eighties and discover that his forecast, if it ever was a forecast and not a pre-planned arrangement, was right on the nose.

This amazing forecast had its antecedent pronouncements, among which was another “One World” speech by this same Roy Ash during the Proceedings of the American Bankers Association National Automation Conference in New York City, May 8,9,10, 1967.

The affairs of the world are becoming inextricably interlinked ... governments, notably, cannot effectively perform the task of

creating and distributing food and other essential products and services ... economic development is the special capability and function of business and industrial organizations ... business organizations are the most efficient converters of the original resources of the world into usable goods and services.

The flash of genius, the new ideas, always comes from the marvelous workings of the individual brain, not from the committee sessions. Organizations are to implement ideas, not to have them.

As a Charter Member of the American Bankers Association's Committee on Automation Planning and Technology I was a panelist at that same convention as we worked to convert the 14,000 banks of this country to automation and the ubiquitous Credit Card. All of these subjects were signs of the times leading toward the demise of the Soviet Union in favor of an evolutionary process toward One World.

In addition to the 1972 White House Conference on the Industrial World Ahead a most significant yet quite unnoticed action took place during that same year when President Nixon and his then-Secretary of the Treasury, George Shultz, established a Russian/American organization called the "USA USSR Trade and Economic Council." Its objective was to bring about a union of the Fortune 500 Chief Executive Officers of this country, among others, such as the hierarchy of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, with their counterparts in the Soviet Union. This important relationship, sponsored by David Rockefeller of Chase Manhattan Bank and his associates, continues into the "One World" years.

This bilateral activity increased during the Reagan/Shultz years of the Eighties despite such "Evil Empire" staged tantrums as the Korean Airlines Boeing 747 Flight 007 "shootdown" in 1983.

It is this "US-TEC" organization, with its counterpart bilateral agreements among other nations and the USSR, that has brought about the massive changes of the former Communist world. These did not go unnoticed. During a speech delivered in 1991, Giovanni Agnelli, chief executive officer of the Fiat Company and one of the most powerful men in Europe, if not the world, remarked:

The fall of the Soviet Union is one of the very few instances in history in which a world power has been defeated on the battlefield of ideas.

Now, is this what Nixon, Stans, Shultz, Ash, Rockefeller and others had in mind during those important decades of the sixties, seventies and eighties. For one thing, it may be said quiet accurately, that these momentous events marked the end of the Cold War and have all but shredded the canopy of the nuclear umbrella over mankind.

The Cold War was the most expensive war in history. R. Buckminster Fuller wrote in *Grunch of Giants*:

We can very properly call World War I the million dollar war and World War II the billion dollar war and World War III (Cold War) the trillion dollar war.

The power structure that kept the Cold War at that level of cost and intensity had been spearheaded by the Secret Team and its multinational covert operations, to wit:

This is the fundamental game of the Secret Team. They have this power because they control secrecy and secret intelligence and because they have the ability to take advantage of the most modern communications system in the world, of global transportation systems, of quantities of weapons of all kinds, and when needed, the full support of a world-wide U.S. military supporting base structure. They can use the finest intelligence system in the world, and most importantly, they have been able to operate under the canopy of an assumed, ever-present enemy called "Communism." It will be interesting to see what "enemy" develops in the years ahead. It appears that "UFO's and Aliens" are being primed to fulfill that role for the future. To top all of this, there is the fact that the CIA, itself, has assumed the right to generate and direct secret operations.

—L. Fletcher Prouty
Alexandria, VA 1997

1998 Preface

How many of us recall that early in June 1971 the official history of “The United States Involvement in Vietnam from World War II to the Present” burst upon the scene in several of the larger newspapers of this country? It was said that this enormous collection, given the name “The Pentagon Papers” of “37 studies and 15 collections of documents done in 43 volumes” had been secretly released to these newspapers by a young man, Daniel Ellsberg, who had stolen them despite their cloak of highest secrecy.

Furthermore, how many recall that the Director of the Study Task Force, Leslie H. Gelb, whom Secretary Robert McNamara had directed to head this task force was assigned to the office of the Assistant Secretary, International Security Affairs, under the Honorable Paul C. Warneke and that his immediate superior was the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Plans & Arms Control, Morton Halperin? Two important comments are to be derived from the introductory material published in the Senator Gravel Edition of *The Pentagon Papers, Volume One*:

- a) “On June 17, 1967, Secretary Robert S. McNamara directed that a task force be formed to study the history of United States in Vietnam from World War II to the present.”

Note: Mr. McNamara did not include the word “war” in his directive, nor did he use it in his recent book, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam*. What took place in Vietnam was not a “war” in the classic sense.

- b) “The Pentagon Papers tell of the purposeful withholding and distortion of facts. There are no military secrets to be found here, only an appalling litany of faulty premises and questionable objectives, built one upon the other over the course of four administrations, and perpetuated today by a fifth

administration”, Mike Gravel, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.
August 1971.

Senator Gravel's comment becomes quite obvious to the careful reader.

It is Mr. McNamara's direction to the Task Force that confirms the historical date, Sept. 2, 1945, as the beginning of the U.S. Armed Forces involvement in Vietnam. He recognized all too well that United States involvement in Vietnam had begun on that same date when World War II ended. There had been no hiatus in our military engagement in that extended conflict from “Pearl Harbor” in 1941 to that ignominious helicopter retreat from Saigon in 1975, and it had all been planned that way.

Few historians have noted the fact that initial plans for the United States role in Korea and Vietnam had been made at the “Big Four” Teheran Conference of Nov/Dec 1943, when Roosevelt, Churchill, Chiang Kai-Shek and Stalin met to discuss long range military plans to include the de-Colonialization of Southeast Asian states. (It is generally over-looked that Chiang Kai Shek was at Teheran for that most important meeting. This will be thoroughly discussed in this book, and will include a reference in a U.S. Government publication which confirms that fact. Also, I was ordered by the military to fly the Chinese delegation from Cairo to Teheran after the Cairo Conference in Oct 1943.)

These facts are of grave importance to an understanding of an accurate appraisal of what some now call “The Vietnam War” ... despite the fact that by all conventional standards what took place during those hectic three decades in Indochina was certainly not a war. First of all this country had never established a “military objective” for the conflict in Viet Nam.

The reason, of course, was because of the realization that Ho Chi Minh's potential allies, Russia and China, had combat-ready nuclear weapons and most certainly possessed the option to employ them against us, either in the United States or in Southeast Asia, had they chosen to do so. As a result our combat commanders were prohibited from preparing and pursuing a bona fide military objective in Vietnam.

By 1954, during the Eisenhower administration, this had become a critical subject for all U.S. military planning ... not simply that for Southeast Asia, but world wide.

During a National Security Council Meeting, January 8, 1954 on the subject of “Significant Developments affecting U.S. Security” and with special emphasis on Southeast Asia, President Eisenhower said:

For himself, said the President with great force, he simply could not imagine the United States putting ground forces anywhere in Southeast Asia, except possibly in Malaya ... to do this anywhere was simply beyond his contemplation. Indeed the key to winning this war was to get the Vietnamese to fight. There was just no sense in even talking about United States forces replacing the French in Indochina. If we did so, the Vietnamese could be expected to transfer their hatred of the French to us. I can not tell you, said the President with vehemence, how bitterly opposed I am to such a course of action. This war in Indochina would absorb our troops by divisions!²

This remarkable comment by the man who had led U.S. Forces to victory in Europe during World War II marked a major turning point in Strategic War Planning both in the United States and the world. It must be noted that by Jan 8, 1954 President Eisenhower was fully cognizant of the fact that the Russians had already detonated the first portable, tactical Hydrogen Bomb. As a result, before the close of this memorable NSC meeting it was agreed that:

*d. The National Security Council ... requested the Department of Defense, in collaboration with the Central Intelligence Agency, urgently study and report to the Council all feasible further steps, short of the overt use of U.S. forces in combat, which the United States might take to assist in achieving the success of the NSC Action No. 1005 “Laniel-Navarre” Plan.*³

The President had put his opinion on the record, Jan 8, 1954. In spite of that, during the following meeting of the NSC, Jan 14, 1954, the Secretary of State John Foster Dulles made the following significant comment:

If we could carry on effective guerrilla operations against the new Vietminh government we should be able to make as much trouble for that government as they had made for our side ...⁴

2. *Foreign Relations of the United States: 1952-54, Volume XIII, Indochina, Part I.* Department of State Publication 9210, Washington, D.C. p. 949.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 954.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 963.

At the close of this January 14th meeting the “National Security Council ... Agreed that the Director of Central Intelligence, in collaboration with the other appropriate departments and agencies, should develop plans, as suggested by the Secretary of State, for certain contingencies in Indochina.”⁵ By the end of the month, it had been decided that Allen Dulles' choice for the head of the CIA's “Saigon Military Mission”, Colonel Edward G. Lansdale would be sent to Saigon to establish that office by July 1, 1954.

Then on March 15, 1954 the National Security Council launched a major new covert counter-revolutionary, counter-insurgency program aimed at combatting the Communists, especially in the grey areas and behind the “Iron Curtain.” As a result, NSC 5412 of March 15, 1954 marked the official recognition and sanctioning of a much larger program of anti-Communist covert activities in Indochina and throughout the world. In the interests of world peace and U.S. national security, the overt foreign activities of the U.S. Government should be supplemented by covert operations.

With this action the U.S. Government for the first time defined “Covert Operations” as:

All activities conducted pursuant to this directive which are so planned and executed that any U.S. Government responsibility for them is not evident to unauthorized persons and that if uncovered the U.S. Government can plausibly disclaim any responsibility for them. Such operations shall not include: armed conflict by recognized military forces, espionage and counterespionage, nor cover and deception for military operations.⁶

This was a pivotal decision in the era of the international availability of the hydrogen bomb. It was not significant solely for the “Vietnam” era of 1954, but also for today ... 1998 ... as the nations of the world are discussing the build-up and strengthening of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. We continue to face the insoluble “Hydrogen Bomb Weapon” dilemma.

The cloud over-hanging both these NSC sessions of 1954, and the current NATO expansion talks of 1998 has been the same: “What

5. *Ibid.*, p. 964.

6. *The U.S. Government and the Vietnam War, Part I, 1945-1961*, prepared for the Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, by the Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, printed by the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1984. See Appendix C on page 330.

is the strategic role of the Hydrogen Weapon in time of war?" Or to put it in its more basic form, "Can the Hydrogen Weapon be used in warfare, ever, in any capacity ... victoriously?"

What has been the motivation for such a series of Strategic discussions by the National Security Council at that time: January 1954, and today?

On the authority of Bernard J. O'Keefe, formerly Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of EG & G, Inc. one of the nation's leading high-technology companies, and the man who armed the first "Fat Man" five-foot-diameter implosion type Atomic Bomb that was dropped over Nagasaki during August 1945, stated:

"The true father of the Hydrogen bomb is not Edward Teller, but Andrei Sakharov of the Soviet Union who detonated the first deliverable hydrogen bomb on August 12, 1953."

The first test-explosion of a U.S. hydrogen bomb device was the BRAVO shot at a test site in the Pacific on March 1, 1954.

Note carefully the sequence of dates above from the emphatic statement by Eisenhower on Jan 8, 1954 through to the National Security Council decision defining "Covert Operations" on March 15, 1954. These bracket the initial and operational Hydrogen bomb explosion dates by the Soviets on August 12, 1953 and the first U.S. shot on March 1, 1954.

As the world's military strategists noted those developments they knew all too well that "Conventional" warfare in any form that had been known before was no longer the final solution to international conflicts of any size. At the same time they were beginning to realize that these great "Fission-Fusion-Fission" hydrogen weapons would not resolve international disputes effectively either.

Bernard O'Keefe, one of the few men with a total, practical understanding of the hydrogen weapon, summed up this problem that faces the citizens of the entire world at the close of his book, *Nuclear Hostages*:

Only when we get economic cooperation can we hope to get political reconciliation. Only when a prosperous economy permits it, will the barriers to human rights of the police state begin to fall. Only when these things begin to happen can mutual understanding and mutual trust emerge. Only then can come meaningful disarmament. Only then, and generations away, can

we realize the hopes for the world government, the ultimate solution to the nuclear threat.

We have the time.

We have until the end of the world.

Except for Mr. O'Keefe's 1983 words, the above is an outline of the thinking of World Leaders of the Mid-Fifties era. It may be noted that the alternative to that "War Planning" stalemate was first stated by the Dulles brothers team. They saw a future for "Covert Operations" as a potential alternative. This led to NSC's approval of CIA's Saigon Military Mission and to the most important document of those decades, NSC Directive #5412 of March 15, 1954 that became the official recognition and sanctioning of covert operations in Indochina and throughout the world. Such operations were required to have been "Approved and Directed" by the NSC, and specifically:

Such operations shall not include: armed conflict by recognized military forces, espionage and counterespionage, nor cover and deception for military operations.

In other words, during this age of thermonuclear weapons, the United States would utilize covert operations under the control of the CIA. From that date on the CIA became:

1. This nation's "Secret Team", and
2. The "Make-War" power-center of this country.

During this period of the early Fifties, I was the Commanding Officer of the 99th Air Transport Squadron of the Military Air Transport Squadron in Tokyo with regularly scheduled flights to Honolulu on the East and across Southeast Asia to Saudi Arabia on the West. All during 1952-1954 my squadron operated in and out of Saigon weekly. As a result I became quite familiar with the troubled situation in that emerging country, later known as South Vietnam, first-hand; and with Edward G. Lansdale and his Saigon Military Mission (SMM).

It became clear that the CIA role in Indochina was to strengthen its SMM, to recruit as many Vietnamese as possible in order to assist Ngo Dinh Diem with the task of establishing a new state: South Vietnam.

I was transferred from Tokyo to the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk in 1954, and after that excellent course, transferred to the Pentagon. Shortly after reporting there I was informed by the Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force, Gen. Thomas D. White that I had been selected to establish an Air Force office designed to operate under the provisions of NSC 5412 to “provide military support of the clandestine operations of the CIA.” I was introduced to selected representatives of each Air Force staff section that would be involved in this new task, and then Mr. Allen Dulles, Director of Central Intelligence had me put through a complete indoctrination of his Agency, which ended with an escorted trip around the world to meet personally with CIA Station Chiefs of each country where there was clandestine activity. By the end of 1956, it had become clear to me and to my associates that the CIA was certainly the “Make War” branch of the government and that new “Secret Team” would be responsible for most “war-like” activity around the world ... provided it had been directed by the National Security Council to do so.

This is the background of the nation's planning for “warfare” during this Nuclear era, and for the role of the military services in its support. This was my responsibility from 1955-1964 as my work was cycled first through the Air Force, then through the Office of the Secretary of State and finally through the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

This book, *The Secret Team* relates much of the story with episodes that have never been made public before.

L. Fletcher Prouty
Colonel, U.S. Air Force (Retired)

Appendix B

Copies of NSAMs 263 and 273, and Some Primary Supporting Documents

Contained herein are copies of National Security Action Memorandum Number 263 (10/11/63), Number 273 (11/26/63), and some of their primary supporting documents. These representations are taken from *Foreign Relations of the United States, Volume IV, Vietnam August-December 1963* (Dept. of State Publication 9857), published in 1991 by the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

Fletcher describes his participation as one of General Krulak's principal writers for the text that became NSAM 263 beginning on page 70, **JFK Prepares To Get Out Of Vietnam: The Taylor/McNamara Trip Report of October 1963 and NSAM 263**. As explained in the first paragraph of the Preface of *FRUS, vol IV*:

The publication *Foreign Relations of the United States* constitutes the official record of the foreign policy of the United States. The volumes in the series include, subject to necessary security considerations, all documents needed to give a comprehensive record of the major foreign policy decisions of the United States together with appropriate materials concerning the facts that contributed to the formulation of policies.

In early 1992, after learning about the existence of this new publication from Fletcher, I obtained a copy and studied portions of it. We were discussing the prevalence of journalists and university professors who themselves are not acquainted with such historically precise information. Fletcher summed up the situation in this way:

I was doing a TV show to Australia, live, night before last. And there was a man from Los Angeles talking about the subject [JFK and Vietnam], and, my word he hadn't even read this book. At

the end of the show the man from Australia—the host of the show—asked me, “What do think is going to be the value of opening the files with respect to the Kennedy murder?” I replied, “I can’t see it being worth a darn. Here we are listening to people who haven’t even cracked the books that *are* opened, and if they have, they don’t understand what’s in them. I don’t see that this will make a damn bit of difference. If people aren’t going to read books that are available, why talk about reading books that aren’t available?”

This is the key to this subject. If people don’t read material like this—where one can see that 263 is completely spelled out. All of the meetings that were held—there were over 50 meetings held before NSAM 263 was published. And here are these uninformed people that are professors in college, important writers in big magazines, and they haven’t even read this primary source material.

Signed by President Johnson four days after President Kennedy’s murder, NSAM 273 was extraordinarily significant given the fact that for the first time the stated goal of the U.S. was altered to be that of helping the South Vietnamese government *win* the war:

It remains the central object of the United States in South Vietnam to assist the people and Government of that country to win their contest against the externally directed and supported Communist conspiracy.

This sort of wording was something President Kennedy had steadfastly vetoed when it had been proposed by some of his military advisors a number of times in the past. Thus NSAM 273 explicitly delineated the beginning of the reversal of JFK’s policy that had begun to take explicit shape with the signing of NSAM 263. This despite the fact that one of LBJ’s most common phrases after the assassination and during his 1964 campaign was “let us continue.” This breach was further obfuscated by such statements as “It *remains* the central object of the United States in South Vietnam...” Such declarations indicated the *discontinuity* with events that were unfolding and being directed by President Kennedy prior to November 22, 1963.

For anyone interested in learning about the historical background and context for such affairs of state, these *FRUS* volumes are indispensable.

The following is an outline of the documents included in this Appendix. Each is listed by the number they appear as in the *Foreign Relations of the United States, Volume IV, Vietnam August-December 1963*:

194. National Security Action Memorandum No. 263

This recorded JFK's approval of withdrawing 1,000 U.S. military personnel by the end of 1963, as well as other recommendations from the Taylor/McNamara Memo (doc. 167) which included withdrawal of "the bulk of U.S. personnel by ... the end of 1965."

167. Memorandum From the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Taylor) and the Secretary of Defense (McNamara) to the President
NSAM 263 approves Section IB(1-3) of this Memorandum created as a result of the Taylor/McNamara trip to South Vietnam in late September-beginning of October.
169. Summary Record of the 519th Meeting of the National Security Council, White House, Washington, October 2, 1963, 6 p.m.
More background on the policy decision made in light of the Taylor/McNamara Report (doc. 167) presented to JFK earlier in the day.
170. Record of Action No. 2472, Taken at the 519th Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, October 2, 1963
NSC confirmation of the endorsements made by JFK of the Taylor/McNamara Report.
179. Memorandum for the Files of a Conference With the President, White House, Washington, October 5, 1963, 9:30 a.m.
NSAM 263 directly refers to this Memorandum.
181. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Vietnam
NSAM 263 directly refers to this Telegram.

331. National Security Action Memorandum No. 273

This 11/26/63 NSAM initiated LBJ's reversal of the plans JFK had been implementing for the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam.

321. Memorandum of Discussion at the Special Meeting on Vietnam, Honolulu, November 20, 1963
NSAM 273 is purported to have grown out of the discussion that took place in Honolulu on 11/20/63 with the majority of the Kennedy cabinet in attendance.

NSAM No. 263

194. National Security Action Memorandum No. 263¹

Washington, October 11, 1963.

TO

Secretary of State
Secretary of Defense
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

SUBJECT

South Vietnam

At a meeting on October 5, 1963,² the President considered the recommendations contained in the report of Secretary McNamara and General Taylor on their mission to South Vietnam.

The President approved the military recommendations contained in Section I B (1-3) of the report, but directed that no formal announcement be made of the implementation of plans to withdraw 1,000 U.S. military personnel by the end of 1963.

After discussion of the remaining recommendations of the report, the President approved an instruction to Ambassador Lodge which is set forth in State Department telegram No. 534 to Saigon.³

McGeorge Bundy

1. Source: Department of State, S/S-NSC Files: Lot 72 D 316, NSAMs. Top Secret; Eyes Only. The Director of Central Intelligence and the Administrator of AID also received copies. Also printed in *United States-Vietnam Relations, 1945-1967*, Book 12, p. 578.

2. See Document 179.

3. Document 181.

167. Memorandum From the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Taylor) and the Secretary of Defense (McNamara) to the President ¹

Washington, October 2, 1963.

SUBJECT

Report of McNamara-Taylor Mission to South Vietnam

Your memorandum of 21 September 1963 ² directed that General Taylor and Secretary McNamara proceed to South Vietnam to appraise the military and para-military effort to defeat the Viet Cong and to consider, in consultation with Ambassador Lodge, related political and social questions. You further directed that, if the prognosis in our judgment was not hopeful, we should present our views of what action must be taken by the South Vietnam Government and what steps our Government should take to lead the Vietnamese to that action.

Accompanied by representatives of the State Department, CIA, and your Staff, we have conducted an intensive program of visits to key operational areas, supplemented by discussions with U.S. officials in all major U.S. Agencies as well as officials of the GVN and third countries.

We have also discussed our findings in detail with Ambassador Lodge, and with General Harkins and Admiral Felt.

The following report is concurred in by the Staff Members of the mission as individuals, subject to the exceptions noted.

I. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Conclusions.

1. The military campaign has made great progress and continues to progress.

2. There are serious political tensions in Saigon (and perhaps elsewhere in South Vietnam) where the Diem-Nhu government is becoming increasingly unpopular.

1. Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Vietnam Country Series, Memos and Miscellaneous. Top Secret. Also printed in *United States-Vietnam Relations, 1945-1967*, Book 12, pp. 554-573.

2. Document 142.

3. There is no solid evidence of the possibility of a successful coup, although assassination of Diem or Nhu is always a possibility.

4. Although some, and perhaps an increasing number, of GVN military officers are becoming hostile to the government, they are more hostile to the Viet Cong than to the government and at least for the near future they will continue to perform their military duties.

5. Further repressive actions by Diem and Nhu could change the present favorable military trends. On the other hand, a return to more moderate methods of control and administration, unlikely though it may be, would substantially mitigate the political crisis.

6. It is not clear that pressures exerted by the U.S. will move Diem and Nhu toward moderation. Indeed, pressures may increase their obduracy. But unless such pressures are exerted, they are almost certain to continue past patterns of behavior.

B. Recommendations.

We recommend that:

1. General Harkins review with Diem the military changes necessary to complete the military campaign in the Northern and Central areas (I, II, and III Corps) by the end of 1964, and in the Delta (IV Corps) by the end of 1965. This review would consider the need for such changes as:

a. A further shift of military emphasis and strength to the Delta (IV Corps).

b. An increase in the military tempo in all corps areas, so that all combat troops are in the field an average of 20 days out of 30 and static missions are ended.

c. Emphasis on "clear and hold operations" instead of terrain sweeps which have little permanent value.

d. The expansion of personnel in combat units to full authorized strength.

e. The training and arming of hamlet militia to an accelerated rate, especially in the Delta.

f. A consolidation of the strategic hamlet program, especially in the Delta, and action to insure that future strategic hamlets are not built until they can be protected, and until civic action programs can be introduced.

2. A program be established to train Vietnamese so that essential functions now performed by U.S. military personnel can be carried out by Vietnamese by the end of 1965. It should be possible to withdraw the bulk of U.S. personnel by that time.

3. In accordance with the program to train progressively Vietnamese to take over military functions, the Defense Department should announce in the very near future presently prepared plans to withdraw 1000 U.S. military personnel by the end of 1963. This action should be explained in low key as

an initial step in a long-term program to replace U.S. personnel with trained Vietnamese without impairment of the war effort.

4. The following actions be taken to impress upon Diem our disapproval of his political program.

a. Continue to withhold commitment of funds in the commodity import program, but avoid a formal announcement. The potential significance of the withholding of commitments for the 1964 military budget should be brought home to the top military officers in working level contacts between USOM and MACV and the Joint General Staff; up to now we have stated \$95 million may be used by the Vietnamese as a planning level for the commodity import program for 1964. Henceforth we could make clear that this is uncertain both because of lack of final appropriation action by the Congress and because of executive policy.

b. Suspend approval of the pending AID loans for the Saigon- Cholon Waterworks and Saigon Electric Power Project. We should state clearly that we are doing so as a matter of policy.

c. Advise Diem that MAP and CIA support for designated units, now under Colonel Tung's control (mostly held in or near the Saigon area for political reasons) will be cut off unless these units are promptly assigned to the full authority of the Joint General Staff and transferred to the field.

d. Maintain the present purely "correct" relations with the top GVN, and specifically between the Ambassador and Diem. Contact between General Harkins and Diem and Defense Secretary Thuan on military matters should not, however, be suspended, as this remains an important channel of advice. USOM and USIA should also seek to maintain contacts where these are needed to push forward programs in support of the effort in the field, while taking care not to cut across the basic picture of U.S. disapproval and uncertainty of U.S. aid intentions. We should work with the Diem government but not support it.³

As we pursue these courses of action, the situation must be closely watched to see what steps Diem is taking to reduce repressive practices and to improve the effectiveness of the military effort. We should set no fixed criteria, but recognize that we would have to decide in 2-4 months whether to move to more drastic action or try to carry on with Diem even if he had not taken significant steps.

3. Mr. Colby believes that the official "correct" relationship should be supplemented by selected and restricted unofficial and personal relationships with individuals in the GVN, approved by the Ambassador, where persuasion could be fruitful without derogation of the official U.S. posture. [Footnote in the source text.]

5. At this time, no initiative should be taken to encourage actively a change in government. Our policy should be to seek urgently to identify and build contacts with an alternative leadership if and when it appears.

6. The following statement be approved as current U.S. policy toward South Vietnam and constitute the substance of the government position to be presented both in Congressional testimony and in public statements.

a. The security of South Vietnam remains vital to United States security. For this reason, we adhere to the overriding objective of denying this country to Communism and of suppressing the Viet Cong insurgency as promptly as possible. (By suppressing the insurgency we mean reducing it to proportions manageable by the national security forces of the GVN, unassisted by the presence of U.S. military forces.) We believe the U.S. part of the task can be completed by the end of 1965, the terminal date which we are taking as the time objective of our counterinsurgency programs.

b. The military program in Vietnam has made progress and is sound in principle.

c. The political situation in Vietnam remains deeply serious. It has not yet significantly affected the military effort, but could do so at some time in the future. If the result is a GVN ineffective in the conduct of the war, the U.S. will review its attitude toward support for the government. Although we are deeply concerned by repressive practices, effective performance in the conduct of the war should be the determining factor in our relations with the GVN.

d. The U.S. has expressed its disapproval of certain actions of the Diem-Nhu regime and will do so again if required. Our policy is to seek to bring about the abandonment of repression because of its effect on the popular will to resist. Our means consist of expressions of disapproval and the withholding of support from GVN activities that are not clearly contributing to the war effort. We will use these means as required to assure an effective military program.

[Here follow Sections II, "Military Situation and Trends," III, "Economic Situation and Trends," IV, "Political Situation and Trends," and V, "Effect on Political Tension."]

VI. OVERALL EVALUATION

From the above analysis it is clear that the situation requires a constant effort by the U.S. to obtain a reduction of political tensions and improved performance by the Vietnamese Government. We cannot say with assurance whether the effort against the Viet Cong will ultimately fail in the absence of major political improvements. However, it does seem clear that after another period of repressive action progress may be reduced and indeed reversed. Although the present momentum might conceivably continue to

carry the effort forward even if Diem remains in power and political tensions continue, any significant slowing in the rate of progress would surely have a serious effect on U.S. popular support for the U.S. effort.

VII. U.S. LEVERAGES TO OBTAIN DESIRED CHANGES IN THE DIEM REGIME

A. Conduct of U.S. Representatives.

U.S. personnel in Saigon might adopt an attitude of coolness toward their Vietnamese counterparts, maintaining only those contacts and communications which are necessary for the actual conduct of operations in the field. To some extent this is the attitude already adopted by the Ambassador himself, but it could be extended to the civilian and military agencies located in Saigon. The effect of such action would be largely psychological.

B. Economic Leverage.

Together, USOM's Commodity Import Program (CIP) and the PL 480 program account for between 60 and 70 percent of imports into Vietnam. The commitment of funds under the CIP has already been suspended. CIP deliveries result in the generation of piastres, most of which go to the support of the defense budget. It is estimated that CIP pipelines will remain relatively large for some five or six months, and within this time period there would not be a serious material effect. Even within this period, however, the flow of piastres to support the defense budget will gradually begin to decline and the GVN will be forced to draw down its foreign exchange reserves or curtail its military expenditures.

Within the domestic economy the existing large pipelines would mean that there would be no material reason for inflation to begin in the short term period. However, the psychological effect of growing realization that the CIP program has been suspended might be substantial in 2-4 months. Saigon has a large number of speculative traders, and although there is considerable police effort to control prices, this might not be able to contain a general trend of speculation and hoarding. Once inflation did develop, it could have a serious effect on the GVN budget and the conduct of the war.

Apart from CIP, two major AID projects are up for final approval—the Saigon-Cholon Waterworks (\$9 million) and the Saigon Electric Power Project (\$4 million). Suspension of these projects would be a possible means of demonstrating to Congress and the world that we disapprove of GVN policies and are not providing additional aid not directly essential to the war effort.

C. Paramilitary and Other Assistance.

(1) USOM assistance to the Combat Police and USOM and USIS assistance to the Director General of Information and the ARVN PsyWar Program could be suspended. These projects involve a relatively small amount of local currency but their suspension, particularly in the case of USIS, might adversely affect programs which the U.S. wishes to see progress.

(2) However, there would be merit in a gesture aimed at Colonel Tung, the Special Forces Commander, whose forces in or near Saigon played a conspicuous part in the pagoda affair and are a continuing support for Diem. Colonel Tung commands a mixed complex of forces, some of which are supported by MAP and others presently through CIA. All of those now in or near Saigon were trained either for combat missions or for special operations into North Vietnam and Laos. Purely on grounds of their not being used for their proper missions, the U.S. could inform Diem that we would cut off MAP and CIA support unless they were placed directly under Joint General Staff and were committed to field operations.

The practical effect of the cut-off would probably be small. The equipment cannot be taken out of the hands of the units, and the pay provided to some units could be made up from the GVN budget. Psychologically, however, the significance of the gesture might be greater. At the least it would remove one target of press criticism of the U.S., and would probably also be welcomed by the high military officers in Vietnam, and certainly by the disaffected groups in Saigon.

At the same time, support should continue, but through General Harkins rather than CIA, for border surveillance and other similar field operations that are contributing to the war effort.

We have weighed this cut-off action carefully. It runs a risk that Colonel Tung would refuse to carry out external operations against the Lao corridor and North Vietnam. It might also limit CIA's access to the military. However, U.S. liaison with high military officers could probably be fully maintained through the U.S. military advisors. On balance, we conclude that these possible disadvantages are outweighed by the gains implicit in this action.

(3) Consideration has been given both by USOM and the military (principally the JCS in Washington) to the possibility of redirecting economic and military assistance in such a fashion as to bypass the central government in Saigon. Military studies have shown the technical feasibility, though with great difficulty and cost, of supplying the war effort in the countryside over lines of communications which do not involve Saigon, and it is assumed that the same conclusions would apply to USOM deliveries to the field under the rural strategic hamlet program. However, there is a consensus among U.S. agencies in Saigon that such an effort is not practical

in the face of determined opposition by the GVN unless, of course, a situation had developed where the central government was no longer in control of some areas of the country. Nor is it at all clear that such diversion would operate to build up the position of the military or to cut down Nhu's position.

D. Propaganda.

Although the capability of USIS to support the United States campaign of pressure against the regime would be small, the Ambassador believes consideration must be given to the content and timing of the United States pronouncements outside the country. He has already suggested the use of the Voice of America in stimulating, in its broadcasts to Vietnamese, discussions of democratic political philosophies. This medium could be used to exploit a wide range of ascending political pressure. In addition, a phased program of United States official pronouncements could be developed for use in conjunction with the other leverages as they are applied. We must recognize the possibility that such actions may incite Diem to strong countermeasures.

E. The Leverage of Conditioning Our Military Aid on Satisfactory Progress.

Coupled with all the above there is the implicit leverage embodied in our constantly making it plain to Diem and other that the long term continuation of military aid is conditioned upon the Vietnamese Government demonstrating a satisfactory level of progress toward defeat of the insurgency.

F. Conclusions.

A program of limited pressures, such as the CIP suspension, will not have large material effects on the GVN or the war effort, at least for 2-4 months. The psychological effects could be greater, and there is some evidence that the suspension is already causing concern to Diem. However, the effect of pressures that can be carried out over an extended period without detriment to the war effort is probably limited with respect to the possibility of Diem making necessary changes.

We have not analyzed with care what the effect might be of a far more intensive level of pressure such as cessation of MAP deliveries or long continued suspension of the commodity import program. If the Diem government should fail to make major improvements, serious consideration would have to be given to this possible course of action, but we believe its effect on the war effort would be so serious—in psychological if not in

immediate material terms—that it should not be undertaken at the present time.

VIII. COUP POSSIBILITIES

A. Prospects of a Spontaneous Coup.

The prospects of an early spontaneous replacement of the Diem Regime are not high. The two principal sources of such an attempt, the senior military officers and the students, have both been neutralized by a combination of their own inability and the regime's effective countermeasures of control. The student organizations have been emasculated. The students themselves have displayed more emotion than determination and they are apparently being handled with sufficient police sophistication to avoid an explosion.

The generals appear to have little stomach for the difficult job of secretly arranging the necessary coalescence of force to upset the Regime.

Diem/Nhu are keenly aware of the capability of the generals to take over the country, utilizing the tremendous power now vested in the military forces. They, therefore, concentrate their manipulative talent on the general officers, by transfers, and by controls over key units and their locations. They are aware that these actions may reduce efficiency, but they tolerate it rather than risk the prospect that they be overthrown and their social revolution frustrated. They have established a praetorian guard to guarantee considerable bloodshed if any attack is made. The generals have seen slim hope of surmounting these difficulties without prohibitive risk to themselves, the unity of the Army and the Establishment itself.

Despite these unfavorable prospects for action in the short term, new factors could quickly arise, such as the death of Diem or an unpredictable and even irrational attack launched by a junior officer group, which would call urgently for U.S. support or counteraction. In such a case, the best alternative would appear to be the support of constitutional continuity in the person of the Vice President, behind whom arrangements could be developed for a more permanent replacement after a transitional period.

B. Prospects for Improvement under an Alternative Government.

The prospects that a replacement regime would be an improvement appear to be about 50-50.⁴ Initially, only a strongly authoritarian regime would be able to pull the government together and maintain order. In view of the pre-eminent role of the military in Vietnam today, it is probable that this role would be filled by a military officer, perhaps taking power after the selective process of a junta dispute. Such an authoritarian military regime, perhaps after an initial period of euphoria at the departure of Diem/Nhu,

would be apt to entail a resumption of the repression at least of Diem, the corruption of the Vietnamese Establishment before Diem, and an emphasis on conventional military rather than social, economic and political considerations, with at least an equivalent degree of xenophobic nationalism.

These features must be weighed, however, against the possible results of growing dominance or succession by Nhu, which would continue and even magnify the present dissension, unhappiness and unrest.

C. Possible U.S. Actions.

Obviously, clear and explicit U.S. support could make a great difference to the chances of a coup. However, at the present time we lack a clear picture of what acceptable individuals might be brought to the point of action, or what kind of government might emerge. We therefore need an intensive clandestine effort, under the Ambassador's direction, to establish necessary contacts to allow the U.S. to continuously appraise coup prospects.

If and when we have a better picture, the choice will still remain difficult whether we would prefer to take our chances on a spontaneous coup (assuming some action by Diem and Nhu would trigger it) or to risk U.S. prestige and having the U.S. hand show with a coup group which appeared likely to be a better alternative government. Any regime that was identified from the outset as a U.S. "puppet" would have disadvantages both within South Vietnam and in significant areas of the world, including other underdeveloped nations where the U.S. has a major role.

In any case, whether or not it proves to be wise to promote a coup at a later time, we must be ready for the possibility of a spontaneous coup, and this too requires clandestine contacts on an intensive basis.

IX. ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVE POLICIES

Broadly speaking, we believe there are three alternative policies the U.S. could pursue to achieve its political and military objectives:

1. Return to avowed support of the Diem regime and attempt to obtain the necessary improvements through persuasion from a posture of "reconciliation." This would not mean any expression of approval of the repressive actions of the regime, but simply that we would go back in practice to business as usual.

4. Mr. Sullivan (State) believes that a replacement regime which does not suffer from the overriding danger of Nhu's ambition to establish a totalitarian state (the control of which he might easily lose to the Communists in the course of his flirtations) would be inevitably better than the current regime even if the former did have the deficiencies described. [Footnote in the source text.]

2. Follow a policy of selective pressures: “purely correct” relationships at the top official level, continuing to withhold further actions in the commodity import program, and making clear our disapproval of the regime. A further element in this policy is letting the present impression stand that the U.S. would not be averse to a change of Government—although we would not take any immediate actions to initiate a coup.

3. Start immediately to promote a coup by high ranking military officers. This policy might involve more extended suspensions of aid and sharp denunciations of the regime’s actions so timed as to fit with coup prospects and planning.

Our analysis of these alternatives is as follows:

1. Reconciliation.

We believe that this course of action would be ineffective from the standpoint of events in South Vietnam alone, and would also greatly increase our difficulties in justifying the present U.S. support effort both to the Congress and generally to significant third nations. We are most unlikely, after recent events, to get Diem to make the necessary changes; on the contrary, he would almost certainly regard our reconciliation as an evidence that the U.S. would sit still for just about anything he did. The result would probably be not only a continuation of the destructive elements in the Regime’s policies but a return to larger scale repressions as and when Diem and Nhu thought they were necessary. The result would probably be sharp deterioration in the military situation in a fairly short period.

2. Selective Pressures.

We have examined numerous possibilities of applying pressures to Diem in order to incline him to the direction of our policies. The most powerful instrument at our disposal is the control of military and economic aid but any consideration of its use reveals the double-edged nature of its effects. Any long-term reduction of aid cannot but have an eventual adverse effect on the military campaign since both the military and the economic programs have been consciously designed and justified in terms of their contribution to the war effort. Hence, immediate reductions must be selected carefully and be left in effect only for short periods.

We believe that the present level of pressures is causing, and will cause, Diem some concern, while at the same time not significantly impairing the military effort. We are not hopeful that this level (or indeed any level) of pressure will actually induce Diem to remove Nhu from the picture completely. However, there is a better chance that Diem will at least be deterred from resuming large scale oppressions.

At the same time, there are various factors that set a time limit to pursuing this course of action in its present form. Within 2-4 months we have to make critical decisions with the GVN about its 1964 budget and our economic support level. In addition, there is a significant and growing possibility that even the present limited actions in the economic field—more

for psychological than for economic reasons—would start a wave of speculation and inflation that would be difficult to control or bring back into proper shape. As to when we would reverse our present course, the resumption of the full program of economic and military aid should be tied to the actions of the Diem government.

As a foundation for the development of our long-term economic and military aid programs, we believe it may be possible to develop specific military objectives to be achieved on an agreed schedule. The extent to which such objectives are met, in conjunction with an evaluation of the regime's political performance, would determine the level of aid for the following period.

3. Organizing a Coup.

For the reasons stated earlier, we believe this course of action should not be undertaken at the present time.

On balance we consider that the most promising course of action to adopt at this time is an application of selective short-term pressures, principally economic, and the conditioning of long-term aid on the satisfactory performance by the Diem government in meeting military and political objectives which in the aggregate equate to the requirements of final victory. The specific actions recommended in Section I of this report are consistent with this policy.

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

*Secretary of Defense*⁵

5. The source text bears no signatures.

169. Summary Record of the 519th Meeting of the National Security Council, White House, Washington, October 2, 1963, 6 p.m.¹

[Here follows an attendance list.]

The President opened the meeting by summarizing where we now stand on U.S. policy toward Vietnam. Most of the officials involved are in agreement. We are not papering over our differences. We are agreed to try to find effective means of changing the political atmosphere in Saigon. We are agreed that we should not cut off all U.S. aid to Vietnam, but are agreed on the necessity of trying to improve the situation in Vietnam by bringing about changes there. Reports of disagreements do not help the war effort in Vietnam and do no good to the government as a whole. We must all sign on and with good heart set out to implement the actions decided upon. Here and in Saigon we must get ahead by carrying out the agreed policy. Because we are agreed, we should convey our agreement to our subordinates. There are no differences between Washington and Ambassador Lodge or among the State and Defense Departments and the CIA. Ambassador Lodge has full authority to pull into line all U.S. government representatives in Saigon.

The President then turned to consideration of the draft public statement (copy attached).² He said that attacks on the Diem regime in public statements are less effective than actions which we plan to take. He preferred to base our policy on the harm which Diem's political actions are causing to the effort against the Viet Cong rather than on our moral opposition to the kind of government Diem is running.

Mr. Ball said that he and Secretary Rusk felt that there should be stress on the moral issues involved because of the beneficial effect which such emphasis produced in world public opinion, especially among UN delegates. The President replied that the major problem was with U.S. public opinion and he believed we should stress the harm Diem's policies are doing to the war effort against the Communists.

Mr. Bundy said Secretary McNamara and General Taylor wanted to emphasize the objective of winning the war. State Department officials wanted something more than an objective of merely winning the war. Mr. Harriman commented that he was prepared to accept the language as proposed.

1. Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Meetings and Memoranda Series, NSC Meeting No. 519. Top Secret. This meeting took place in the Cabinet Room and lasted until 6:30 p.m., according to the President's Log. (*Ibid.*)

2. Not attached, but see *infra*.

The President objected to the phrase “by the end of this year” in the sentence “The U.S. program for training Vietnamese should have progressed to the point where 1000 U.S. military personnel assigned to South Vietnam could be withdrawn.” He believed that if we were not able to take this action by the end of this year, we would be accused of being over optimistic.

Secretary McNamara said he saw great value in this sentence in order to meet the view of Senator Fulbright and others that we are bogged down forever in Vietnam. He said the sentence reveals that we have a withdrawal plan. Furthermore, it commits us to emphasize the training of Vietnamese, which is something we must do in order to replace U.S. personnel with Vietnamese.

The draft announcement was changed to make both of the time predictions included in paragraph 3 a part of the McNamara-Taylor report³ rather than as predictions of the President.

Mr. Bundy raised the question as to Ambassador Lodge’s view of the proposed draft policy statement. He said Ambassador Lodge could be told that because of the time pressure it had not been possible to clear the statement with him, but that it was felt here it would meet his requirements.

The President then asked about the measures which we would take to bring pressure on Diem. Secretary McNamara replied that a working group would propose recommendations for the President’s decision at a later date.

The President directed that no one discuss with the press any measures which he may decide to undertake on the basis of the recommendations to be made to him. He said we should not talk about such measures until they are agreed. The selected cuts in U.S. assistance should be discussed only in the Cabinet Room until all of them were finally agreed upon.

Mr. Salinger said he would decline to answer any press questions about what measures the U.S. proposed to take.

In response to a question by Administrator Bell, the President said he should reply to inquiring Congressmen that we are continuing our present aid schedule. After a further exchange, the President made clear that what he thought we should tell the Congressmen should be limited to saying that aid which we are now extending would be continued. He recognized that aid we are now extending is not that we had been extending prior to the August disturbances.

Secretary McNamara felt that Mr. Bell should say nothing. The group would return to the President by Friday⁴ with specific recommendations.

The President then asked what we should say about the news story attacking CIA which appeared in today’s “Washington Daily News.” He read a draft paragraph for inclusion in the public statement but rejected it as being too fluffy. He felt no one would believe a statement saying that there

3. Document 167.

4. October 4.

were no differences of view among the various U.S agencies represented in Saigon. He thought that we should say that now we had a positive policy endorsed by the National Security Council and that such policy would be carried out by all concerned.

Mr. Bundy suggested the President direct everyone present not to discuss the paper. Now that a policy decision had been made, we should be absolutely certain that no one continues to talk to the press about differences among U.S agencies.

The President said that as of tonight we have a policy and a report endorsed by all the members of the National Security Council.

The President asked again about the means we plan to use in changing the political atmosphere in Saigon.

Secretary McNamara discussed the recommendations in paragraph 4 of the report and said the group would be returning to the President with specific actions to be taken.

After the President left the meeting, there was a discussion as to how to put into final form the recommendations for the President. It was decided that a sub-group would make more precise the recommendations contained in paragraph 4, and that the group of principals would meet the following day in the absence of the President in order to prepare a paper for him to consider on Friday.⁵

The only substantive point that came out in this discussion was Secretary McNamara's belief that economic pressures against Diem should be undertaken over a longer period of time rather than a short period which would produce critical reactions in Saigon.

5. See footnote 3, Document 174.

170. Record of Action No. 2472, Taken at the 519th Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, October 2, 1963¹

McNAMARA-TAYLOR REPORT ON VIETNAM²

a. Endorsed the basic presentation on Vietnam made by Secretary McNamara and General Taylor.

b. Noted the President's approval of the following statement of U.S. policy which was later released to the press:³

"1. The security of South Viet Nam is a major interest of the United States as other free nations. We will adhere to our policy of working with the people and Government of South Viet Nam to deny this country to Communism and to suppress the externally stimulated and supported insurgency of the Viet Cong as promptly as possible. Effective performance in this undertaking is the central objective of our policy in South Viet Nam.

"2. The military program in South Viet Nam has made progress and is sound in principle, though improvements are being energetically sought.

"3. Major U.S. assistance in support of this military effort is needed only until the insurgency has been suppressed or until the national security forces of the Government of South Viet Nam are capable of suppressing it.

"Secretary McNamara and General Taylor reported their judgment that the major part of the U.S. military task can be completed by the end of 1965, although there may be a continuing requirement for a limited number of U.S. training personnel. They reported that by the end of this year, the U.S. program for training Vietnamese should have progressed to the point where 1,000 U.S. military personnel assigned to South Viet Nam can be withdrawn.

"4. The political situation in South Viet Nam remains deeply serious. The United States has made clear its continuing opposition to any repressive

1. Source: Department of State, S/S-NSC Files: Lot 70 D 265, NSC Meetings. Secret.

2. Document 167.

3. Printed in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: John F. Kennedy, 1963*, pp. 759-760. McGeorge Bundy sent Lodge the following telegram explaining this statement:

"Statement issued after NSC meeting today represents President's own judgment of common purpose and policy established by you and McNamara mission and is designed to strengthen your hand in next phase.

"Urgency of immediate public proof of unity here prevented prior reference to you but President asked me to insure that if you need any adjustment or modification you let us know." (CAP 63556, October 3; Kennedy Library, National Security File, Vietnam Country Series, State Cables)

Lodge responded in telegram 624 from Saigon: "The statement is excellent in

actions in South Viet Nam. While such actions have not yet significantly affected the military effort, they could do so in the future.

“5. It remains the policy of the United States, in South Viet Nam as in other parts of the world, to support the efforts of the people of that country to defeat aggression and to build a peaceful and free society.”

179. Memorandum for the Files of a Conference With the President, White House, Washington, October 5, 1963, 9:30 a.m.¹

SUBJECT

Presidential Conference on South Vietnam

A conference on South Vietnam was held in the Cabinet Room at 9:30 a.m., October 5, 1963. Present were the Vice President, Secretary Rusk, Secretary McNamara, Under Secretary Harriman, General Taylor, Mr. McCone, Administrator Bell, Mr. Bundy and Mr. Forrestal.

The meeting discussed the report of Secretary McNamara and General Taylor and considered draft instructions to Ambassador Lodge.

The President asked what would be the impact of a suspension of the Commodity Import Program. Mr. Bell replied that the Commodity Import Program accounted for approximately 40 percent of South Vietnam's imports. He emphasized that the real effect of a suspension would be an interruption of the flow of commodities into the country. A suspension would not necessarily have an impact upon the government budget. A continued suspension, however, would have a serious effect on the economy.

Mr. McCone said that he believed that the principal effect of a suspension would be to cause an economic crisis in the Saigon business community. This would be more pronounced than the political effects such a suspension might have upon Diem and Nhu.

Secretary McNamara pointed out that since we have already suspended the funding of imports under the program, it would be difficult to resume now.

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1. Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Meetings and Memoranda Series, Meetings on Vietnam. Top Secret. Drafted by Forrestal on October 7. Forrestal sent this memorandum to Bromley Smith under cover of a memorandum of October 8 which reads in part as follows:

"I also attach a draft NSAM together with a memorandum to Secretary McNamara. If the NSAM looks okay to you, will you shoot it off to McNamara for his clearance?"

"Should copies of the NSAM go to anybody else (Secretary Dillon, the Attorney General, the Vice President)? I should think perhaps not."

Smith indicated on the memorandum that he had obtained McNamara's clearance and agreed with Forrestal that no copies should be sent to any one else. The draft NSAM referred to comprised a draft report to the NSC, October 4 (see footnote 3, Document 174), an annex to the report (Document 175), and a draft of telegram 534 to Saigon (Document 181), which was essentially the draft report to the NSC in cable form.

The President agreed and asked Mr. Bell what would be the impact of a suspension of the two capital projects, the Saigon water works and the Saigon power project.

Mr. Bell replied that a suspension of these projects would not have an effect upon the economy or upon the military effort. But, he pointed out, both projects were already started and near their final stages of completion. The water project was complete except for the construction of a filtration plant; and the power station needed only a building to house the turbines, which had already been ordered. The President suggested that the contractors in each case simply be told that a decision on the final stages of the two projects would be delayed for policy reasons for an indefinite, but not necessarily long, period of time. Our public posture should be that the two projects were being suspended for further review.

The President noted that the recommendations with respect to the PL 480 program were tantamount to taking no substantive action at this time. In this connection he suggested that, for the present, we say only that we were not in a position to make forward decisions.

The discussion then turned to recommendations concerning a suspension of assistance to those forces under Colonel Tung which were located in Saigon rather than in the field. The President emphasized that we should make clear the basis upon which we were suspending aid to these forces, i.e. that they were not directly contributing to the war effort and therefore we could not support them.

The President asked Secretary McNamara for his opinion on the nature of the controversy between the Buddhists and the Government. Secretary McNamara replied that in his opinion the controversy was now more political than it was religious.

After a discussion with General Taylor, the President observed that the military improvements which we wished to press upon Diem be taken up as soon as possible by General Harkins rather than by Ambassador Lodge. It would be preferable if discussions of political improvements and possible U.S. pressure actions were undertaken by Ambassador Lodge. The President also said that we should not consider the political recommendations to be in the nature of a hard and fast list of demands, and that this point should be made more clear in the draft instructions.² The most likely and desirable result of any U.S. pressures would be to bring Diem to talk seriously to Lodge about the whole range of issues between us.

The Secretary of State agreed that the military matters should be pressed and that they stood the best chance of being accepted by the GVN. Nevertheless, he felt that we should not forget the importance of obtaining an improvement in the political climate in Saigon.

2. The changes made in the draft at the instruction of President are explained in the footnotes to Document 181. See also *infra*.

The President said that no formal or public statement should be made at the conclusion of the meeting. Instead he felt that the Secretaries of State and Defense in executive session before Congressional committees next week should confine themselves to saying that U.S. programs were under continuing review in light of the President's previously announced policy that we supported those things which furthered the war effort and would not support those things which do not.

It was agreed that Section 5 of the McNamara/Taylor Report be approved and that appropriate instructions implementing the recommendation in this section be transmitted via CAS channels. Mr. McCone said that any such activity should be carried on under the tightest security under the direction of the CAS station chief. The President agreed, but added that these activities should be subject to the Ambassador's general guidance.

The President also said that our decision to remove 1,000 U.S. advisors by December of this year should not be raised formally with Diem. Instead the action should be carried out routinely as part of our general posture of withdrawing people when they are no longer needed.

There is attached to this memorandum a copy of the McNamara/Taylor report and the final telegraphic instructions to Ambassador Lodge.³

M. V. Forrestal

3. Neither attached, but see Documents 167 and 181.

181. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Vietnam¹

Washington, October 5, 1963—5:39 p.m.

534. Eyes only for Ambassador Lodge.

1. Following is overall instruction resulting from NSC consideration of McNamara/Taylor report and recommendations together with those you have submitted in recent weeks. These instructions have the President's personal approval. At any time you feel it is necessary you may state to GVN that you are acting under the specific instructions of the President as recommended by the National Security Council.

2. Actions are designed to indicate to Diem Government our displeasure at its political policies and activities and to create significant uncertainty in that government and in key Vietnamese groups as to future intentions of United States. At same time, actions are designed to have at most slight impact on military or counterinsurgency effort against Viet Cong, at least in short term.

3. The recommendations on negotiations are concerned with what US is after, i.e., GVN action to increase effectiveness of its military effort; to ensure popular support to win war; and to eliminate strains on US Government and public confidence. The negotiating posture is designed not to lay down specific hard and fast demands or to set a deadline, but to produce movement in Vietnamese Government along these lines. In this way we can test and probe effectiveness of any actions the GVN actually takes and, at same time, maintain sufficient flexibility to permit US to resume full support of Diem regime at any time US Government deems it appropriate.

4. We recognize that recommended actions cannot be continued more than a limited period—tentatively estimated at two to four months—before they begin to have substantial impact on counterinsurgency effort. Even within this period, they will require careful and constant evaluation. As they begin to have substantial impact on war effort, further major decisions will be needed.

5. It is not possible to specify with precision the criteria that we should use in determining whether this proposed course of action has brought about adequate changes in performance of Diem Government and should,

1. Source: Department of State, Central Files, POL 15 S VIET. Top Secret; Immediate. Prepared by Hilsman with clearances of Harriman and Bundy. Cleared in draft with Rusk and McNamara. Regarding the drafting of this cable, see Document 179. Repeated to CINCPAC for POLAD exclusive for Felt.

therefore, be modified or withdrawn, or whether on contrary response of the Diem Government is clearly inadequate so that more drastic action should be considered. The desired GVN measures in this report are grouped under three headings: (1) military actions, (2) political actions, and (3) actions with respect to US itself. Test of adequacy of these actions should be whether, in combination, they improve effectiveness of GVN effort to point where we can carry on in confident expectation that war effort will progress satisfactorily. Since we cannot now foresee interlocking impact of possible actions both in GVN and here, we obviously do not expect that GVN will or even can perform on entire list and for this reason this is in no sense a package of demands. While general view here is that some action in each of three areas will be necessary, we do not now wish to prejudge question of balance or quantity of actions which may justify resumption of full cooperation with GVN.²

A. Actions:

6. *AID Commodity Import Program.* Existing suspension of new commitments will be maintained, and under this policy the presently due second-quarter allocation of \$20-25 million will be withheld. You should make this continued suspension clear in an appropriate manner to the GVN.

No public announcement will be made. In addition, US working levels should inform Vietnamese military that commodity import assumptions being used for budget planning purposes must now be considered uncertain not only from previously stated standpoint of Congressional uncertainty, but because of executive review of program.

7. *PL 480.* Presently pending supplementary agreement for \$2.9 million worth of condensed milk (5-months' requirement) will be handled by making month-to-month agreements for appropriate portions of this amount until further notice, but outright suspension will not be undertaken. Action on other pending items in PL 480 account will become due with respect to wheat flour (\$6 million annually) and raw cotton (\$12 million annually) approximately 1 November, and these items will then be submitted for action by Washington. Remainder of presently planned PL 480 for FY 1964, comprising tobacco (\$2.5 million) and miscellaneous items (\$2.5 million), does not require any action in next 60 days. Discussions with GVN on PL 480, especially with respect to food, should take note of fact that no deliveries are being held up or negative decisions made; we are simply not able to make forward decisions in October.

2. The last sentence in paragraph 5 was in neither the Draft Report to the NSC of October 4 nor the attached cable. Its inclusion reflects the President's concern as expressed at the 9:30 a.m. meeting of October 5; see Document 179. The changes noted in footnotes 3-6 below also reflect the President's concern.

8. *AID Project Loans*. Presently pending balance of loan projects for Saigon-Cholon Waterworks (\$10 million) and Saigon electric power project (\$4 million) will be “suspended for review,” and you should inform GVN in appropriate manner to this effect without making public announcement. If this becomes publicly known here or in field, explanation will be limited strictly to bare statement of suspension for review.³

9. *Assistance to Forces Commanded by Colonel Tung in or near Saigon*. You should inform GVN, through whatever channel you deem appropriate, that US can no longer furnish support to these forces unless they are placed under effective operational control of Joint General Staff and committed to field operations. (This applies to MAP [*less than 1 line not declassified*] support for certain airborne ranger, Civil Guard, and “civilian airborne ranger” units.) Again no public announcement will be made, but if action becomes known explanation here and in field will be that we cannot assist forces that are not contributing to the war effort. Notion that action is a reprisal for political use of these forces should be discouraged.⁴

10. *Handling of GVN Inquiries in Saigon*: US representatives in Saigon should make clear that these matters must be taken up with you personally.

B. Negotiating Tactics:

Your policy toward the GVN of cool correctness in order to make Diem come to you is correct. You should continue it. However, we realize it may not work and that at some later time you may have to go to Diem to ensure he understands over-all US policy. Decision of when this becomes imperative rests with you, in light of your assessment of situation.

12. If, as we hope, Diem seeks clarification of US policies and actions, you should present an exposition of how our actions are related to our fundamental objective of victory. There are three issues at root of strained relations between GVN and US and of our judgment that victory may be jeopardized. The first concerns military effort: GVN must take steps to make this more effective. The second is crisis of confidence among Vietnamese people which is eroding popular support for GVN that is vital for victory. The third is crisis of confidence on the part of the American public and Government. Heart of problem is form of government that has been evolving in Viet-Nam. Diem’s regime has trappings of democracy, but in reality it has

3. The last sentence in paragraph 8 is in neither the Draft Report to the NSC nor the draft cable.

4. The last two sentences in paragraph 9 replace the following sentence in the Draft Report to the NSC and the draft cable: “Concurrently MACV should assume operational relationships with border surveillance and mountain scout forces [*less than 1 line not declassified*] commanded by Colonel Tung.”

been evolving into authoritarian government maintained by police terrorist methods. What GVN must do is to reverse this process of evolution.

13. To preserve flexibility and provide an opportunity for testing and probing on effectiveness of measures GVN actually takes, you should avoid laying down specific demands, but consider actions listed below as illustrative examples of general proposition outlined above, picking and choosing particular items as situation warrants.

14. Purpose of all actions listed below is to increase effectiveness of war effort, to ensure popular support, and to relieve strains in GVN/US relations.

15. Specific military actions listed below are probably most acceptable to Diem, but serve as a test of his commitment to furthering war effort. They should increase effectiveness of war effort and this in turn should feed back to improve political climate. We believe that burden of pressure for military actions should be assumed by General Harkins in direct conversation with Diem and others under your general guidance and that these conversations should not await initiative by Diem, since our continuing posture of cooperative consultation on military matters should not be broken. Conversely, Harkins should not be channel of a discussion on relation between improvements by GVN and resumption of full US support.⁵

16. Political actions are not arranged in order of importance. First of political actions, i.e., entering into negotiations to normalize university life, etc., should set stage for later political actions, such as broadening government.

17. If, in fact, GVN does begin to move along lines we desire, an opportunity will be provided to test and probe effectiveness of the actions in improving war effort, ensuring popular support, and easing strain in GVN/US relations. Paramount need, however, is for GVN to set a psychological tone and image that will make specific actions both real and credible. Although we cannot at this time in complete confidence predict the exact point in this complex of actions at which we will be sure war effort will proceed to successful conclusion, it seems probable its achievement will require some restriction of role of Nhus. As practical matter, we would expect that Diem would not take such action at outset, but only after he had proceeded a considerable distance down the path we desire.

5. The last two sentences of paragraph 15 were neither in the Draft Report to the NSC nor the draft cable.

18. *Military*

- a. Further shift of military emphasis and strength to Delta (IV Corps).
- b. Increase in military tempo in all corps areas, so that all combat troops are in field an average of 20 days out of 30 and static missions are ended.
- c. Emphasis on “clear and hold operations” instead of terrain sweeps which have little permanent value.
- d. Expansion of personnel in combat units to full authorized strength.
- e. Training and arming of hamlet militia at accelerated rate, especially in the Delta.
- f. Consolidation of strategic hamlet program, especially in the Delta, and action to insure that future strategic hamlets are not built until they can be protected, and until civil action programs can be introduced.

19. *Political*

a. *Resumption of normal university life.* Detained students should be released; school and university classes should be universally resumed. Diem should sit down with rector and faculty of Saigon University to work out conditions of normalization of university life. Since students are fearful of arrests and inclined to riots, this will involve significant negotiations on a variety of police-terrorist techniques, including secret arrests, torture, beatings, etc. For this reason, it is an excellent technique to get Diem to focus on the core issues. Similar action should be taken in regard to Hue University, including reinstatement of ex-rector. In both universities, at least some faculty members who have resigned, been fired or jailed should be reinstated.

b. *Specific concessions should be made to Buddhists.* Those still jailed should be processed for release with all possible speed. Repair of pagodas should be facilitated with government sponsorship. GVN-sponsored “Union Committee for Pure Buddhism” should be expanded and genuinely representative Buddhist leaders given responsible positions. Assembly action should eliminate laws which deny equal status to Buddhism.

c. *Renewed activity in land reform program.* This was an early Diem achievement but stopped short of completion. It could be revitalized and attract rural support for the GVN and improve its international image.

d. *Joint re-emphasis on political aspects of strategic hamlet program.* Phasing and security aspects of strategic hamlet program are dealt with under section 1 above. Following is concerned with aspects of strategic hamlet program affecting popular attitudes. This would require an effort to gain more support from peasants through increasing payments to them for their labor and other services and through weeding out graft by local officials. In addition, particularly in Delta, redesigning the program to avoid

unnecessary relocation of population and increased emphasis on social and economic programs that are likely to elicit peasant support.

e. *Police techniques.* GVN should abandon its present practices of controlling populace by instilling fear through night-time arrests, brutal interrogation (including women) and other police-terrorist methods which contribute to growing resentment and unrest and diminishing acceptance of regime.

f. *Civil liberties should be restored.* Arbitrary arrests should cease and those arrested speedily released or given fair public trial. Religious freedom should be implemented as guaranteed by constitution. Public gatherings should be permitted and controlled only to insure safety of life and property.

g. *Refurbishing GVN image.* Government should be broadened so as to include respected individuals, including some within Viet-Nam who have not participated in government and some, such as Vu Van Mau, who have departed. It should be pointed out that these respected individuals are not likely to participate in government or return to Viet-Nam until changes such as those described above convince them that GVN has in fact reversed trend towards authoritarian government. Their willingness to accept posts in government or return to Viet-Nam will in turn be convincing evidence to mass of population that changes are, in fact, meaningful.

h. *"Changes in personnel."* Specific "reforms" described above are apt to have little impact without dramatic symbolic move which convinces Vietnamese that reforms are real. As practical matter this can only be achieved by some feasible reduction in influence of Nhus, who are—justifiably or not—a symbol of authoritarianism. Future role of Nhus in government is therefore of paramount importance. At this point it is impossible to tell whether Nhu must be permanently removed or merely confined to well-defined and limited role. In either case, some device must be found both to restrict his activities and to symbolize this restriction by his absence from power center in Saigon. In addition, similar devices must be found for those individuals, such as Colonel Tung, who are most closely associated with Nhu and his authoritarianism.

i. *Public and official statement by Diem* before National Assembly which would set new tone for government by pointing to steps being taken to respond to popular sentiment, and by making a call for total mobilization of effort on part of officials and people equally.

20. US/GVN Relations

a. Avoid divisive press attacks, e.g. *Times of Viet-Nam* story attacking CIA, etc.

b. Cease public statements slandering the US effort and the role of US military and civilian personnel.

c. Cease undercover efforts to discredit the US and weaken the will of US individuals to give their full support to programs, e.g. “mendacious briefings” of GVN troops and rumors of physical danger to US families and other personnel.

d. Re-cast GVN propaganda in such a way as to gain foreign support of its socio-economic program.

C. Congress, Press, and Public:

21. No public statement will be issued here for the present.

22. At President’s next press conference, he expects to repeat his basic statement that what furthers the war effort we support, and what interferes with the war effort we oppose. If questioned on actions US may take, he expects to say only that US programs are being reviewed to insure consistency with this policy.⁶

23. Similar responses will be given if information about any US actions leads to detailed inquiries. If detailed inquiries pinpointing specific actions are made, they will be dealt with as indicated in each paragraph of A., above.

24. On Tuesday and Wednesday⁷ in meetings with Congressional committees in executive session, Rusk, McNamara and Bell will follow same line. They will explain our three-fold concern as outlined in para 5, above, but they will avoid as you should any listing of desired actions which could be construed as a package of US demands. We believe it of great importance that there should be no public impression of a package of sanctions and a package of demands. We are seeking necessary but limited improvements from a government very difficult to move, and we do not wish

6. The draft of telegram 534 to Saigon expanded President Kennedy’s statement: “that in line with this policy Secretary McNamara and General Taylor have recommended that certain programs be reviewed; and that, on your additional recommendation, a small number of programs have been held up in order to permit review to determine their consistency with policy he has enunciated. He will say all other programs are being continued, in line with US policy of supporting war effort against the Communist aggression.”

The draft continues:

“In the meantime, you will have informed GVN through appropriate channels, as outlined in the section concerning actions above, of the steps US is taking.”

“If, as a result of your actions, inquiries are made about the programs under review, by either GVN or press, replies will state that certain programs have been held up, on your recommendation, to permit review for consistency with policy President has enunciated of supporting what furthers war effort and opposing what interferes with it; and that the bulk of the programs, which clearly further war effort, are being continued.

“At some point, after you have appropriately informed GVN, and after the President has made the statements described above, inquiries concerning Tung’s forces should be made with statement that, in line with its policy, United States has terminated support to certain military units which are not contributing to the prosecution of the war.”

to encourage unjustified sense of optimism or of triumph from those who wish this situation was easier than it is. In particular, we would prefer press to consider us inactive than to trumpet a posture of “major sanctions” and “sweeping demands.” (You should follow same line in briefing Zablocki Codel.)⁸

D. Coordination in Saigon:

25. Separate cables to Harkins and Brent lay out their areas of these instructions in detail.⁹ You should, of course, coordinate all actions by country team representatives. Suggest you pass this cable to them individually.

Rusk

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8. Congressman Clement J. Zablocki chaired a special study mission to Southeast Asia, composed of members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, which traveled to Laos, Malaysia, and Vietnam October 3-19. Also on the mission were Congressmen Harris B. McDowell, Jr., Ronald Brooks Cameron, William T. Murphy, William S. Broomfield, J. Irving Whalley, Vernon W. Thomson, and Peter H.B. Frelinghuysen. See Document 222.
 9. The Joint Chiefs of Staff sent Harkins and Felt these instructions in JCS 2792, October 5. The cable was substantively the same as the first three numbered paragraphs of section B of the Taylor-McNamara Report, Document 167. (Department of State, Central Files, POL 26 S VIET)

The instructions to Brent were in Aido 915, October 5, and were essentially a reiteration of AID-related actions and tactics. (*Ibid.*, AID (US) S VIET)

NSAM No. 273

331. National Security Action Memorandum No. 273¹

Washington, November 26, 1963.

TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director of Central Intelligence
The Administrator, AID
The Director, USIA

The President has reviewed the discussions of South Vietnam which occurred in Honolulu, and has discussed the matter further with Ambassador Lodge.² He directs that the following guidance be issued to all concerned:

1. It remains the central object of the United States in South Vietnam to assist the people and Government of that country to win their contest against the externally directed and supported Communist conspiracy. The test of all U.S. decisions and actions in this area should be the effectiveness of their contribution to this purpose.

2. The objectives of the United States with respect to the withdrawal of U.S. military personnel remain as stated in the White House statement of October 2, 1963.³

1. Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, NSAM's. Top Secret. NSAM 273 grew out of the discussion at the November 20 Honolulu Conference. McGeorge Bundy wrote the first draft and sent copies to Hilsman and William Bundy, asking for their opinions. In fact, Bundy's draft was almost identical to the final paper. The major exception was paragraph 7 of the Bundy draft which reads as follows: "7. With respect to action against North Vietnam, there should be a detailed plan for the development of additional Government of Vietnam resources, especially for sea-going activity, and such planning should indicate the time and investment necessary to achieve a wholly new level of effectiveness in this field of action. (Action: DOD and CIA)" (Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Vietnam Country Series, Memos and Miscellaneous) Bundy thought that President Kennedy and Lodge might want to discuss this paper during their planned meeting on November 24. Hilsman responded on November 23 in a memorandum to McGeorge Bundy that he thought the draft was "fine" and he had made only minor changes. No record of Hilsman's changes have been found. (*Ibid.*, Hilsman Papers, Country Series—Vietnam) Hilsman also sent a copy to Rusk under cover of a memorandum of November 23 and suggested the Secretary might find it of use at the Cabinet meeting scheduled for that afternoon. (Department of State, Cabinet Meeting Files: Lot 68 D 350) At the November 23 Cabinet meeting, Vietnam was not discussed.

2. See *supra*.

3. It is a major interest of the United States Government that the present provisional government of South Vietnam should be assisted in consolidating itself and in holding and developing increased public support. All U.S. officers should conduct themselves with this objective in view.

4. The President expects that all senior officers of the Government will move energetically to insure the full unity of support for established U.S. policy in South Vietnam. Both in Washington and in the field, it is essential that the Government be unified. It is of particular importance that express or implied criticism of officers of other branches be scrupulously avoided in all contacts with the Vietnamese Government and with the press. More specifically, the President approves the following lines of action developed in the discussions of the Honolulu meeting of November 20. The offices of the Government to which central responsibility is assigned are indicated in each case.

5. We should concentrate our own efforts, and insofar as possible we should persuade the Government of South Vietnam to concentrate its efforts, on the critical situation in the Mekong Delta. This concentration should include not only military but political, economic, social, educational and informational effort. We should seek to turn the tide not only of battle but of belief, and we should seek to increase not only the control of hamlets but the productivity of this area, especially where the proceeds can be held for the advantage of anti-Communist forces.

(Action: The whole country team under the direct supervision of the Ambassador.)

6. Programs of military and economic assistance should be maintained at such levels that their magnitude and effectiveness in the eyes of the Vietnamese Government do not fall below the levels sustained by the United States in the time of the Diem Government. This does not exclude arrangements for economy on the MAP account with respect to accounting for ammunition, or any other readjustments which are possible as between MAP and other U.S. defense resources. Special attention should be given to the expansion of the import, distribution, and effective use of fertilizer for the Delta.

(Action: AID and DOD as appropriate.)

7. Planning should include different levels of possible increased activity, and in each instance there should be estimates of such factors as:

A. Resulting damage to North Vietnam;

B. The plausibility of denial;

- C. Possible North Vietnamese retaliation;
- D. Other international reaction.

Plans should be submitted promptly for approval by higher authority.

(Action: State, DOD, and CIA.)

8. With respect to Laos, a plan should be developed and submitted for approval by higher authority for military operations up to a line up to 50 kilometers inside Laos, together with political plans for minimizing the international hazards of such an enterprise. Since it is agreed that operational responsibility for such undertakings should pass from CAS to MACV, this plan should include a redefined method of political guidance for such operations, since their timing and character can have an intimate relation to the fluctuating situation in Laos.

(Action: State, DOD, and CIA.)

9. It was agreed in Honolulu that the situation in Cambodia is of the first importance for South Vietnam, and it is therefore urgent that we should lose no opportunity to exercise a favorable influence upon that country. In particular a plan should be developed using all available evidence and methods of persuasion for showing the Cambodians that the recent charges against us are groundless.

(Action: State.)

10. In connection with paragraphs 7 and 8 above, it is desired that we should develop as strong and persuasive a case as possible to demonstrate to the world the degree to which the Viet Cong is controlled, sustained and supplied from Hanoi, through Laos and other channels. In short, we need a more contemporary version of the Jorden Report,⁴ as powerful and complete as possible.

(Action: Department of State with other agencies as necessary.)

McGeorge Bundy

4. The Jorden report, entitled "A Threat to the Peace, North Viet-Nam's Effort To Conquer South Viet-Nam," was released by the Department of State on December 8, 1961. For documentation on the preparation and release, see vol. 1, pp. 282 ff.

321. Memorandum of Discussion at the Special Meeting on Vietnam, Honolulu, November 20, 1963¹

Item A 1—Country Team Review of the Situation (Political)

Summary of Discussion

Ambassador Lodge described the outlook for the immediate future of Vietnam as hopeful. The Generals appear to be united and determined to step up the war effort. They profess to be keenly aware that the struggle with the Viet Cong is not only a military problem, but is also political and psychological. They attach great importance to a social and economic program as an aid to winning the war. The Generals believe that:

(1) The requirements for the population to contribute what amounts to “forced labor” in connection with the construction of strategic hamlets must be drastically reduced, if not totally eliminated.

(2) The Strategic Hamlet Program has been pushed too rapidly and at too great a cost in human effort. More emphasis must be placed on the sociological aspects of the program. Existing strategic hamlets must be consolidated and improved. Any further wholesale expansion of the program should be deferred.

1 Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 334, MAC/V Files: FRC 69 A 702, 204-58 Policy and Precedent Files (1963). Secret. No drafting information appears on the source text. An attached copy of the press release describing the work of the conference is not printed.

Felt sent this summary of the discussion at Honolulu to McNamara under cover of a memorandum of November 22. The agenda for the meeting is not printed. Items F. and G. of the agenda, “CIA-MACV Relations” and “Review of Special Funding”, did not have memoranda of discussion. On November 19, Rusk and McNamara agreed to address certain items on the agenda in subcommittees which met on the morning of November 20 and then reported to the principal participants in the afternoon. Another copy of this memorandum is *ibid.*, RG 84, Saigon Embassy Files: FRC 67 A 677, 350. Honolulu Conference.

In a November 13 memorandum, Forrestal briefed McGeorge Bundy on this meeting. The memorandum reads in part as follows:

“From what I can gather the Honolulu Meeting is shaping up into a replica of its predecessors, i.e., an eight-hour briefing conducted in the usual military manner. In the past this has meant about 100 people in the CINCPAC Conference Room, who are treated to a dazzling display of maps and charts, punctuated with some impressive intellectual fireworks from Bob McNamara.” (Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Vietnam Country Series, Honolulu meeting, Briefing Book, 11/20/63 A)

(3) Chinese racketeers and extortionists—the so-called “cailles”—must be eliminated.

(4) The procedure of arbitrary arrests and disregard of habeas corpus must end.

(5) Major efforts must be made to win over the Hoa Hao and Cao Dai sects to the side of the government. (Recent reports indicate some initial successes in this direction.)

Resumption of U.S. aid should improve the economic situation. The U.S. should for this first year avoid a situation in which it appears that the Diem regime received more aid than the new government.

As far as political institutions are concerned, the Generals talk of facilitating the growth of political parties and of creating more courts and judges, but much of this seems theoretical. Western-educated urban elements expect progress in political liberalization and perhaps the Council of Sages² will be able to do something to fulfill this need for political expression.

Ambassador Lodge doubted the wisdom of the U.S. making sweeping demands for democratization or for early elections at this time. He believed that in Vietnam the technique of changing governments by violent means is not yet ready to be displaced in favor of changing governments by election. He emphasized that if we can get through the next six months without a serious falling out among the Generals we will be lucky. However, the leading members of the Generals' group are modern-minded men who are at least aware of conditions in the modern world other than in the strictly military field. They evince a desire to react intelligently to the social, economic and political factors, and their performance to date in this sphere has been good. Americans—whether in government or in the press—should not seek to guide them at every turn nor try to get them to act as though they were made in our image. As long as they follow the course they have set for themselves, we should not push them too hard for several months. Since coming to power, the new leaders of Vietnam have acted with restraint. They have held down on arrests, have been willing to correct errors, and have avoided any wholesale purges throughout the governmental administration. Their handling of press and public relations generally is a great improvement. They are trying to please the public—a rather new departure in Vietnam. Although the question of where the true power and influence lies will not become clear until the pulling and hauling of various personalities

2. According to telegram 1092 from Saigon, November 20, the Council of Sages was formally established by the Provisional Government as a smaller Council of Notables, still intended to be advisory and broadly representative of Vietnamese society. (Department of State, Central Files, POL 15-1 S VIET)

has made itself felt, the Generals appear to have really tried to have a big civilian element in the government.

In conclusion, Ambassador Lodge remarked that what we are really trying to do in Vietnam is to win the minds of the people. This includes not only the Generals and people who are currently living under RVN control, but also the Viet Cong. The problem is to convince the young VC soldier that if he continues to fight he will surely be killed, but that if he stops he will find that he and his family have an opportunity for a good life in peace and security. Problem thus is not only military, but economic, social and political as well.

For the first time in years the central government has the enthusiastic support of the urban population. However, in the final analysis the war will be won or lost in the country-side and to date the rural population is still apathetic.

The changed situation requires us to rethink our programs, civil and military. We must see whether and how our programs need changing. For example, with regard to our military programs, the question arises whether—with a real chain of command, an improved fighting spirit, the commitment of troops to fight the VC instead of to static non-military missions—present and proposed force levels are appropriate.

To take another example, in our economic programs aimed at the rural areas, we have developed procedures to deal directly with Province Chiefs. This was done largely because of the lassitude of the central bureaucracy and its apparent lack of interest in what happened in the countryside. Perhaps it is still wise to continue to by-pass Saigon so far as possible, but it would be well to review the question. We may be about to get a “new look” in the Saigon bureaucracy.

Finally, as regards all U.S. programs—military, economic, psychological—we should continue to keep before us the goal of setting dates for phasing out U.S. activities and turning them over to the Vietnamese; and these dates, too, should be looked at again in the light of the new political situation. The date mentioned in the McNamara-Taylor statement of October 2³ on U.S. military withdrawal had—and is still having—a tonic effect. We should set dates for USOM and USIS programs, too. We can always grant last-minute extensions if we think it wise to do so.

Ambassador Lodge said all this is submitted in the belief that an American presence will be wanted—and needed—in Vietnam for some time in the future. But it should perhaps be a different kind of presence from what exists—and is needed—in Vietnam today.

Secretary Rusk asked whether we could expect to encourage the new government to move closer toward a true democracy without thereby

3. Document 167.

reducing the main effort against the VC. Ambassador Lodge replied that as an example forced labor could be reduced although not entirely. He went on to say that while we can expect some progress toward democratic processes at the local village and hamlet level it is hard for him to imagine a sophisticated Western democracy emerging in Vietnam for some time to come.

Secretary Rusk asked if there was any way the U.S. could hope to prevent a future internal split between the Generals. Ambassador Lodge replied that this can best be accomplished by making sure that they understand what the U.S. considers would be best for their country. He noted that the Generals recognized the advantages of sticking together. In addition to other actions, the Ambassador said if we make it clear, for example, that we have confidence in General Minh it will materially help his position among his colleagues and probably will serve to retain him in his present position of authority. From his own conversation with Generals Minh, Don, and Kim, Ambassador Lodge is confident that they want to avoid any internal disputes among the members of the Military Revolutionary Council. These three key Generals believe that they can keep General Dinh under control. However, Ambassador Lodge is not too sure this is the case, as General Dinh, in addition to being Minister of Security, also commands the troops of III Corps.

General Taylor asked what were the present intentions of the military leaders with respect [sic] to the ultimate shape of the government. Ambassador Lodge replied that he believes that General Minh is sincere when he says that the Military Revolutionary Council is merely a provisional government. However, there is no political leadership emerging from the scene thus far and he doubts that it will come from any of the civilians who are now in the Cabinet. Ambassador Lodge re-emphasized his earlier recommendation that the U.S. not press the Generals too hard on political reforms and early elections. He would instead urge that the U.S. be patient and give the Generals a chance to get on with the war. Ambassador Lodge believes that they are sincere, that they have the good of their country at heart, and that they have a basically sound program.

Item A 2—Review of Situation (Military)

Summary of Discussion

General Harkins began by pointing out that despite what has appeared in the press, there is no difference of opinion between Ambassador Lodge and himself on the situation in Vietnam or on the conduct of the war against the VC. Ambassador Lodge expressed his complete agreement.

Turning to the military situation in Vietnam, General Harkins emphasized that the problem is one of people, not statistics. The problem is

to win the people over to the full support of the war effort. Until the new government gets out in the field and talks to the people and learns their problems and true feelings, they can never hope to really win the war.

As for the statistics, after the coup VC incidents shot up to 300-400% of what they were before. However, after 6 November they dropped down to normal and have remained that way ever since. Similarly, the numbers of returnees under the Chieu Hoi program fell off markedly since early October. However, just this past week over 350 members of the Hoa Hao Sect have rallied to the government, as have a number of Cao Dais. At the same time, the Montagnard tribes are continuing to come out of the hills to seek the protection of the government. (About 220,000 had rallied to the government before the coup as a result of such programs as the CIDG. At present a total of about 400,000 Montagnards are under RVN control.)

The change of government has had a definite impact at the province level, where everything focuses on the Province Chief. These 42 key individuals have the real job of winning the people over to the support of the government. Perhaps even more important than the Province Chief is the District Chief, of whom there are over 253 throughout the country. As these officials are definitely associated with the old government insofar as the villager is concerned, we must expect that the new regime will probably want to reassign nearly all of them to emphasize the complete break with past policy.

As to the situation within the officer ranks generally, there is still much to be done. There remain a lot of deserving officers who should be promoted. General Minh is well aware of this point. The role of Generals Khanh and Tri in the II and I Corps, respectively, is still not clear although they have associated themselves with the objectives of the coup. General Minh intends to establish a more direct chain of command and insure that military orders will be carried out when received. This will be quite a change for the good as in the past a military order was seldom implemented until the responsible commander had checked it out through political channels back to the Palace.

The principal problems the new government faces are: first, the appointment of new Province and District Chiefs will inevitably complicate matters until these new officials are able to become acquainted with their areas of responsibility [sic] and get on top of the local situation; second, the establishment of a straightforward military chain of command will, of course, involve some high level negotiations among the Generals themselves; third, the people in the rural areas still remain apathetic to the government; fourth, the support of the man in the village and hamlet will depend on whether the government can assure him security and do something to improve his current marginal existence.

Secretary Rusk asked how Province and District Chiefs were selected—were they natives of the area to which they were assigned? General Harkins stated that the selection of these key officials was done by

Generals Minh and Don in consultation with the Corps Commander concerned. He emphasized that those Province Chiefs who were being relieved would not be wasted; they would be reassigned to other positions where they could make use of their experience.

General Harkins emphasized again that we must expect that it will take a little time for things to settle down again after this change of administration. The new government is discovering a lot of things that it did not know. For example, some 50 tons of ammunition were found stored in the Presidential Guard barracks. Another problem the new government is considering, for example, is what to do with the gendarmérie. The question arises as to whether it is better to have these outstanding NCOs engaged in police functions primarily within the Capitol area, or whether they could better serve the nation by being reintegrated into the Army and sent out to fight the VC.

[Here follows a description of a slide show given by Harkins.]

Item A 3—Review of Situation (Economic)

Summary of Discussion

Mr. Brent took the lead on this item, noting the difficulties experienced with the Diem regime in its latter days and pointing out the opportunity which now existed for more effective collaboration between the U.S. and RVN under the new regime. The Generals are seeking means to improve government administration, to get the most out of U.S. aid, and to win the war as soon as possible.

Initial U.S. efforts in the economic field are directed toward encouraging the RVN to establish a central ministry for economic policy and planning, including all aspects of foreign aid. This idea has been well received by the Prime Minister and working level officials. The fact that the Prime Minister has already assumed direct responsibility for supervision of the Ministry of Finance and National Economy is a first step in this direction. The Prime Minister is well informed on the economic problems of his country. In an informal session with him on 7 November 1963, agreement in principle was reached on the following points, details to be worked out as circumstances permit:

- a. All economic aid matters will be handled through the Prime Minister's office.
- b. All strategic hamlet matters will be handled through the Prime Minister's office.
- c. A mixed U.S.-Vietnamese group can be established to study the economic situation, isolate problems, and recommend solutions. The RVN

team would include Dean Thuc; the Minister of Rural Affairs, Mr. Quang; and the Director General of Planning, Mr. Diem.

d. Budget matters, except military, will also be under control of the Prime Minister.

Areas of priority attention would be taxation; exploitation of farmers, fishermen, and small artisans by middlemen; inefficient government procedures; use of foreign aid; joint U.S.-RVN budgeting; and marketing policies for rice, fish, and fertilizer.

The total requirements for U.S. aid remain large. Defense expenditures (including MAP) equal nearly 1/4 of the country's national income and substantially exceed the entire fiscal revenue of the central government. The Country Team recognizes the limitations on foreign aid funds imposed by Congress, but recommends maintenance of the FY 63 level in FY 64 and 65. Beside the economic rationale, it appears politically and psychologically necessary to extend at least the same measure of support to the new regime as was extended to Diem.

Upon U.S. recognition of the new RVN on 8 November, a commercial import and PL 480, Title I program were resumed to cover urgently required materials and items. An amendment to the PL 480, Title I program was negotiated to provide 4.3 million dollars worth of wheat flour and sweetened condensed milk.

Since the pipeline for essential commodities is refilled, our present posture is to carefully review specific requests of the RVN. Our intention is to maintain leverage and avoid the impression of giving a blank check. We are hopeful that a few months experience will allow negotiation of a more substantial installment of aid in return for RVN cooperation along lines desired by the U.S.

Two additional facts of the commercial import program should be mentioned. First, it was undoubtedly the realization that the U.S. could not be bluffed into restoring import financing that finally provided the spark that set off the coup. Second, there is no indication that the Vietnamese economy was harmed by the suspension in any fundamental respect. Prices of indigenously produced commodities pursued the usual seasonal patterns and price increases in imported commodities were anticipated with the notable exception of condensed milk and flour. Local production apparently was not seriously affected.

On the social side there are a number of encouraging signs. The new Minister of Security and the new Chief of Police both recognize that there must be an end to fear and hatred of the government. The police must be restrained and re-educated. This same concern for popular feeling has also been expressed by the new Minister of Information, the new Minister of Education, and by the new Minister of Labor. During Mr. Brent's calls upon six of the new Ministers, all have been unanimous in expressing their beliefs

that the future of Vietnam must be determined by the people of Vietnam themselves.

As for the students and the Buddhists, both groups feel that as originators of events that led to the coup, they deserve special treatment. The Buddhist associations are being listened to by the new government and are exerting a calming influence. The students on the other hand, except in Hue, are demanding dismissals of governmental and educational officials and a number of other changes. They are organizing into associations with definite political objectives and may continue to be a problem. The new government hopes that they can be developed as a constructive force. In this connection, General Minh is working with a group of students for the establishment of a Vietnamese Peace Corps so that the younger generation can channel their energies into worthwhile civic action type activities.

Mr. Brent concluded that there is an entirely new spirit in Vietnam; that the new government is confident, but not overconfident; that it is warmly disposed toward the U.S., and, that we have opportunities to exploit that we never had before. The Vietnamese are soberly aware that if this present experiment fails there will probably be no second chance.

Secretary Rusk asked if the former Secretary of State at the Presidency, Mr. Thuan, was usable in the new government. Ambassador Lodge stated that Thuan would probably prefer some post outside of the country, and that Generals Minh and Don may well use him later as an Ambassador.

Secretary Rusk then asked to what extent the U.S. officials shared offices with Vietnamese compatriots. Mr. Brent replied that at the province level they do, but very little at the government level. Secretary Rusk stated that this might be desirable if the Vietnamese would agree.

Mr. William P. Bundy asked if the RVN had purchased milk and flour from France following the suspension of the CIP. Mr. Brent replied they had since U.S. supplies were not available for delivery in time to meet the government's requirements and since France was prepared to divert a ship for the purpose. However, after conversations with the Prime Minister, the RVN agreed to reduce these orders by 50% since the U.S. can now supply these commodities on the desired schedule.

Secretary McNamara then inquired as to the estimated size of the rice crop, to which Mr. Brent replied that they hope to have a 300,000 ton export this year, and that due to improved seed and fertilizer it could be approximately 30% more by next year. Secretary McNamara said it would be worth considering the diversion of a substantial amount of U.S. aid to provide more fertilizer and thereby increase rice production. For a relatively small dollar outlay for fertilizer we could raise the RVN's income from its rice exports appreciably. As it will probably not be possible for the new government to raise taxes, the only solution to its economic problem is to increase its exports. This means an increased requirement for fertilizer and seed. He asked the Group 1 subcommittee ⁴ to look into this further. Mr Bell

then asked if the new government would have to relax economic controls, or if it could take steps to raise additional taxes or to improve tax collection. Ambassador Lodge replied that it was too early to give an answer to this and Minister Trueheart added that while the RVN can improve tax collection, it would not be feasible to increase direct taxes on items in heavy demand such as milk, for example. Admiral Felt stated that there were some cases where the people were subjected to double taxation by both the government and the VC. Perhaps as the areas of VC control were reduced, the government might be able to increase its tax collections. Secretary McNamara said that we must be realistic. The new government cannot be expected to establish a standard of austerity too soon, nor can it count on much increased revenue from improved tax collection procedures. The only solution seems to be greater emphasis on increasing productivity in the export sector of the economy.

[Here follows discussion of agenda item A4, "Review of the Situation (Province Summaries)," given by Harkins. Harkins stated that while the Country Team considered all provinces critical, they singled out 13 which were "particularly critical because of their current problems." Those provinces were Quang Ngai, Binh Dinh, Phuoc Thanh, Binh Duong, Tay Ninh, Hau Nghia, Long An, Kien Tuong, Dinh Tuong, Kien Hoa, Chuong Thien, and An Xuyen. The state of this last province on the Ca Mau peninsula occasioned the more general discussion printed below.]

An Xuyen, on the extreme tip of the Ca Mau peninsula is safe in the cities, but the VC really own the province. They have been in control since the early forties. There is considerable production of rice and of charcoal, amounting to some \$10 million a year. Much of this revenue is siphoned off by the VC. Some of the produce goes to Thailand and some to Singapore as well as to Saigon. MACV is investigating the feasibility of a combined naval-economic blockade to cut off the flow of revenue to the VC.

General Harkins emphasized the need for the RVN to get trained intelligence personnel into the strategic hamlets to identify the VC and keep them from forming Communist cells. Security of the informer is the key to the problem. Thus far there have not been sufficient military forces at the village level to make it safe for people to report on the VC. Secretary McNamara asked if the reason that so many strategic hamlets were not considered successful in the Delta was for security, economic, or political reasons, or all three. Mr. Fraleigh stated that they were unsuccessful in all three. However, in the northern areas of Vietnam 60% of the hamlets were considered successful.

4. Group 1 was the subcommittee dealing with economic problems. It included as members Janow, Brent, Trueheart, Forrestal, Stoneman, William Bundy, Major General Timmes, Silver, and others.

Secretary McNamara said that he believed there were three things to do in the Delta: first, get the Chieu Hoi Program moving; second, get the fertilizer program going to increase output of rice; and third, and most important, improve the security of the strategic hamlets by arming the trained militia and increasing the number of militia.

General Harkins added that the leaders of the new government must get out of Saigon and talk to the people in the Delta area.

General Taylor remarked that this discussion points up the fact that the war is different in each province. Perhaps we need joint U.S.-Vietnam province teams to attack the problem at the province level. He asked if the criticality of the thirteen provinces was based purely on military assessment. General

Harkins said it was not; that it was across the board.

Ambassador Lodge then gave a political summary of the current situation throughout the provinces making the following points:

- a. Most of the population is aware of the coup.
- b. Most of the population is reserved in their opinion of the coup and are waiting to see what effects it will have on their daily lives.
- c. Major programs are now stalled at the province level awaiting instructions from the central government.
- d. Numerous changes and impending changes of province chiefs have contributed to the uncertainty and inactivity at the province level.
- e. The death of Diem is regretted; the death of Nhu is not.
- f. Public opinion concerning U.S. involvement in the coup is mixed. Cooperation between RVN and U.S. personnel is closer than ever before.

Item B 1—Prospects and measures proposed by Country Team for improved prosecution of the war under the new government (Political, including possibility of improved relations with neighboring States)

[Here follows discussion of Vietnam's relations with Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and France which developed into a general discussion of the situation in Cambodia.]

Item B 2—Prospects and measures proposed by Country Team for improved prosecution of the war under the new government (Military, including a report on progress in accomplishment of tasks assigned as a result of the McNamara-Taylor Mission, and outlining plans for control of infiltration and special requirements for the Delta Campaign)

[Here follows Harkins' presentation, including slides, of the actions that the Republic of Vietnam's Armed Forces were taking to increase pressure on the Viet Cong. This presentation led to a more general discussion printed below.]

Secretary McNamara stated he assumed that the first effort would be made to protect the hamlets that have already been built. General Harkins said the whole Strategic Hamlet Program was under intensive review. Secretary McNamara asked how long this would take. Minister Trueheart estimated that it would be two to three months before the revised program could get under way. General Taylor recommended that any new plans that are prepared should establish firm target dates for various phases, so that tangible check points on RVN progress would be available.

Item B 3—Prospects and measures proposed by Country Team for improved prosecution of the war under the new government (Economic)

Summary of Discussion

Mr. Silver reviewed the economic situation in South Vietnam noting that the RVN expenditures have risen about 60% in the period 1960-1964 while U.S. aid, which amounts to about 40% of the central government's revenue, has declined somewhat. This increase in expenditures is nearly entirely attributable to an increase in defense expenditures, a 100% increase from 1960 to 1964. In addition, the increase for civil expenditures included non-military costs for counterinsurgency, and as a major item, support for the strategic hamlet program.

Turning to the 1964 budget, the Diem government estimated the total budget deficit in 1964 at approximately 9.0 billion piasters. After adjustments to his figures, USOM believes that the deficit will more likely be in the order of 7.0 billion piasters. This 7.0 billion piasters represent about one third of the total money supply; about 8% of the GNP; and an equivalent deficit in the U.S. budget of close to \$50.0 billion.

South Vietnam is primarily agricultural, with a small industrial base. This is significant since the economy does not have the capacity to expand and meet the increasing demand for goods. Although prices have not gone up appreciably despite increased defense expenditures during the past years, it is not believed this situation will continue through 1964 unless the projected deficit is neutralized.

A previous backlog of U.S. economic aid and a pump-priming operation to get the strategic hamlet program started has had the effect of reducing central government expenditures in the past. In addition, the RVN has reduced its foreign exchange holdings from about \$200.0 million in 1961 to about \$155.0 million in 1962. Fortunately, these holdings have been rising in recent months because of stepped-up rice exports.

USOM's proposal is that U.S. and RVN personnel should sit down together and discuss these problems with a view toward developing agreed joint solutions. In general, USOM's recommendations would be to improve the efficiency of tax collections, increase taxes on selected items (e.g.,

gasoline), reduce the civil budget by 1.0 billion piasters, maintain the 1964 military expenditures at the 1963 level if this is consistent with the war effort, and introduce attractive savings programs, including increased use of the national lottery, rural banks, war bonds, etc. Also, USOM believes that the economy can stand an increase in money supply of 1.0 to 1.5 billion piasters without serious effects.

All of this leaves the RVN about 2.0 billion piasters short in their budget. USOM would recommend that this be met by drawing down on their foreign exchange reserves which amount to about \$170.0 million at present.

Secretary Rusk then asked for comments on the export/import status. Mr. Silver said that in 1960 the foreign exchange earnings were \$88.0 million. In 1961 it dropped to \$70.0 million due to a drop in price of rice and rubber on the world market. In 1962 earnings dropped further to \$47.0 million due to floods which wiped out the usual rice exports. The estimate for this year comes to about \$80.0 million with the projection for 1965 hopefully at \$95.0 million. Present imports are about \$250.0 million. This figure does not include MAP or strategic hamlet inputs, but does include CIP. In response to a question from Mr. Bell, Mr. Silver pointed out that this analysis only relates to government and not to the private sector.

Mr. William P. Bundy asked why a 2.0 billion piaster deficit in 1964 was considered important when there had been 3.0 to 4.0 billion piaster deficits in 1962 and 1963. Mr. Silver replied that prices have risen 15% in the last three years and this, plus cumulative deficits of this magnitude could well become serious.

Secretary McNamara stated that one of the charts showed a 20% increase in the money supply during the first part of this year and asked how this was to be absorbed. Mr. Silver said apparently much of this money was cash hoardings. There were also reports that quantities of cash were being held by the VC as a precaution against the day when the strategic hamlet program would cut them off from their current sources of revenue from the countryside.

Secretary McNamara expressed concern that this huge increase in money supply in combination with a deficit of 7.0 billion piasters could lead to price increases which in turn could create such serious political problems that the present government might not be able to survive. It will be hard enough for the new government to consolidate its position as it is. It is absolutely essential that we help it maintain economic stability over the next 12 to 18 months. Under the best of circumstances the hoped for transfer of power from the military to some form of civilian government will be a very difficult political operation. Under conditions of economic instability it will be almost impossible.

Secretary McNamara stated he was of the opinion the U.S. should lean over backwards to help the Generals avoid economic unrest. With a tremendous deficit lying ahead, this is going to be very difficult. The United

States should not try to push this new government too far to raise taxes, tighten up administration, reduce budgets, and so forth. Economic stability is really the foundation of military security in the long run. He would be prepared, therefore, to take a calculated risk and cut some of our safety factors on the military side if this were necessary to insure economic stability.

Mr. Bell agreed that the RVN was facing a very difficult and dangerous economic situation [sic] which could be extremely serious to the whole war effort. Our first objective should be to get together with the Vietnamese to be sure we understand one another. Toward this end, plans are being made to send out a prominent figure in the economic field as head of a U.S. economic mission which would tackle these problems jointly with the best Vietnamese economists. This is clearly what must be undertaken in the next couple of months.

Mr. Janow then commented further on the import level. He said that in 1962 imports were about \$280 million. This year the estimate (including our aid) is about \$238 million and for 1964 the planning figure is about \$255 million. If this commercial import level is compared with their exports of about \$100 million, there is a gap of about \$150 million. This deficit does not include such costs as MAP, the counter insurgency program which the US is supporting, or capital investment. If these are added the figure is increased by another \$250 million. A gap of this kind, built into the RVN economy is obviously against their best interest.

Major General Timmes then spoke about the military budget. Using charts he showed that the RVN regular forces would require about 11.2 billion piasters. 75% of this would go to military pay, allowance, and subsistence. General Timmes emphasized that this is the Vietnam piaster budget. The MAP budget amounts to about \$175 million. He then showed a comparison of this year and last year's RVN military budget. This showed that the current budget is only 358 million piasters larger than last year's and the forces are much larger. MAAG believes that this budget has been reduced to the minimum figure.

General Timmes showed the figures for the Civil Guard and SDC. He pointed out that 86% of the Civil Guard and 95% of the Self Defense Force budgets were for pay and allowances. His final chart showed how the total defense cost of 14.5 billion piasters for CY 64 was made up. He noted that perhaps this figure could be reduced by 100 to 200 million piasters as a result of force reorganizations which might take place under the new government.

Secretary McNamara pointed out that the difference between these figures and Mr. Silver's program came to 750 million piasters. Secretary Rusk then asked how much of a limiting factor was money as far as finishing the war at an early date. Secretary McNamara said that in his opinion the RVN is going to be right on the ragged edge of running out of the money needed to win the war. The situation in the Delta and strategic hamlet

program itself are both serious, immediate problems. Furthermore, we must improve the output of the country. This means more fertilizers, additional expenditures to raise the economic base and increase productivity. He stated that all this requires money. The RVN has this tremendous deficit; the new government is sitting on top of a keg of political dynamite. Secretary McNamara doubts that enough money has been budgeted under AID and MAP to handle the situation. This is very serious problem which must be watched extremely carefully.

Mr. Bell shared Secretary McNamara's concern. More money may be required to finance what ought to be the heaviest action year of the war. If things move successfully, it might be possible to taper off after the next 12 to 15 months. However, we must be careful not to give the RVN any more of a "fiscal hangover" from the war than necessary. He agreed with Secretary McNamara that it is a serious problem which could blow up on us if we are not careful in the next six months. But, we must also keep the RVN's feet to the fire, keep their resources fully committed, and not let them saddle themselves with an economy and military establishment that is larger than circumstances require.

Mr. Fraleigh then discussed the advantages of increased use of fertilizer on rice production. Vietnam uses very little fertilizer on rice as compared to other countries. As a result, its per hectare yield of rice is 1/2 that of Taiwan or Japan. Mr. Fraleigh recommends that we think in terms of doubling the use of fertilizer in 1964. For every \$70 spent on a ton of fertilizer delivered in Vietnam, \$110 worth of additional milled rice is produced for export. Mr. Bell wondered what was holding it back. Mr. Fraleigh replied it was the credit system, since fertilizer is handled commercially. Secretary McNamara observed that unless an adequate credit system is devised to improve the distribution of fertilizer, the productivity will not rise and this productivity is needed to build political stability. Ambassador Lodge remarked that South Vietnam could be one of the richest rice producing areas of the world.

Secretary McNamara said he was afraid a certain euphoria had settled over us since the coup. True, the Generals are friendly to us, but the situation in Cambodia is deteriorating and the VC showed they have a tremendous reserve capability by trebling their rate of incidents week before last. He wondered if current U.S. programs put enough power behind our objectives.

Secretary Rusk noted that the Japanese might be able to work something out with the RVN on a rice fertilizer barter basis. This would be a matter that could be explored during his forthcoming trip.

Secretary McNamara summarized the present situation as follows. South Vietnam is under tremendous pressure from the VC. The VC are as numerous today as they were a year or two years ago. The surrounding area is weaker. The Cambodian situation is potentially very serious to the RVN. The input of arms from Cambodia before the recent developments was very

worrisome in the Delta. The Generals head a very fragile government. The United States should not try to cut the corners too fine. We must be prepared to devote enough resources to this job of winning the war to be certain of accomplishing it instead of just hoping to accomplish it.

Decisions Made and Actions To Be Taken

Exploratory discussions would be held with the Japanese government to determine if a mutually advantageous rice-fertilizer barter arrangement could be worked out between Japan and the RVN. (Action: State.)

Item B 4—Prospects and measures proposed by Country Team for improved prosecution of the war under the new government (Strategic Hamlet Program)

Summary of Discussion

Minister Trueheart led the discussion. He stated that the Strategic Hamlet Program is sound. It separates the VC from supplies, intelligence information, and from the general population. In the longer term, the program holds out prospects for social and economic changes throughout the country.

However, under the Diem regime implementation of the program has been faulty, particularly in the Delta region, primarily due to overextension. The Strategic Hamlet Program represents a large dollar investment by the U.S. Government and a large labor investment by the Vietnamese people. Minister Trueheart believes the new government in RVN will continue the program since they cannot default on what was promised the people under this program by their predecessors. The Generals will seek to disassociate themselves from past errors by providing for closer military and civil cooperation, reduced forced labor, relocation of poorly placed hamlets and improved training and arming of the militia. Most importantly, they must, sooner or later, establish meaningful priorities. Primary emphasis on hamlets must be in the Delta area and progress reporting should focus on this strategic region as well as on the thirteen critical provinces discussed earlier by General Harkins.

In the future additional hamlets will be required, maybe as many as one thousand, and some poor hamlets will need relocation. This will be expensive. Seventy percent of the hamlets in the Delta are not up to the standard required to make them truly effective. Economic and political progress must be made to improve the people's standard of living. New educational facilities are required and distribution of fertilizer to the inhabitants of the strategic hamlets is needed. The new government has established an inter-ministerial committee to supervise the Strategic Hamlet

Program. Minister Trueheart stated that as far as the Country Team could determine, the one billion piasters already budgeted by the RVN for support of strategic hamlets will cover current costs. No additional MAP funds are foreseen.

Secretary Rusk asked how much medical contact did the people in the hamlets have? He was answered that this varies, USOM has one group that dispenses some medical assistance and the U.S. Army has an on-the-job medical training program. General Harkins added that there are only 700 doctors in RVN, 450 of whom are in the armed forces.

Mr. McGeorge Bundy asked where does the responsibility for the Strategic Hamlet Program now fall? Minister Trueheart replied that there was no change on the U.S. side, and that the inter-ministerial committee is responsible on the RVN side. Mr. Bundy then asked how do we communicate our recommendations concerning this program to RVN now that Mr. Nhu is dead. Minister Trueheart replied that we utilize all available means of communication through MAAG, USOM, MACV, etc.

Admiral Felt stated we are dealing with development of a new campaign plan with priority emphasized on areas south and southwest of Saigon. General Harkins replied the first priority of effort would be in this part of the country although attention would also be given to the problem areas in the north.

Mr. McGeorge Bundy then asked to whom the province chiefs report. Minister Trueheart replied that this varies between Corps, but in most cases to Corps Commanders. Admiral Felt then asked if this put the division commanders on the same level as the province chiefs. Mr. Colby replied in the affirmative, but noted that the division is an operational command subject to movement to any part of the country.

Mr. McGeorge Bundy asked how the strategic hamlets are financed. Minister Trueheart replied that they were originally financed through an emergency purchase of ten million dollars worth of piasters by the U.S. Government. Now they are being financed by the Vietnamese Government, although some \$35 million of U.S. assistance has gone into the hamlet program this year. Minister Trueheart stated that there is an advantage to the village inhabitants contributing reasonable amounts of labor to the hamlets as it serves thereby to identify the peasants with their own hamlets and with the program as a whole.

Minister Trueheart emphasized that when he said 70% of the hamlets in the Delta were not considered up to standard, he did not mean that they are under VC control. General Taylor asked if there are any hamlets under control of the VC. General Harkins responded that although some hamlets have been over run and some subverted by the VC, he did not know of any that were actually under the control of the VC.

[Here follows discussion of Item C 1, "Revision of Military Comprehensive Plan;" Item C 2, "Status Report on FY 64 MAP;" Item D,

“Outline in terms of forces, timing and numbers involved, the projected program for reduction U.S. military forces by end FY65;” and Item E, “Country Team suggestions for revision of current reports to develop a consolidated country team reporting system.”]

Appendix C

NSC 5412, “National Security Council Directive on Covert Operations”

A segment of NSC 5412 follows below. Known as the Special Group 5412/2, this subcommittee of the National Security Council was the descendant of the Special Group 10/2 which, as described in “The Forty Committee” by L. Fletcher Prouty¹, produced a document, NSCID 10/2, that “came close to giving the CIA what it wanted” in terms of being able to conduct clandestine operations. NSC 5412, “National Security Council Directive on Covert Operations,” effectively neutralized such oversight functions as were intended to be carried out under the authority of the Operations Coordinating Board (OCB) which was a part of NSC by law. OCB was intended to be a group of senior individuals, who would follow the decisions made by the National Security Council and make sure that the bureaucracy carried them out.

The following is taken from pages 308-310 of *The U.S. Government and the Vietnam War, Executive and Legislative Roles and Relationships, Part I, 1945-1961*, prepared for the Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, by the Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, printed by the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1984. Also important to note here is the wording that defined “covert operations.”

Although there had been some covert U.S. operations in Indochina during Truman’s administration, which had been continued by Eisenhower, the approval of NSC 5412 on March 15, 1954, marked the official recognition and sanctioning of a much

1. “The Forty Committee”, by L. Fletcher Prouty, *Genesis*, February, 1975, pp. 28, 105-108,
<http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/40Comm.html>

larger program of anti-Communist activities in Indochina and throughout the world.⁸¹

NSC 5412, “National Security Council Directive on Covert Operations,” which continued to be the U.S. Government’s basic directive on covert activities until the Nixon administration’s NSC 40 in 1970, began with this statement of purpose:

The National Security Council, taking cognizance of the vicious covert activities of the USSR and Communist China and the governments, parties and groups dominated by them ... to discredit and defeat the aims and activities of the United States and other powers of the free world, determined, as set forth in NSC directives 10/2 and 10/5 [of the Truman administration], that, in the interests of world peace and U.S. national security, the overt foreign activities of the U.S. Government should be supplemented by covert operations....

The NSC has determined that such covert operations shall to the greatest extent practicable, in the light of U.S. and Soviet capabilities and taking into account the risk of war, be designed to

a. Create and exploit troublesome problems for International Communism, impair relations between the USSR and Communist China and between them and their satellites, complicate control within the USSR, Communist China and their satellites, and retard the growth of the military and economic potential of the Soviet bloc.

b. Discredit the prestige and ideology of International Communism, and reduce the strength of its parties and other elements.

c. Counter any threat of a party or individuals directly or indirectly responsive to Communist control to achieve dominant Power in a free world country.

d. Reduce International Communist control over any areas of the world.

e. Strengthen the orientation toward the United States of the peoples and nations of the free world, accentuate, wherever possible, the identity of interest between such peoples and nations and the United States as well as favoring, where appropriate, those groups genuinely advocating or believing in the advancement of

81. NSC 5412 was declassified in 1977, and is located at the National Archives, RG 273. It will be published in a future volume of FRUS.

such mutual interests, and increase the capacity and will of such peoples and nations to resist International Communism.

f. In accordance with established policies and to the extent practicable in areas dominated or threatened by International Communism, develop underground resistance and facilitate covert and guerrilla operations and ensure availability of those forces in the event of war, including wherever practicable provisions of a base upon which the military may expand these forces in time of war within active theaters of operations as well as provision for stay-behind assets and escape and evasion facilities.

NSC 5412 defined “covert operations” as “... all activities conducted pursuant to this directive which are so planned and executed that any U.S. Government responsibility for them is not evident to unauthorized persons and that if uncovered the U.S. Government can plausibly disclaim any responsibility for them. Specifically, such operations shall include any covert activities related to: propaganda, political action; economic warfare; preventive direct action, including sabotage, anti-sabotage, demolition; escape and evasion and evacuation measures; subversion against hostile states or groups including assistance to underground resistance movements, guerrillas and refugee liberation groups; support of indigenous and anti-communist elements in threatened countries of the free world; deceptive plans and operations; and all activities compatible with this directive necessary to accomplish the foregoing. Such operations shall not include: armed conflict by recognized military forces, espionage and counterespionage, nor cover and deception for military operations.”

To approve and coordinate most covert operations, (some were required to be approved by the President), NSC 5412 established what became known as the 5412 Committee, also given the nonspecific title, the “Special Group,” to reduce chances of exposure. (In 1964, after the term “Special Group” became known, the Group was called the 303 Committee. In 1970, it was renamed the 40 Committee.) The 5412 Committee and its successors consisted of the Deputy Under Secretary of State, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the President’s Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, and the Director of the CIA, with the latter serving as the Group’s “action officer.” In 1957, the Chairman of the JCS also became a member.

Appendix D

Krulak Letter Re: Dealey Plaza Photos And Lansdale Identity

VICTOR H. KRULAK

15 March 1985

Mr. Fletcher Prouty
Alexandria, Virginia

Dear Fletch:

As I read your interesting letter it is plain that you have not wanted for interest or achievement in your life. It has to have been exciting and rewarding too.

Mine has been a lively existence too. I had much to do with Vietnam from '64 to '68, and was loudly disenchanted with what went on and how. I recorded it as part of my book First to Fight that came out a few months ago.

I've also spent ten years in the newspaper business (a most useful education) and now write a syndicated weekly column. I wrote another book, Organization for National Security that resulted in my testifying before a Senate committee.

All taken together, a stirring life.

As to your chronicle concerning the JFK assassination period, I remember your going to Antarctica. I was in the Pentagon at the time of the tragedy but have no recollection of where Lansdale was.

The pictures.-- The two policemen are carrying shotguns, not rifles. Their caps are different (one a white chinstrap, one black). One has a Dallas police shoulder patch, one does not and their caps differ from that of another police officer in photo 4. Reasonable conclusion -- they are either reservists or phonys. And, as you know, city cops don't have anything to do with Sheriff's offices.

As to photo no. 1. That is indeed a picture of Ed Lansdale. The haircut, the stoop, the twisted left hand, the large class ring. It's Lansdale. What in the world was he doing there? Has anyone ever asked him and who was the photographer? Why did he take the pictures? What did he do with them?

I have examined my own records and find no clue that would help. Suffice to say, it is a fascinating proposition.

I am returning your pictures.

Best regards always.

Sincerely,

[signed, Brute Krulak]

VHK: jm
Enclosures

Appendix E

Copies of NSAMs 55, 56, and 57

Contained herein are copies of National Security Action Memorandum Numbers 55, 56, and 57 taken from Fletcher's own files when working in the Pentagon. As was his standard operating procedure, he xeroxed and saved copies of these for his own files at the point when he briefed the Joint Chiefs of Staff on them (see page 170).

NSAM No. 55

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 28, 1961

NATIONAL SECURITY ACTION MEMORANDUM NO. 55

TO: The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

SUBJECT: Relations of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the President
in Cold War Operations

I wish to inform the Joint Chiefs of Staff as follows with regard to my views of their relations to me in Cold War Operations:

a. I regard the Joint Chiefs of Staff as my principal military advisor responsible both for initiating advice to me and for responding to requests for advice. I expect their advice to come to me direct and unfiltered.

b. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have a responsibility for the defense of the nation in the Cold War similar to that which they have in conventional hostilities. They should know the military and paramilitary forces and resources available to the Department of Defense, verify their readiness, report on their accuracy, and make appropriate recommendations for their expansion and improvement. I look to the Chiefs to contribute dynamic and imaginative leadership in contributing to the success of the military and paramilitary aspects of Cold War programs.

c. I expect the Joint Chiefs of Staff to present the military viewpoint in governmental councils in such a way as to assure that the military factors are clearly understood before decisions are reached. When only the Chairman or a single Chief is present, that officer must represent the Chiefs as a body, taking such preliminary and subsequent actions as may be necessary to assure that he does in fact represent the corporate judgement of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

- 2 -

d. While I look to the Chiefs to represent the military factor without reserve or hesitation, I regard them to be more than military men and expect their help in fitting military requirements into the over-all context of any situation, recognizing that the most difficult problem in Government is to combine all assets in a unified, effective pattern.

[signature of John Kennedy]

cc: Secretary of Defense
General Taylor

NSAM No. 56

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 28, 1961

NATIONAL SECURITY ACTION MEMORANDUM NO. 56

TO: The Secretary of Defense

SUBJECT: Evaluation of Paramilitary Requirements

The President has approved the following paragraph:

“It is important that we anticipate now our possible future requirements in the field of unconventional warfare and paramilitary operations. A first step would be to inventory the paramilitary assets we have in the United States Armed Forces, consider various areas in the world where the implementation of our policy may require indigenous paramilitary forces, and thus arrive at a determination of the goals which we should set in this field. Having determined the assets and the possible requirements, it would then become a matter of developing a plan to meet the deficit.”

The President requests that the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Department of State and the CIA, make such an estimate of requirements and recommend ways and means to meet these requirements.

McGeorge Bundy

cc: Secretary of State
Director, CIA
General Maxwell D. Taylor

C-O-P-Y

NSAM No. 57

C O P Y

June 28, 1961

NATIONAL SECURITY ACTION MEMORANDUM NO. 57

TO: The Secretary of State
 The Secretary of Defense
 The Director, CIA

The President has approved the attached recommendation:

The Special Group (5412 Committee) will perform the functions assigned in the recommendation to the Strategic Resources Group.

McGeorge Bundy

cc: General Maxwell D. Taylor

cc: Mrs. Lincoln
 Mr. Smith
 Mr. McG. Bundy file

C O P Y

C O P Y

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PARAMILITARY OPERATIONS

1. For the purpose of this study, a paramilitary operation is considered to be one which by its tactics and its requirements in military-type personnel, equipment and training approximates a conventional military operation. It may be undertaken in support of an existing government friendly to the U.S. or in support of a rebel group seeking to overthrow a government hostile to us. The U.S. may render assistance to such operations overtly, covertly or by a combination of both methods. In size these operations may vary from the infiltration of a squad of guerillas to a military operation such as the Cuban invasion. The small operations will often fall completely within the normal capability of one agency; the large ones may affect State, Defense, CIA, USIA and possibly other departments and agencies.

2. In order to conduct paramilitary operations with maximum effectiveness and flexibility within the context of the Cold War, it is recommended that current directives and procedures be modified to effect the following:

a. Any proposed paramilitary operation in the concept state will be presented to the Strategic Resources Group for initial consideration and for approval as necessary by the President. Thereafter, the SRG will assign primary responsibility for planning, for interdepartment coordination and for execution to the Task Force, department or individual best qualified to carry forward the operation to success, and will indicate supporting responsibilities. Under this principle, the Department of Defense will normally receive responsibility for overt paramilitary operations. Where such an operation is to be wholly covert or disavowable, it may be assigned to CIA, provided that it is within the normal capabilities of the agency. Any large paramilitary operation wholly or partly covert which requires significant numbers of military trained personnel, amounts to military equipment which exceed normal CIA-controlled stocks and/or military experience of a kind and level peculiar to the Armed services is properly the primary responsibility of the Department of Defense with the CIA in a supporting role.

Appendix F

Prouty Letter Regarding JFK Assassination Conspiracy and Cover Story

4201 Peachtree Place, Alexandria, VA 22304
1994

Aug 13,

Dave Ratcliffe
567 35th Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Dear Dave,

One of the pleasantest surprises I have ever received was in the mail yesterday. It was the VCR you made while you visited.¹ Although some might say it was a bit “one-sided” from the point of view of who did the preaching, and that it was more than a bit “long winded”, I have steeled myself to put up with the burden of criticism in favor of my gratitude toward you for the work, the effort, the concept and the product. Thank you!

I am sending essentially the same letter to Tom and to Patrick. I understand and appreciate their roles in this too, and I want to encourage all of you now to do what you can to promote this work. Lest I appear to be a bit too aggressive on my own behalf, I wish to

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1. This is a 2-Volume video-taped interview conducted by the author and recorded by Patrick Fourmy in Fletcher's home in August, 1993. Video copies are available from Prevailing Winds Research, Box 23511, Santa Barbara, CA 93121. Audio cassette tape copies are available from rat haus reality press.

state that I believe that all of us have produced something for these times that is rare, unusual, and significant. Now it is up to us all to prepare it for a market in the way that it deserves and that the market will accept...perhaps...demand.

I have been getting many requests these days for similar work. Only day before yesterday I made a 2 hour TV taped interview for some fellows who are connected with Compuserve and who want to use it for that and for me to get into that network forum.

At about the same time an author sent me several pages of questions and a blank cassette and asked me to answer the questions and tape it. As a result, I wrote up much of the following and then read it. I thought that I might use it to send to you, Tom and Patrick simply as an up-date.

Before I go into that, I have been—in response to Patrick’s request a while ago—going through my files and putting all my articles in folders and copying them. When I get this done I plan to make a master list of it all and see what the next step is with you fellows with regard to the Archives in Santa Barbara. I am interested in that.

Along with the articles I have found that I have most of the original publications. They can serve as a sort of Master List from which copies can be made. On top of that, it might be well to bring some of them up to date, and I could do that on cassette or video tape. We have many options ahead of us. Now to the questions I received and the letter. Forgive the fact that it is addressed to other work. Despite that, I believe it may serve a purpose for all of us. (The writer involved is with a small, local publication. I do not expect it to be seen by many people.)

I told him that I had his questions concerning the assassination of President Kennedy, and related matters. I shall provide taped material; but it is essential that I clarify things that are rather confusing in this work about the definition of a “Conspiracy” and the definition of the “Cover Story.”

This next section is interesting, because I was doing it for a stranger and then Patrick’s package came in with that interesting work by my

old friend Peter Dale Scott, “CASE CLOSED? or OSWALD FRAMED?” The review of Gerald Posner’s book. It has burned me up since I first saw that book to see the way Posner crafted lies into his work. A good example is what he said about me. These paid hacks/lawyers who have been writing those books have been doing some very heavy disinformation and slanderous work. They need to be exposed.

First of all, let’s examine these ideas. Hundreds of unwitting authors have written books about this subject, many of them denying absolutely that there was/is a conspiracy. Unfortunately they do not appear to understand the word. What they are really doing, intentionally or not, is to support the “JFK Assassination Cover Story.” This has become a major commercial enterprise, and a really dirty game. They are out to draw blood from anyone who does not agree with the party line of the Coup d’etat perpetrators.

Whether they are witting or unwitting of the objective of their work, they are attempting to perpetuate the cover story. They will do anything, say anything in their witless attempt to protect the idea that only one person, and no more, was involved in the crime.

A conspiracy is a plan, usually an evil or unlawful plan. It involves two or more people. The denial of the fact of a conspiracy, i.e. the cover story, is like a bubble. Once any part of it is proved to be false, it bursts and the cover story is exposed. Like a balloon, it is not necessary to burst a cover story with ten or fifteen pins. It collapses with only one bit of circumstantial evidence that is undeniable.

As I have done in my writing for about 30 years, I go to the most important single point of the cover story and destroy it. I go after the first and most vulnerable of the lies, i.e. the “Three bullets.” Except for the nuts who believe the “Magic Bullet” fabrication, there had to be at least four shots—ergo, at least two riflemen.

After that it is ridiculous to examine every other item on the “Twenty Six Volume” quagmire list. The bubble of the cover story is burst. Therefore, a conspiracy exists; so what more can be said? More than one guy was involved. It’s that basic.

At this point one must take into consideration the motivation of hundreds of the authors who support the “Oswald did it alone” mythology. These are the people who are being persuaded by adequate compensation or other inducements to fight for, and to maintain the contrived “Cover Story.” Note that they tend to be lawyers, and pseudo-lawyers all the way from David Belin to Gerald Ford and Gerald Posner. They are simply serving their clients, sponsors and captors.

They must not let the web of the “Cover Story” be ripped apart. Beginning with the Warren Commission and Belin, this has been a major occupation for the last three decades. In their desperate efforts they attack those writers who have exposed the fact of a conspiracy, and do all they can to destroy the work of those writers and to degrade them as individuals.

A glowing example of a member of this sleazy profession is Gerald Posner with his book *Case Closed*. As a simple example, that I am in a position to support, I’ll pick his slanderous attack on me. Actually he fails to mention me and my work in the entire 607 pages of his work; but he does drag me into the fray with a footnote on page 468. In so doing, he erroneously cites my book, *JFK, the CIA, Vietnam and the Plot to Assassinate John F. Kennedy*, by simply referring to it as *JFK*. (This little device confuses his readers who discover there is no book by that name.)

However he proves that he has read it by citing “p.306. The implication [by Prouty] is that some intelligence agency, probably the CIA, released an early, prepackaged set of details about the assassin to the media.” These are his words, and—as a mark of his profession—they are false. No where on those pages, 306-309, or elsewhere in my book, did I make such a comment whatsoever. He fabricated that lie in an attempt to categorize my work as biased and incorrect.

Further Posner used a typical lawyer’s game to characterize me incorrectly; so that anyone who wished to seek information about me from the U.S. Army or the Intelligence community could not find it, because there would be none. He cites me as “a mysterious

intelligence officer” and as “an ex-Army colonel.” I never served as either and have claimed neither.

Then he continues his lies with, “the chief Pentagon liaison officer to the CIA.” I never had such a job.

Proof of the fact that he created these lies on purpose is the fact that he has my book with my biographical data correctly available to include photographs, bits of my biography and all.

Next he plays a game with the Christchurch New Zealand *Star* newspaper that was shown being read by Sutherland (Man X) in the film *JFK*. He says “Prouty claimed that the local newspaper published an extra.” That was no casual “claim.” It is a positive fact. I bought the paper in New Zealand, and I still possess that same copy. It’s a fact, not simply a claim as he embellishes his story.

Then he fabricates the timing sequence of the press time of the newspaper. To be accurate, he confuses “press time”, i.e. that time when the paper was ready for the press, and the time I gave when I had purchased it on the street, i.e. “around noon time.” That difference itself could be one to two hours, and the arrest of Oswald is not when reporters learned he was suspected of killing the President. At that time he was arrested on the suspicion of Tippet’s murder. There was a big time difference.

Here again he creates a purposeful lie to obfuscate my main point concerning the content of that paper. It published a section about Oswald with his biographical material that had been written by the conspirators *before the Dallas Court had charged him with the crime*. This is the time when the reporters on the scene first knew that Oswald was a suspect.

You may recall that there had been a printed news report that “a suspect” had been picked up in Fort Worth. The reporters would not have begun to go after that story until then and that was after the news was already on the streets in New Zealand. That is important.

There was a long gap between the time the police arrested Oswald on the suspicion of murder of Tippet, and his arraignment as the

suspected murderer of JFK. Yet the paper in New Zealand received a copy of the conspirators' cover story that had been collated and written before he was charged with the crime. This is important, and Posner is attempting to bury it with contrived, misleading data.

With this important fact in mind, there could not have been any substantive attempt to delve into the skimpy records of Oswald. It was only after his arraignment that they began that search in earnest. Therefore, the very fact that the *Star* carried a complete, well researched account of Oswald's life *before* he had been arraigned is most significant. It should be noted that the *Star* also carried a fine, studio photo of Oswald that was rarely seen anywhere else. How did the *Star* and other papers around the world get such information by newswire unless it had been collated, written and transmitted before Oswald had been charged, perhaps even before Nov 22?

Then Posner continues to embellish his lies by closing with "the *Star* managed to get a thin extra on the street within three hours." It's a small, but significant point. Posner says he quotes me for that statement. I never said it was a *thin* extra. In other words it was not some casually whipped up supplement to the day's news. I have the paper today. It is the normal 36 pages including all the routine locals news, sports news, etc. of a regular, well constructed daily paper.

I go into this detail because of the significance of the Posner slander. He is a lawyer. He is accustomed to tearing apart his opposite's story. In this case, as sole writer of the book, he plays both sides. He characterizes me untruthfully, he attacks the film, he quotes my book wrong. He is dishonest—as are so many others who work to maintain the "dead dog" cover story.

In this business, this is an important part of the story. Now to proceed with other questions, as listed.

It is these authors who attack us. They attack all of us who have informed the public of the fact and nature of the conspiracy. They are very creative, and they are cowards. They will never debate publicly. They, and their sponsors, cannot permit the destruction of their scenario. This is big business; and it is one of the major

responsibilities of the leadership of the Coup d'état that took over the reins of government immediately following Kennedy's death.

So—one thing must be understood. When the cover story bubble has been burst the game is up. I have carefully examined this subject in my book about *JFK*. Turn to page 292 where I quote the century old legal definition of conspiracy where, among other things it states that: “circumstances are stronger than positive proof.” This is most important and accepted in courts.

Now for more questions:

- a) The second question asks about any evidence I may have about the professional “Hit team that killed JFK.” Of course I have no evidence concerning the identity of those men—as individuals—and no one will ever have it. However the clear imprint of their profession is everywhere. And the fact that not one of them has ever been apprehended defines their work. I covered that carefully in my book.

In 1956 Allen Dulles, Director of Central Intelligence sent me and one of his key people on a round-the-world trip to visit a number of his CIA-Chiefs of Station. It was an elaborately orchestrated trip. During that trip I was conducted to a place where such professionals live, are trained and concealed. I was given a complete briefing on that business.

As a result of the fact that the JFK murder was accomplished with such total professionalism and that no “killers” have ever been apprehended and tried, it is clear that they were selected professionals from such a place and that they will never be identified and tried by the resultant “victors” of this coup d'état. There never has been a trial of this case—and never will be.

Furthermore, as I report in my book, LBJ said the same thing in 1973, “We had been operating a damned Murder Inc....” What more do we need? Johnson also “expressed his belief that the assassination in Dallas had been part of a conspiracy”.² That's the former President, and a man who

was under those same guns in Dallas. What more does anyone need?

Furthermore I worked on cases similar to the “JFK” case. I know how it is done. And one thing I know very well is that the “Cover Story” is bigger and more important than the act of the crime itself—it survives and must live for years.

- b) This next question is important and needs to be discussed and understood. Let’s look at the facts:
 - 1) The Secret Service and the FBI reported that they found three cartridge cases at the scene. (Actually they were found by Craig of the Dallas Sheriff’s Office.
 - 2) This information was given to the Warren Commission and it became their “Ball and Chain.” They were forced to work within those parameters, i.e. three bullets and three bullets only. So let’s account for them.

One bullet hit JFK in the back. The best evidence of this exists in the form of his suit coat and shirt.

One bullet hit JFK in the head. This evidence is found in the Zapruder film, and attested to by numbers of witnesses.

One bullet hit Connally.

One bullet missed. This bullet caused a fragment to hit Tague. The Warren Commission admitted this fact of the missed shot. This forced them into the “Magic Bullet” scenario that combines the back shot and the Connally hit.

We all know that there were four bullets fired—at the very least. We all know the precise timing of the shots by means of

2. Leo Janus, “The Last Days of the President, LBJ in Retirement,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, July, 1973, volume 232, p. 39.

the Zapruder record. We all know that the indisputable “fourth” bullet means at least one more gunman.

We could end everything here. Four bullets in the time available means at least two gunmen. Two, or more, gunmen mean a conspiracy. There is the pin that bursts the balloon of the contrived cover story. From here on out the discussion is academic, relatively trivial and contrived. It’s all over with “Four bullets, Two gunmen.” But I’ll continue with the questions simply because they have been asked.

- c) This question asks about the Christchurch *Star* and its account of the “getaway” car... “What getaway car?” All I can say is that the first paper printed in Christchurch that day includes that statement. When I returned from New Zealand and had access to all the news and reports available to me in the environment of my office in the area of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the Pentagon, I found that similar news had been flashed around the world; but that U.S. papers had all but ignored it.

I wish to make something clear about the Christchurch *Star* and its role in my accounts of this case. First of all, that is where I was and it was the first and only paper I could get; so I quote from it. This leads to an interesting development that has confused a lot of improperly motivated writers.

When I worked on the film *JFK*, I let Stone’s film experts use my original newspaper that I have carefully preserved during these three decades. They copied only parts of it for use in the airport scene with Sutherland. That was a movie-type newspaper, i.e. the Front Page looked like the original. Hundreds were printed, and given away. Of course the people who got those copies believed they had exact copies. They were not. For certain reasons the paper was “cut and pasted” much differently than the original, so when these “researchers” scan their copies they do not realize that they do not have a true and complete copy of the original.

This has led them into errors, and then they blame me for “misquoting” the paper. In fact, I have the only complete original. There are no complete copies. What the paper says, in fact is:

NBC Radio reported that a car believed to be the getaway car of the assassin had been seized in Fort Worth, Texas. A suspect had been taken into custody.

You must not confuse this statement with the Oswald biographical data that were in a totally different section. The main news item at the top of the page is attributed to N.Z.P.A-A.A.P. news services. All of that extensive news coverage does not even contain the name Oswald. You can see that the newsmen who were working on this case did not even know about Oswald—at the time they were filing their news reports. They did know about the getaway car and a suspect in Fort Worth. Quite obviously Oswald was not in the car, did not drive it, and did not go to Fort Worth.

Therefore, the Oswald part of this story had been provided to the *Star* separately and is a separate item on the lower left-hand quarter of the page. Oddly, this special story adds:

Reuter said a Secret Service agent had also been shot from the same distance as the President but no details of this shooting were immediately available.

The same story adds:

Tippet was shot dead as he ran into the cinema, British United Press said.

You can see that the world press was being fed information that had been put together as a cover story, and did not agree with the basic news of the day.

In the basic news it was reported in large print:

Three bursts of gunfire, apparently from automatic weapons, were heard.

Secret Service men immediately unslung their automatic weapons and pistols.

We all know from the abundant photos of the time, that not a single Secret Service man there, and there were few enough, “Unslung his automatic weapon or pistol.” Here is contrived, cover story news again.

The very first CBS nationwide news carried the “three bursts of automatic gunfire” also. This was “on the scene” spot news, and was most likely accurate.

- d) Next is about Nixon being in Dallas: “Are you suggesting that Richard Nixon had some involvement with the JFK Assassination?” It totally missed my point. It had been arranged by the conspirators that Nixon be in Dallas on that significant day. The purpose was to cloud his career with that fact—and what could have been made of it, and thereby to control him when and if he became President—as was planned for the future.

Nixon did not have a memory problem about where he was. After all he told most of his four different stories to reporters in the same time frame, i.e. in 1963. He fabricated them. It just seems important to note that he chose to tell four important reporters for four important publications—including books—that he was in four different places that day, at that time. He never did tell the reporters that he was still in Dallas at the time JFK was shot. They don’t call him “Tricky Dick” for nothing. (I have all four of the publications.) In final analysis, Nixon was a victim of Dallas also. He was not shot; but from that date on he was under control. This is a characteristic of Coup d’etat planning—control them all.

- e) Then about “Presidential Protection.” It is in this area of official activity that made me so certain JFK had been killed by a conspiracy—so many commonplace rules were neglected or broken. When I first saw that radio-photo of the Texas School Book building in the *Star*, and noted how many windows had been left open right over the Presidential motorcade route, I knew something was wrong in Dallas. A Congressman was with me. We both agreed.

One of the problems with the writers of most of the JFK books is that they are young and inexperienced in this subject. I was in Cairo and Teheran in 1943 during those major WWII conferences that involved Roosevelt, Churchill, Chiang Kai-shek, and Joe Stalin. I worked in that heavy security environment then.

Some time before the Cairo trip, I was contacted by the civilian air crew that had been selected to fly Roosevelt's party to Cairo. (He went most of the way by ship.) We made early plans for their protection and assisted the British with the local Cairo responsibilities. When I went to Teheran, I flew the Chinese delegation there, and noted that the city was totally encircled by a high curtain with armed men all along it. The Russians were responsible for that task. Again a heavy security environment.

On Sept. 2, 1945, the day of the formal Japanese surrender in Tokyo Bay on the battleship Missouri, I flew a planeload of elite corps Marines to Japan. They were to serve as Gen. MacArthur's personal guard there. I know writers have taken me to task for my "Presidential Protection" statements; but I'll challenge any of them to compare their experience with mine.

That was 50 years ago. As a young man I was working on military duties among units protecting these world leaders. Needless to say, in such a situation, you learn a lot and quickly.

More significantly, during my Pentagon years (1955-1964) I was Chief of Special Operations and again was involved in the area of Presidential Protection. (See Appendix I of my book *The Secret Team* that is an official record of my work while assigned to the office of the Secretary of Defense, i.e. the office of Special Operations.) I knew the units. I knew about their training at Ft. Holabird, MD, and was familiar with the business. It is a very strict responsibility—when done correctly.

While in this duty I would be called about Presidential Protection matters and during a planned visit to Mexico City by President Eisenhower in 1958, I flew the plane that carried Secret Service and Military men to Mexico City weeks before the visit to make plans for that operation.

We completely covered the route he would take and made the plans for what would be done. We worked from a manual that established what would be done. I have mentioned it in my book. We joked about it, as I wrote. But it was done with care.

A further question asks, “Who was in charge of security for the President on that day?” I have written many times that the man who ought to have been in charge had received a call and had been informed that his unit—one of many—would not be needed in Dallas that day. As a result there was no one in charge. The unit did not go to Dallas. (I talked with members of his unit after my return from New Zealand and was shocked to learn this.) Another move of the Conspiracy game.

Then another, “Couldn’t that person be asked why established procedures were ignored?” What good would it have done? He had no way to know that one of the other units had not been sent to Dallas—until after the fact.

- f) This next is about “Forest Sorrels of the Secret Service.” I can see no merit to this question. The dog is dead. Why beat it any longer? It wasn’t Sorrel’s fault.
- g) Another asks about the units not being on duty in Dallas. I’ve given the answer above. Of course the key calls, the ones that told those unit leaders they would not be needed that day had to have come from a highly placed office that had, or appeared to have, the authority and the responsibility for making those calls—only in this case the caller acted on the orders of the conspirators and called off the protection. No one will ever know who that was because the conspirators took over the government and there never will be any trials and prosecution—as we have learned over the past 30 years.
- h) Next there is some reference to an author named Ziebel about the Secret Service’s Manual and its rules. I have no idea who Ziebel is. I have not read his book. I only know that he must not have done any research. When I say I assisted Presidential Protection people in 1943, and when I say that I was in Mexico City with Secret Service men in 1958, and when I say

that my work during 1955-1964 brought me into contact with that work, I am talking about real military experience at the highest level, i.e. Office of the Secretary of Defense. The total of this work, 1943 to 1964 is supported by Official orders. The Secret Service quite obviously made mistakes on Nov 22, 1963, and no doubt did improve its Manual. Who wouldn't? But that doesn't mean that they did not have one earlier. That 130 year old organization had plenty of good policies in 1963. Some one finessed them out of using them then.

If anyone prefers to believe Ziebil, that's his option. If I were in your place the least I would do is ask for his credentials—other than “myth-maker.”

- i) Now for the “marksman” question and the Posner fables. There is no reason to be concerned with whether or not a man could shoot and hit JFK from the 6th floor through a tree with three shots and do the other damage he did. We know there were at least four shots so that argument is contrived by those who wish to keep the cover story alive. Note how this type of hypothetical scenario creeps into the case all the time. It's like all of the “autopsy” business. Of course it might be important, if it were relevant.

Forget it. There were four shots—or more. That fact, and that fact alone destroys the “No conspiracy” cover story.

- j) Now about the Cabinet on the way to Tokyo. The significance of that episode is that, because someone had the clout to cause that to happen, we get another peek at the pervasiveness of the machinery of the conspiracy. That could never have happened by itself. Naturally we'll never know who did it. Asking any member of the Cabinet that question would have been about as productive as the time I asked the Sphinx if she would like to go to dinner. The real issue is that after JFK was killed the way he was, you couldn't have asked a Cabinet officer the time of day. Bullets create sudden learning.
- k) About the JFK cabinet being ordered to Japan, many newspapers in the USA, and around the world printed the

speeches those Cabinet members made when they got to Japan. Of course they never did get to Japan. They ordered the plane to return to Honolulu and then went right on to Washington. Their PR people had sent the speeches on to Japan before they left and had provided copies to the News Services. No one thought to stop them. Few people knew that they had actually gone on that aborted trip. It is a crazy scene all the way.

Anyone with a real interest in this period, i.e. August-November 1963, should know that there is a marvelous book printed by the GPO in the Foreign Relations of the U.S. (FRUS) series, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963, Volume IV, Vietnam August-December 1963*. It has everything, in detail, about this unusual period. It is new. It is absolutely the best source book available.

- l)** I'll skip the Connally bullet fragment question. That's just another one of those contrived scenarios that the "Cover Story" fabricators adore. It's irrelevant, except to the "Magic Bullet" theme.
- m)** More on the Christchurch *Star*. All kinds of historical fabricators have played with that bit of the drama. When they term the paper a "Thin Extra" one is able to see through their game. They had somehow managed to get a copy of the movie production of that paper. That movie paper, which included excerpts from many papers, was "thin." The true *Star* of November 23, 1963 is a full 36 page paper. In other words it was not some quick handout only a few pages in size.

Next, they try to make much of the time difference between the USA and NZ. I was there. I could and did look at clocks on the wall. I knew the NZ time. A U.S. Congressman and I were just sitting down to breakfast at 7:30 am when we heard the very first news from BBC. Posner, the worst of sources, fantasizes, "the implication that some intelligence agency, probably the CIA released an early, pre-packaged set of details about the assassin to the media. But there is nothing mysterious about the extra edition of the *Star*."

If you'll take the time to compare what I wrote and what Posner contrives that I wrote, you'll see the root of the problem. So many authors, Posner included, simply fabricate things and insert them into their script while attributing them to me. I never said, nor inferred that "probably the CIA, released an early, prepackaged set of details..." and I never said it was a "thin" extra edition. Also, he gave my work and job title wrong. He cites my own book where all that appears correctly. Then he massages it to suit his own dirty work. Such action defines him and his work.

My point about the timing of the release of this news in the *Star* is important. It may have been 9:00am (NZ time) when Oswald was arrested in the theater. OK. According to the news the police did not know whether he was Oswald or Hidell. Most importantly it was after midnight, in Dallas, when Oswald was arraigned as the suspect in the murder of JFK. That was the official time when reporters were told that news. Before that they had no firm basis to dig into distant and nebulous files for news of some 24 year old stranger of that name.

Once they knew Oswald was arraigned as the killer they tore into their files and dug up their stories; but around the world a story about Oswald had already surfaced. This was the early story printed by the *Star*. When I got back to Washington I went to the Library of Congress and checked papers from all over the world to see how the story broke. Posner and his tribe never did that. It was not just the *Star* that had the big, in depth Oswald story so quickly. It was the world.

One feature of the story was a fine, studio type photo of Oswald that none of the researchers have been able to identify. How did that photo get flashed around the world before Oswald had been arraigned?

That's the *Star* story. You can see why the "Cover Story" protagonists, such as Posner, try to warp and distort the facts. The *Star* is an interesting and important bit of the evidence for what it tells us about the nature of the conspiracy planning.

Back to the question, we see what I think about Posner's intentional distortions. Untruth does not go over too well in history books, although it is all too prevalent.

- n) I have no interest in the Ruby side of the story. He got into the Police station because they let him in. What else?
- o) Relative to “chance rules our lives.” I do not believe it. I have no way to know what JFK thought. If anyone wants to know what JFK was thinking on that day, he ought to read the speech that he planned to make at the Trade Mart in Dallas on Nov 22, 1963. It’s all quoted in my book.

What we all need to know is that John F. Kennedy knew only too well that there was always a chance that he would be killed. It may be that most Presidents know that. Despite this, Kennedy had the guts to continue as the leader of this nation and to present himself to his constituents from Coast to Coast and to all comers. He did not simply “take a chance.” He was doing his duty as he saw it; and he was going to see that American men were not thrown into battle in Southeast Asia. He had stated his policy and he had planned to re-confirm it on Nov 22, 1963. JFK was a true hero and an outstanding President.

One of my close relatives, a first cousin, was employed by the Kennedy’s while Joe was Ambassador to London. Her job was to be their tutoress and general assistant with schooling. She was a Smith College graduate and her family knew the Kennedys. My long awareness of that unusual family dates back to my youth. I was born in Massachusetts a few months before John Kennedy.

I have a pretty good idea of him and of his family. He was undoubtedly one of the most highly qualified men ever to be elected to the office of President. If he had not been killed, and if three decades of lies and character assassination had not followed Dealey Plaza, he would have changed the history of the Twentieth Century.

I provide this for your own utilization as you may see fit. I had written much of it for other purposes; but was so pleased with the VCR that you sent me that I thought I’d respond along the same lines.

Now I'm going to write, essentially this same letter to Patrick and to Tom. I am most interested in your project out there, and want to provide all the support I can.

Incidentally, I play your piano tapes frequently. They are excellent. I thank you for them also.

Sincerely,

L. Fletcher Prouty

Appendix G

Organizations Dedicated To A Sustainable Future

The following is a brief listing of some of the organizations accessible on the web providing information essential to focus our energies upon creating a living, sustainable civilization where human society is fully engaged in being partners with other life forms.

<http://www.rmi.org/>

Rocky Mountain Institute

1739 Snowmass Creek Road, Snowmass, Colorado 81654-9199

970/927-3851

<http://nativeamericas.aip.cornell.edu/>

Native Americas: Akwe:kon's Journal of Indigenous Issues

Akwe:kon Press, American Indian Program, Cornell Univ., 300 Caldwell Hall,
Ithaca, NY 14853, 800/9NATIVE

<http://www.rprogress.org/>

Redefining Progress

One Kearny Street, 4th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94108

415/781-1191

<http://www.ilsr.org/>

Institute for Local Self-Reliance

2425 18th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009-2096

202/232-4108

<http://www.awakeningearth.org/>

Duane Elgin's Awakening Earth

20 Elford Street, San Rafael, CA 94901

<http://www.sustainableABC.com/>

Sustainable Architecture, Building and Culture

Box 30085, Santa Barbara, CA 93130

805/898-9660

<http://www.scorecard.org/>

EDF's Scorecard, an Environmental Information Service

<http://www.futurenet.org/>

Positive Futures Network

publishes *YES! A Journal of Positive Futures*

Box 10818, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

206/842-0216

<http://www.rafi.org/>

Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI)

110 Osborne St., Suite 202, Winnipeg MB R3L 1Y5, Canada

204/453-5259

<http://www.schumachersociety.org/>

E.F. Schumacher Society

140 Jug End Road, Great Barrington, MA 01230

413/528-1737

<http://www.sanetwork.org/>

Sustainable America

42 Broadway, Suite 1740, New York, NY 10004-1617

212-269-9550

<http://www.gn.apc.org/schumachercollege/>

Schumacher College

An International Centre for Ecological Studies

The Old Postern, Dartington, Devon TQ9 6EA, UK.

+44 (0)1803 865934

<http://www.renaissancealliance.org/>

The Global Renaissance Alliance

P.O. Box 15712, Washington D.C. 20003

202/544-1219

<http://www.natural-law.org/>

Natural Law Party

1946 Mansion Dr, Fairfield, IA 525561

800-332-0000

<http://www.afd-online.org/>

The Alliance for Democracy

National Council Office: 781/259-9395

<http://www.worldwatch.org/titles/tsow.html>

State of the World papers by the Worldwatch Institute

1776 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-1904

202/452-1999

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"People have asked about this business we euphemistically call 'special operations', that is the military services providing support to the clandestine activities of the government, usually clandestine activities that are at least nominally under the control of the CIA."

"When I was assigned to the Air Force Headquarters in 1955, the Chief of Staff General Thomas D. White directed me to create an office 'to provide the military support of the clandestine operations of the CIA' in accordance with the provisions of the National Security Council Directive #5412 of March 15, 1954, and to operate as the Pentagon 'Focal Point Office for the CIA.'... As Mr. Dulles told me later, 'I want a focal point. I want an office that's cleared to do what we have to have done; an office that knows us very, very well and then an office that has access to a system in the Pentagon. But the system will not be aware of what initiated the request—they'll think it came from the Secretary of Defense. They won't realize it came from the Director of Central Intelligence.'"

"To really understand CIA, you have to remember that perhaps its best cover story is that it's an intelligence organization. It doesn't do much intelligence. Intelligence is gathered by other assets throughout the Government also. The Agency has quite a bit; but that isn't why they were created. Covert operations is their big money deal."

"There is no law, there is no structure, for covert operations. The Government didn't confront that in 1947 when they wrote the law. There has been no revision of the law to accommodate that.... There still is no law that says that the CIA is an intelligence organization—it says that it is a coordinating agency. There is no law that says it is a covert operations agency."

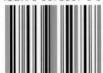
"These activities don't take place within the CIA alone. And it's important to see the CIA that way. The CIA is always merged with the rest of the government that's taking part in these actions. Because this was true over such a long period of time, there were people who were very familiar with and well-trained for these operations. Every time a covert activity came up, they were involved again. This is the Secret Team. They can carry out these activities."

L. Fletcher Prouty

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ISBN 0-9673507-0-0



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