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Intelligence Analysis
Mark M. Lowenthal

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Intelligence Analysis

Mark M. Lowenthal

March 11, 2004

Dr. Mark M. Lowenthal is the assistant director of central intelligence for analysis and production (ADCI/A&P) and concurrently is the vice chairman for evaluation on the National Intelligence Council (NIC). He returned to the government in 2002, initially as counselor to the director of central intelligence (DCI). Between 1997 and 2002, he served in the private sector, most recently with SRA International, working as a consultant to government and industry clients on intelligence issues. Dr. Lowenthal was the staff director of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence in the 104th Congress (1995–97), where he directed the committee's study on the future of the intelligence community, IC21: The Intelligence Community in the 21st Century. *He also served in the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR), as both an office director and as a deputy assistant secretary of state. He also was the senior specialist in U.S. foreign policy at the Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. He has written extensively on intelligence and national security issues, including five books and more than ninety articles or studies. His most recent book,* Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy *(Congressional Quarterly Press, 2000), has become the standard college and graduate school textbook on the subject. He also has written a fantasy novel. Dr. Lowenthal received his B.A. from Brooklyn College and his Ph.D. in history from Harvard University. He is an adjunct professor at the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University. He also serves as chairman of the Intelligence Committee for AFCEA, formerly the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association. In 1988, Dr. Lowenthal was the grand champion on* Jeopardy!*, the television quiz show.*

Oettinger: It's a great pleasure to introduce our discussion leader today: my friend Mark Lowenthal. You've all had the pleasure of reading his book. For him it's sort of a homecoming. He's a Harvard Ph.D. In fact, the topic of his dissertation is interesting: "Leadership and Indecision: American War Planning and Policy Process, 1937–1942." He's experienced in dealing with great surprises. This will be an informal conversation; he has agreed to be interruptible.

Lowenthal: Thank you, Tony, and thank you for arranging this. Let me say, at the outset, that what I am about to say represents my personal views and not those of a U.S. government agency.

What I thought I would do is mention some major issues facing the intelligence community, and then I'm just going to stop and throw it open to you so that we could have a conversation. I thought I would do it in the order in which we do things in the intelligence community. The first one is priorities. We have had a change in how we handle priorities. The president now has a new priority structure that I manage for the DCI, which for the first time has achieved the goal of having analysis drive collection. That is one of the Holy Grails of intelligence. It gives us an ability to match our resources against our priorities in a way we were never able to do before, both in collection and in analysis.

Let me tell you what my job is, which may help. What is an ADCI? The DCI, as you know, has two responsibilities. He's responsible for running the building he lives in, which means the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency], community management staff, and the NIC. He also is responsible for coordinating the intelligence community writ large. Most DCIs tend to do one or the other, based on their preference and where we are in time. So on the House Intelligence Committee, where I was the staff director in the mid-1990s, we felt that we needed two deputy directors of central intelligence [DDCIs]. We had one, who tended to back up the DCI in his CIA role. We wanted a second one to back up the DCI in his community role, because the DCI can only be in one place at one time. We needed a full-fledged deputy to back up the DCI wherever he wasn't, so we created a second DDCI for community management, under whom there are three ADCIs who are responsible for community activities across the board in three areas: collection, analysis and production, and administration. I'm the analysis and production guy. I work for the DCI and across all fifteen analytic communities.

One of the things that we built to support the president's new priorities framework is something we call the ARC—the Analytic Resources Catalogue. Prior to the creation of the ARC, we had no way of knowing who our analysts were. If you asked somebody, "How many French economists do you have?" the answer would be, "We've got some." We could not tell you how many analysts of any type we have in the intelligence community. We would manage anecdotally. So we created this ARC, which is a census form. Once a year—and we're in the middle of the cycle now—we ask all the analysts to put down what topics and what countries they've worked on. What are their degrees in? What courses have they taken with us?

We only go back ten years for two reasons. First, if they haven't done it in ten years, they don't know it any more. Second, we have so many newbies in the community that ten years basically captures all their information. So we now actually know whom we have. We can match whom we have against what the president's priorities are, and find out where all the gaps are and what our strengths are.

This is also useful when we surge. Surge is an activity we do in the intelligence community when we have a crisis in an area that we weren't covering as much as we have to when it goes bad on us. This happens regularly.

One of the things we do in the ARC when we have a crisis is ask, "Has anyone worked this recently? Does anyone have working knowledge of this, so that if I say 'Burundi' and 'Bujumbura' somebody recognizes it?" So, for the first time, we actually know what our skill set looks like. This is a big deal, and we do this across the entire community; not just the CIA, but also DIA [Defense Intelligence Agency], INR, DOE [Department of Energy], the labs, the

military intelligence units, NGA [National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency], everybody. It's a huge database. My staff and I are the only people who have access to the entire database; otherwise, every agency only sees its own database.

I don't use this promiscuously. I don't call up Jami Miscik, who's the head of the DI [Directorate of Intelligence], and say, "You know, Jami, I think you've got one Uruguay analyst too many. I want her shifted to Paraguay, and I think that Bulgaria analyst should go to Greece." The DDI [deputy director for intelligence] will deploy her people as she wants to on a day-to-day basis. During a crisis, I may start suggesting moving people around, and say, "The DCI needs support. The DIA has the best person. Send that person to me," because the DCI's one customer on any given day is much more important than anyone else's customer, including the DIA's customer. We have the ARC in place now, so the resource part of this is in better shape now, and connecting the resources to the priorities is in better shape.

One of the things we've discovered, though, as we work the system is that the analysts are less fungible than the collectors. If I move a SIGINT [signals intelligence] satellite that's been over an Arabic-speaking country and tell it that I want it to start collecting over Islamabad, it's not going to say, "I don't do Hindi." It does zeros and ones. You have to get the right boresight and you have to get the right frequency, but it really doesn't care what language it's picking up, whereas when an analyst says "I don't do that one," he or she is usually telling the truth. (Not always. Analysts may fudge, because there are issues they don't want to go back to again. They remember how awful those people were, and don't want to work with them again. You get that.)

On the collection side, the age-old problem remains of not having enough people to process and exploit what we capture. We take more photos and capture more signals than we could possibly process and exploit. We are never going to get to, nor do we need to get to, a one-to-one correspondence. We don't need to capture and then print out every photo; we don't need to decrypt every signal. But the numbers that we don't process are still far too large. This is a manpower issue. The only way to solve it is to put more people on the case. There's no way around it. There's always been a tension in the collection agencies between how much money they want to spend on collection versus how much they want to spend on P&E [processing and evaluation], and the intelligence community in this case is just like the Defense Department: hardware always beats people. It's the difference between buying a new car and driving it home, which is fun, and taking your car to the gas station to have the oil changed, which is boring. The P&E is an O&M [operations and maintenance] function, but as I used to say to a former director of NRO [National Reconnaissance Office], "The image that is not processed is identical to the image that is not collected. It has no effect on the system." We have an ongoing tension on that. It's never going to be perfect, but it probably will get better. This is a budget-type decision.

In terms of analysis, as I said, we now have a much better idea of whom we have. The analytical cadre is growing. We are hiring a lot of very good people. We're also losing a lot of people. If you were hired during the great Casey–Reagan buildup, that was over twenty years ago, and you have a lot of people who are voting with their pensions and going out the back door. So if you take the numbers that I have in the ARC and look at them, the experience of the analysts per agency is pretty low. I can't tell you what the exact number is, because it's actually classified, but it's a very scary number, and there's nothing you can do about it. When young people replace old people, you end up with less experience. It's one of those actuarial things. The only way to give

them more experience is to keep them there, and retention is a serious issue. It's one of the ones I'm responsible for.

The mission statement for the ADCI/AP is: "We are the friend of the working analyst." One of the things we worry about is retention. We spend a lot of time and a lot of money to get somebody into the system, and if you apply to the system you'll go through a security check. It's going to take a long time. We're going to do a background check, and a financial check, and yes, you're going to have to take a polygraph. The last thing I want is to have good people leave. Some people leave because they shouldn't be there, and that's fine. But a lot of people leave because they don't believe anyone cares about their career management, so my office is spending a lot more time on this issue.

We're very good at training when we take you in. We're not really brilliant after that. We get too many analysts who feel they're being told, "Congratulations! Here's your desk. Here's your computer. Start writing. See you in twenty, and you'll get a party." That's really bad.

Many analysts have questions about our mentoring program. One young woman asked me, "Why do all mentors have to be seniors? I'd take a really good mentor who's a GS-11, has been here for two years, and really wants to be a mentor." That struck me as a brilliant insight into the mentoring program.

I've been to Fort Huachuca. The reason I went there is because that's where we train military intelligence officers. They put a chart up on the wall and they said, "Okay, you're an O-3 [captain], and you'd like to be an O-4 [major]. This is an interesting aspiration. There's a list of three things you have to do to go from an O-3 to an O-4, and then there is a list of six things, three of which you'll have to do to go from an O-3 to an O-4." So if you're an O-3, you have a pretty firm idea of what you have to do to advance. We could do that for analysts; we just haven't done it yet. We're going to do it, or my staff is going to do it. We have to do better at mid-career training.

We're not good at training people in house to be analysts. We know how to train people to do analysis: "Missiles: pointy end up, fins down. Zlotys equal so many Euros when Poland enters the European Union." What I'm talking about is the ethos of being an analyst: the professionalization of making somebody an analyst. We're not really good at that. We're going to get better at that as well. These are the things that will keep people in the business.

We don't want everyone to stay. Some people are going to be wrong for the business, but I don't want to lose the number of people I know we were losing previously who just felt that nobody liked them, so they left.

If you come to work for the federal government you have to understand that at some level it is a feudal system. If you attach yourself to the right lord or lady and he or she is on the rise—if you have the right padrone, or consigliere, or rabbi, or duenna, or whatever you want to call it—you rise with that person. God forbid that he or she gets sent to the block or to the Tower! Then you're sort of like a *ronin*: you're looking for a new master. That's not a really great career management plan, and there are lots of people who don't attach to the right person; they just sort of drift through the system for twenty years. That's bad. There's no reason for that. So that's one of the things I worry about a lot.

I think the analysts we're getting are very good. We're getting people with interesting language skills. I'm responsible for the language programs in the intelligence community. We have shortfalls in almost any language you can think of. It takes twenty-eight to thirty-three months to train somebody who can do a non-Roman language to get to a level 3 (Professional Working Proficiency) on the U.S. Foreign Service Institute scale, and there are 6,000 non-Roman languages out there. We don't have to know all of them, but we have to know a fair number of them.

The trouble here is a managerial problem. If I'm running a bunch of hotshot analysts, some of whom have to speak Dari, Pushtu, Hindi, or Urdu, I don't want them out of the line for twenty-eight months! I need them writing! If they do it part time it goes to fifty-six months. How much times should they spend learning languages, and am I willing to let them come out of line?

We do not have enough analysts. The intelligence community is 23 percent smaller than it was ten years ago, because we went through ten years of no growth and cannibalization. Nothing is ever going to recover those numbers. There is no quick fix to that. That's why our average experience number is as bad as it is. What's going to happen is that people whom we're taking in now are going to have a lot of room at the top as older people leave. They're suddenly going to be in a situation where we don't have the colonel and brigadier general equivalents who have come up through the system. They're just not there. They never showed up. They're the missing classes, so we're going to start promoting people above their experience levels, because we're just not going to have any other choice.

Foreign languages are a serious problem for us, especially in the non-Roman languages. It's just hard finding enough people who speak them or can be trained to speak them, and the problem is not going to go away. Most of our problems now tend to be in places where people just won't use the Roman alphabet.

With analysts the main problems are really getting them experience and getting enough of them, although we're doing well in recruitment. We're getting a lot of recruits from a lot of interesting places, and the classes tend to look like the world, which is good. They bring different cultural experiences. We don't do this just because we're nice guys. We do this because if we want people to analyze a culture, it might be nice if they occasionally had some cultural affinity for that at work, or they've been there for a while, or their families have been there.

Dissemination is not really a problem. We know how to disseminate a product. You push a button and it goes. The real issue is getting the right product to the right person.

One of the problems we do have is that we're at war. You all understand that. War is a current intelligence experience. War is a day-in, day-out current experience. Every day at five o'clock, the DCI chairs a meeting. This is a very tactical meeting on today's progress in the war on terrorism. "Whom are we tracking? Whom have we captured? What have we intercepted? Where do we think they're coming at us? Have you told the FBI? Have you told the FAA [Federal Aviation Administration]? Have you told the Secret Service?" There are FBI guys in the room. The answer at five o'clock had better not be, "I'll get to that." The answer at five o'clock had better be, "I've already told them and they're moving stuff."

George Tenet is eighteenth DCI, but none of his predecessors has ever had to operate the way he has. George Tenet is the first full-time wartime DCI. Even during Vietnam, the first Gulf War, and Korea, there were lots of other major issues that intruded—much more so than issues can intrude in the DCI's life right now, because we have been attacked and that really changes everything he does. He operates at a very different level.

You have to understand that fighting terrorism is not a completely tactical experience. We do have a strategic plan. You can look at terrorism and think of the terrorist organizations as strategic targets. They have people, they have logistics, they have locations, they have money, they have transportation, and you can take those apart piece by piece. We do have a strategic plan for doing that, but at the end of the day it comes down to tactical stuff. That really changes the way the entire system works, and it puts a tremendous emphasis analytically on current intelligence, much more so than in the past. We still do strategic intelligence and estimates, but there is a huge emphasis these days on current intelligence, and that really affects the product line.

One of the things I always remind people about is that policy makers are in charge of the government. They won an election. That's what it's about. They have a right to rule; the rest of us are just here. We're a service institution, and we just work for whoever wins the election. That's our job. They have to make decisions on the basis of the intelligence we give them and lots of other stuff. No president sits there and only worries about intelligence; he worries about domestic politics, he worries about foreign relations, he worries about the state of the economy, and these all play a role in almost every decision at that level. There's nothing wrong with it; it's just the nature of the system. Intelligence is only one input to this process, and it may not even be the decisive input on a given issue. It's just one of several competing factors. When you watch the NSC [National Security Council] in operation—and by the NSC I mean the real NSC, not the staff—the national security advisor, the secretary of defense, the secretary of state, the vice president—it's very interesting to see them operate together as they bring their constituencies to the table.

Our relationship with the policy maker has been a source of major controversy. We think it works all right. We don't have a problem with it. Nobody who has investigated the intelligence on 9/11 has found any sign that we altered our intelligence to keep the administration happy. We didn't pander. We didn't give them the answer they wanted to get. Everyone agreed that we called it as we saw it.

A lot of people don't understand the nature of our relationship with the policy makers. We're not there to correct them. They're there to use the intelligence as they see fit. They can even make a decision that's contrary to the intelligence. The one thing that they can't do is distort the intelligence. Then we have the right to tell them, "No, you're misrepresenting what we told you." They make any decision they want after that, and we do not have a role in correcting their decisions once they decide whatever it is they decide to do. This has become interesting. If you can stand back from what I do and watch the testimony of recent weeks, there's an interesting misapprehension—sort of a cartoon vision of how the structure works.

Those are the major things we're working on. Right now we're going through a period of growth. The budget is getting better. As mundane as the budget is, the budget matters. It's very

hard to run programs when you have feast-or-famine cycles. Right now we're in the middle of a large feast cycle, but that's after ten years of famine, and basically we could use more of everything. We have to have some sort of plan in our head for how much more we're going to buy of what, and a lot of that stuff is very expensive.

Collection systems are interesting, because, unlike military systems, you don't save money by buying more at once. Buying 100 tanks over three years is more expensive than buying 100 tanks over two years; it just stretches out the cost. Buying six satellites will cost you six satellites no matter how you buy them. Satellites are sort of like the products of Hanseatic guilds: they are hand-made, crafted, by guys using gold wires, and you can't buy them more cheaply.

The two major expenses in the budget are people and machines. One of the things that's interesting about intelligence is that there are no cost savings. One satellite cannot do the work of two satellites. One analyst cannot do the work of two analysts. It doesn't work. People go home. We know this from daily experience. They're usually tired, but they go home. So we are wondering about where we will go in terms of the budget. If we continue on the path we're on now, we'll be in pretty good shape, but we have a lot of lost ground to make up for, in the midst of having one-and-a-half wars on our hands at the moment.

Let me stop there. I've gone on for half an hour.

Student: How do you make the decision about when and when not to invest in collection systems when we don't even have the capacity to analyze what we're collecting? It's possible that we won't have that capacity for another three years, at which point that billion-dollar collection system will be out of date.

Lowenthal: Fortunately, the second part doesn't happen, but that's a terrific question, and it's a daily nightmare. First of all, we're sort of at a buffet where we've got too many pieces laid out and we can't afford all of them. There's a lot of tension in the system about which ones we should buy and which ones we shouldn't buy, because they're not all the same and they have different capacities. Different people react to this in different ways. Personally, I'm in the group that believes we've got to start making hard choices now. Some people think we can postpone them a little longer. No one believes we can buy everything that's in front of us.

We do buy it in the recognition that we're going to need more analysts. We also recognize that it's actually harder to get analysts than collection systems, and even harder to budget for them. One of the good things about our systems is that they tend to be ferociously hardy. The NRO, when they are briefing about a new system, come up with a number for the MMD—the mean mission duration: "This is how long we think this system will survive and collect." They tend to be wrong. They're engineers, so they low-ball it because they want to be careful and the systems last longer. Some of them just sort of go on and on; they lose a little of this and a little of that, but they just keep going, like little Energizer bunnies in space, which is great. That gives us the luxury of stretching out the decision-making to buy the stuff, so we don't face the problem that if we delay and put it up in two years it will be outmoded.

But we do on a regular basis worry about where the analysts will come from. That's my role at these meetings: to say, "Excuse me, you don't have enough analysts." We were watching a

demo of one of the systems we were considering, and it's collecting a lot of stuff. I turned to one of the generals who runs one of the collection analytic agencies, and I asked, "How are you going to process all that?" He said, "Beats the hell out of me!" I said, "Well, thank God we're not building it yet." It's a very serious problem.

Student: The analysts aren't really out there, so it's not as though you're making the choice between buying people and buying equipment.

Lowenthal: It's not that we buy the machines first and the analysts follow. One of the things that's also interesting about analysts, and I think I talk about this in the book, is that they don't seem to have a tremendous awareness of what the collection array does. The collection array tends to be a black hole to them. There are two reasons for this. One is that the collectors like it this way. Let's be serious. They like having a certain level of Eleusinian Mystery on their part of the equation. Part of it is also that analysts get frustrated, so they stop trying to figure out how it works and they just decide, "I'll ask a question, and I either will or won't get an answer. I'll never know why either of those two things happens, so I'll just go on." So we have this interesting situation where analysts are not really brilliant customers of collection, because they don't have a lot of insight into the collection system. This is something we're trying to fix, but it's a problem, because you want analysts to ask good questions.

Student: Have you overcome the phenomenon of compartmentalization that you're talking about, so that your collectors aren't just controlling their little fiefdoms of technological secrecy? I guess the example I would give is if an analyst has a requirement and asks for a collection device to look at something, the collection agency says "No, we can't do that." Maybe it can, but the agency doesn't want to release that it has that capability to that particular analyst. How do you overcome that?

Lowenthal: Analysts don't task the system. We cannot have a situation where individual analysts task the system. It would be anarchic. We couldn't do it.

Analysts have the clearances they need for the collection they need. There's not going to be a mismatch. That's fairly mechanical.

We are actually doing a bunch of things to overcome the lack of understanding. NSA [National Security Agency] and NGA—the agency formerly known as NIMA [National Imagery and Mapping Agency], as the joke goes—are doing a lot more work together. They're fusing IMINT [imagery intelligence] and SIGINT at a very preliminary level, which is a big deal in breaking down many of the stovepipes. One of the major initiatives that the DCI has underway deals with how we share more information sooner and get it to the people who need it in the form that they need it. This is going to take some time to do, but we have a bunch of actions underway. I think there are nine actions on the list in the information sharing initiative that we're pushing. I'm responsible for some of them. We are making some progress on some of this.

The thing that's happening between SIGINT and IMINT is very interesting, because nobody told Clapper and Hayden to do this.[1] They just realized, "We have to start doing this and

[1]General James R. Clapper, Jr., (USAF, ret.) is director of NGA; Lieutenant General Michael V. Hayden, USAF, is

see if it works," and it works very well. It's brilliant when you watch it happening on the floor of the cell where they do this. It's fascinating to watch these two INTs work together in real time and at sort of an early analytical level. I think we are doing some good stuff to break that stovepiping down.

There are still going to be stovepipe problems. One of the things we recommended when I was on the Hill was merging IMINT, SIGINT, and MASINT [measurements and signatures intelligence]. You would have thought we'd suggested rejoining the British Empire! It was amazing what reactions we got to that. It's sort of happening, though, because people realized that we had to do it. We have to share this stuff better, sooner, and across the community, because there's no other way to operate. So it's happening at the agency level without anyone having to direct it, which is actually okay.

I don't think you find a situation where analysts aren't getting access to the intelligence they need. That part of the system we know how to work in. That's okay.

Student: I don't like doing this, but I'm going to bring up a TV commercial, because I think it talks about intelligence: "It's not necessarily what you know, or how tough you are, but it's about how capable you are of changing." When we talk about recruitment and intelligence, it seems to me that for instance with linguists there's a push to find people who can speak Arabic, or some of these languages that are not Roman based. How much recruitment revolves around trying to find people who can adapt, so you don't have this problem of having people who know Russian but can't learn another language?

Lowenthal: That is an interesting question, and as with almost everything else there are two schools of thought. One school of thought is that you recruit against your need: you find yourself an Arabic speaker. With a little luck, we'll need Arabic for the rest of our lives and this person will have a job forever. The other school of thought is "Hire somebody who can learn languages."

My sense is that we end up doing both. One of the things that will make somebody attractive to us at a recruiting table is "I know Farsi. I know Dari." But the odds are that if you know Dari you can learn Pushtu or Hindi or something like that. So we do it both ways.

One of the things that's interesting to me is that we teach languages wrong. We actually know how people learn language. Every human being on this planet, with a few exceptions, has learned at least one language, since none of us starts out speaking. The way people learn a language is the following. First you hear it, then you start to repeat small words, then you string more words together and your parents clap and are very excited, and then you learn to read and write it. But how do we teach it? You learn to read and write it first, and then we teach you how to speak it. So we tend to teach language in the inverse of how we know we're wired to learn languages.

I went out to DLI—the Defense Language Institute in Monterey. At DLI they do it the other way. "We'll get to the reading and writing later. We're going to do conversation." So I went into this classroom, with a bunch of people, mostly Air Force, and they were learning Dari. They'd

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director of NSA.

been doing it for about ten weeks. John would say to Mary in Dari, "Show me the pen," and she would say, "Here is the pen." Then Mary would go over to Joe, and ask, "Where is the window?" This is the kind of conversation you have with three-year-olds, but it works, because these people could have a conversation in Dari. Were they making brilliant conversation? Likely not. "Let's discuss existential philosophy in Dari" was not going to happen that week, but they were able to talk in Dari and they'll get to the reading and writing stuff later on.

My sense is that we don't have an either/or choice. We have to hire some people right now who have the languages we need. A lot of the people we hire, though, if they can master one language probably can master a couple of others in that same language family. We need Roman languages too. The non-Roman ones are harder, because the alphabet's different, but we also still need people who can speak French, German, Portuguese, Spanish, and lots of other languages. It's just that the non-Roman ones tend to be more important right now because they're related to the war on terrorism. You can get people really heated up over this issue. They think either/or, and I'm not sure that's the right choice.

Student: Have you looked at your recruitment process? Someone has to be very committed to go through the whole process, and obviously the security clearance piece alone takes a tremendous amount of time. Basically, you meet people at a college and you tell them they have to submit all these writing samples, and then they get another packet in the mail that says, "Here, give us another little writing sample," and the process seems very long and cumbersome. You hope that people will say "CIA is the only job I want," but more realistically, if the people are really talented, they're getting offers from other organizations and when it's time to make the decision you've lost people along the way. Why not do a computer test or something?

Lowenthal: Where we lose most people is waiting for a clearance. You all have obligations and bills to pay. Some of you may be married and all that other stuff, and you can't afford just to wait for us. I always tell my students at Columbia, "You'd better have a job. I don't care if you're waiting tables or whatever, but you'd better have a source of income, because it will take about nine months to do this." A lot of them will just take another job, with a consulting firm or whatever.

There's not a lot we can do about the clearance process. As we take in more and more people, we don't want to curtail that process for fear of taking in the wrong person: not necessarily a mole, but somebody who is likely to go bad on us for whatever reason. So that's a real tension in the system. We have to make sure the process is as thorough as possible. However, it's a very imperfect process, because at the end of the day we still don't know you. It's not as though the first day you walk in we say, "Today, you get to see Confidential. If that works out, next Monday we'll show you some Secret, and if that works out, the next week we'll show you Top Secret." We don't do that! The day you're there, you're there. We just let you into the family secrets—the ones you need to know. That's really scary from our point of view, because we don't really know who you are, despite all the grief we put you through. We've checked your finances, we've checked your background, we've made you take a polygraph, but we still don't know who you are. That's why the process is going to be very hard to short-circuit, and we will lose people. We have to understand that, and there's not a lot we can do about it.

The other stuff, the repetitive writing samples, is more manageable, but that's not where we tend to lose people. It's that nine months of just waiting and not hearing. I always tell people in my class, "No news is no news. If we don't want you, you'll know. We'll tell you. We do not string people along because we don't want to hurt their feelings and tell them, 'I'm sorry, but you're not going to be working here in the future.'" So you just have to be really patient if you're going to pursue this. There is a cost to us in terms of people who end up, for very logical reasons, going elsewhere.

Student: Do you do any work with outsourcing analysis? If you had people's clearances on file and you had these surges, could you use academics and so on?

Lowenthal: One of the things that we started doing in the 1990s was hire consultants to do analysis. In the interesting way in which the budget is structured, we would have more money available for contracting than we would have for new hires, because new hires represent ongoing commitments for twenty-some-odd years. You'd have to have a base on which to calculate that, whereas contracting money is one- or two-year money, so we could hire people.

We actually have outsourced a fair amount of analysis and some people always ask if that's a good idea. Well, yes; the people who are doing this have to be cleared the same way. They have to go through all the same drill. Economically, I'm not sure that at the end of the day we're saving any money by doing it this way, because all companies put a load on top of their staff's salaries. They're making money; for them this is a profit item. We don't make a profit from our analysts.

Our building is very crowded at this point. I sometimes compare it to one of those Japanese hotels where they sort of stack people up at night. I asked one of my staff, "We're 23 percent smaller; why is it that I have no office space?" She said, "Green badges." (Green badges are contractors; we have blue badges.) It's because we've hired so many contractors to help us fill the gaps in the years when we couldn't hire permanent employees.

A lot of the people we hire are annuitants. You had your blue badge on Friday, you retire, and you come back on Monday. You're still John Smith, but now you have a green badge. In a way, this is good for us. You know the system, you know how it works, you know the style, and we know you. There's an interesting advantage to us. We're paying for you in a different way, but we're not losing your capability.

Student: I saw a talk by Art Cebrowski[2] not long ago, and he has a chart that shows a huge delta between the collected data and the analysts available to analyze it. His solution is that we all have to become our own analysts, including policy makers. I wonder if you'd comment on that.

Lowenthal: He's been in my office to talk to me about that.

Student: You mentioned the Sherman Kent School. Can you teach a person to be a great analyst?

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[2]Vice Admiral Arthur K. Cebrowski (USN, Ret.) is director of military transformation in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD).

Lowenthal: No. I can teach anybody to be a good analyst. Any reasonably intelligent person can be made a good analyst, but a brilliant analyst just shows up. Think about music. There are lots of talented musicians and composers out there, but Mozart just shows up. You still have to hone his talents, and you have to shape them and make sure he learns his lessons, but he's Mozart.

When I was working at INR (I think I mentioned this in the book) my boss used to ask the same questions about any new hire: "Does she write well? Does she think interesting thoughts?" If the answers were yes, everything else would follow. You certainly can teach people analytical skills, but a truly great analyst just shows up. As with every other achievement in the world, they're just there, and you love them when they show up. You nurture them. You hold on to them. You don't let them out the door if you can keep them. It's an interesting sociological point.

Student: Could you speak a bit more about creating a stronger surge capability within the intelligence community? How do you give analysts enough specialized training that they become good at what they do, but at the same time you have enough flexibility to surge when necessary?

Lowenthal: Good question. One of the things they used to do in the DI in the CIA is move people around every two or three years. That was too often. They ended up with a lot of analysts who knew a little bit about a lot but didn't know a lot about anything: a cadre of sort of intelligence generalists. In the late 1990s, when Douglas McEachin was the DDI, he stopped that and people stayed longer in the job.

You have to stay in the job long enough to master the job, but we also have to move people around, because if people stay in a job too long they will stop thinking. They'll say "Been there, done that, same thing happens every year." I have the Chernobyl incident in my book. That story happened in my office: "Oh, yeah, the Swedes! Bitch, bitch, bitch about the dirty air. They do this once a year." Well, it was a little different that time! There really was dirty air, and it was a different kind of dirt.

In certain fields, you can do lots of different things. In the counterterrorism field, there are lots of different things you can do and still be a counterterrorism expert. The same is true with economics.

The main issue with surge is to make sure that we find people who have worked the issue before. When the Georgian government came apart several months ago, we didn't have any idea of how bad Georgia was going to be, but I went into the ARC and I found we had an interesting number of analysts who in the last ten years had worked Georgia. If Georgia had gotten really bad, I would have gone to these various agencies and said, "All right, this is going to be the Georgia team, because when I say 'Georgia' to these people their first thought is not 'Atlanta.' They think 'Tbilisi.'" That's a big step forward!

One of the things we're thinking of doing with the ARC is that when you retire we're going to ask your permission to keep you in a separate ARC database as a reserve, so that if in fact something goes bad, we'll know where you are and we can call you back. It's like the answer I gave earlier: you know the system, you know the different types of information, and where it is.

I do think you have to move analysts around. When I worked at INR, there were some people there who had worked on the same issue for twenty years. At that point, I really believe

you stop thinking about it. On the other hand, it was great that if that issue went up, they knew it in tremendous depth and detail. Sometimes we also had to say, "This is the question the secretary has. He doesn't want the entire history of nuclear fission in Russia; he wants to know if it's burning now." "Oh, but you have to understand about the graphite rods!" I said, "No. The secretary is an economist. He doesn't do graphite rods. He wants to know 'Is it still burning? Are they still lying?'" That's a pretty simple set of questions. Later I let them write about the graphite rods. Analysts are sort of funny that way, because they do have this compulsion on occasion to tell you everything they know about a subject that you know they know, and they've got to find an audience for that.

So I think you have to do both. You have to move analysts around from time to time just to keep their thinking fresh. You don't want to do it every two or three years. That's not a good idea. You have to give people enough time to learn a subject so they become facile with it, and that takes time. There's no other way to do it. It's an interesting managerial problem, though.

Student: You were talking about the relationship between the policy makers and the analysts. In his testimony recently George Tenet was talking about certain statements that Vice President Cheney had made about intelligence. The climate right now is that a lot of people are skeptical about the administration's presenting intelligence fairly.

Lowenthal: The administration didn't present intelligence. The administration made policy decisions. We presented intelligence. Those are two separate functions. You've got to keep them apart.

Student: I thought he was saying that he was representing intelligence you had given him incorrectly and was making mistakes. Am I wrong?

Lowenthal: No. I have to remember which was the classified hearing and which was the unclassified hearing. The issue at hand was that Senator [Carl] Levin was asking about statements that the vice president had made about the mobile biological labs we had found: whether they were bio labs or were used for something else. What the DCI said was that the vice president was speaking from an old set of data and wasn't aware of the current state of uncertainty, so after he made that particular statement the DCI informed him, "At this point we're just not sure." That, to me, is legitimate. You don't want the vice president misspeaking. On the other hand, if the vice president wants to make an interpretation on the basis of what we tell him, he's free to do that.

Student: I'm just curious if there is any pressure from the administration to get political support from your intelligence.

Lowenthal: Every administration wants support. Every administration has an agenda. That's what they got elected to do. Every administration would prefer to have intelligence that supports where they would like to go. That's just a fact of life. They want to do X, they don't want to do Y. They want to concentrate on X, they don't want to concentrate on Y. That happens in every administration. It is very rare, though, to get policy makers who will say "I don't want to see that intelligence. That's just not helpful; it's not supportive. This is the answer I want out of you, and I'd better see it next time." That just doesn't happen, because they understand they're corrupting the system. But they are absolutely free to disagree with the intelligence we give them. They're

free to say, “I just don’t think that leads to the conclusion you think it does,” or “I’m going to do this despite the intelligence you give me.”

There’s a wonderful story that in 1938, after the Munich crisis, President Roosevelt decided, “You know what this country needs? A bigger air force! If Britain and France had had a bigger air force, they wouldn’t have caved in to Adolf Hitler in Munich.” So he announced we were going to build 50,000 aircraft. Well, come January/February of 1939, he called in the chief of the Army air corps, General Arnold, and asked, “Hey, Hap, where are we with those 50,000 planes?” Arnold had all these charts, and he said, “Well, you see, Mr. President, we don’t just buy 50,000 planes. We’ve got to have so many fighter escorts, we’ve got to have so many bombers, we’ve got to have so many transports, we’ve got to have so many trainers, and we’ve got to size it and shape it and …” The president said, “I want 50,000 planes!” Arnold kept going through this, and Roosevelt said, “General, you’re just not understanding me.” He actually said, “And if I see those charts again, you will be the commander in Guam.” Hap Arnold was smart enough never to bring those charts again. Roosevelt just wasn’t getting the answer he wanted.

Now, was Roosevelt right? No, he was wrong! Hap Arnold was right! You don’t go out and buy 50,000 planes. You need things like pilots. You need guys to fuel the planes. You need guys to keep the planes flying. Roosevelt didn’t want to know about that. He wanted to get 50,000 planes. He wanted a showpiece. But Arnold didn’t show him the charts again. He said, “Why bother?”

There are times when you’re briefing policy makers and you realize they’re just not going to listen any more. Now, what do you do as an intelligence officer? You’ve told them once, you’ve told them twice, you’ve told them three times, and they have decided to go ahead despite the intelligence. What is your responsibility at that point as an intelligence officer? This happened to me on an issue several years ago, and I finally told my staff, “Stop telling them. It just doesn’t matter. We’ve told them several times. They’ve decided to act on their own, which they can do. They don’t care. They know the outcome they want, they know the intelligence says it’s going the other way, and they’re free to see if they can make it happen differently.” I think that’s fair. I don’t think it’s the responsibility of the intelligence community to charge at the policy makers so many times that they stop listening to you. That to me is deadly. You just sort of concede the field to them on that one.

Oettinger: I want to underscore a point you made earlier, which is that intelligence is not the only source of information. What triggered that was your mention of Roosevelt, who was a master of gathering and playing off a whole variety of sources: some of his own personal emissaries, industrialists, scholars, you name it. He had multiple sources. So much of it depends on the cognitive style of anybody, from a sergeant to the president of the United States.

Lowenthal: I’ll give you an example. Toward the end of the Reagan administration, Secretary [George] Shultz wasn’t happy with the analysis he was getting on Gorbachev’s foreign policy, and he asked us, “How many of you have met Eduard Shevardnadze?” A couple of people had (I’d never met him). He said, “I’ve met Eduard Shevardnadze twenty times. No other American can say that. I know more about Eduard Shevardnadze as a person than anybody in this room!” We kept suggesting to the CIA branch that did sort of personality stuff that it might be useful if they interviewed Shultz about what Shevardnadze is like. I don’t know how many times we

suggested it. Finally, the CIA person said, "You know, what I think the secretary wants us to do is interview him!" They got it. So they interviewed him for about half an hour about what Eduard Shevardnadze is like. Shultz said to me, "It didn't change their work at all!"

So these policy makers work somewhere else, and we are not the only game in town. We'd like to think we're the only game in town. We'd like to think we're really good at what we do. We *are* really good at what we do—most of the time. But all this other stuff is going on as well. The president and Tony Blair speak regularly. Nobody is going to beat the president on where Tony Blair is in terms of politics. It's important to remember your place. I don't want to sound obsequious about this, but you've got to remember where you are in their system…and it is their system.

Student: How does the political pressure created by the administration's objectives affect how you concentrate your resources? Is there pressure to focus on a particular issue?

Lowenthal: No. The way the system works is that the president has a list of issues that are priorities for him, going from higher to lower. We then take that list of issues and ask ourselves, "Which countries are important players in that issue?" This is what we call the Jim Clapper rule. Jim is the head of NGA, and he always points out that all of intelligence consists of things that happen in places. It doesn't just consist of things, and it doesn't just consist of places.

For example, we don't work on "China." We work on specific issues in China. We work on China WMD [weapons of mass destruction) or China health policy. We're not going to spend a lot of time on China terrorism. That's just not one of the things that happens in China.

So, the policy makers are responsible in the system for describing to us which issues are most important to them, and the issues change. The list changes every six months, and if it's a different administration it would be a different list. We're responsible for taking those issues analytically and asking ourselves which countries are most important to us in each issue, and then deciding how we will collect the information we need on that country in that issue and how many analysts we need to work that issue.

How many analysts is an interesting question. Now that we have ARC data for the first time we're looking at a bunch of issues. We've created something called a bubble chart. On the vertical axis is how well we think we're doing on that issue in answering the policy makers' needs. The horizontal axis is "How important is that issue?" So clearly the further you are out to the right, the higher you want the bubble to be, whereas if you're closer to the zero point it can be lower.

We also think in terms of sizing the bubble so that the size of the bubble represents the number of analysts. We did a couple of dry runs on hypothetical issues. What if we end up with a really big bubble that has really high priority, but it's low? What does it tell us? One of the things it may tell us is that it doesn't matter how many analysts we throw at an issue; it's a really hard issue. We have a couple of bubbles that are very tiny and very high, so one of the things I'm asking myself is "Could the bubble be smaller and still stay high?" Maybe. Maybe I don't need 110 analysts working this issue. Maybe I can get away with 100, and strip 10 analysts out and put

them somewhere else. We can't just put numbers against issues; we have to evaluate performance. The director is responsible for that, and I'm responsible for it under the director.

Evaluating intelligence is a very interesting process. The way we do it is a multi-step process. First we ask the collectors, "Did you collect or not?" One of the things we have to do at the beginning is ask ourselves which collectors are the best ones to work against this issue, because not every issue is susceptible to all types of collection. For example, let's say we're worried about computer attacks against the United States. It's a big issue. I don't want to hear about a lot of imagery. It's ludicrous! "We took pictures of chip factories in Bangalore." "Oh, swell! That's cutting edge!" On the other hand, I want a lot of SIGINT, and probably a lot of HUMINT, and a lot of open source. So one of the things we do under this system is first ask ourselves, "Which INTs are most likely to give us the answer we want?"

One of the problems we've had in the past is what we call "swarmball." Every agency rushes to answer the big questions. Why do they do this? Money! The more questions you answer, the bigger your budget. Why? You're obviously more important, because you answer more questions. There's a certain self-fulfilling prophecy involved in this, so we understand that. One of the things we've gotten the collectors to do is stop collecting on everything. Collect on the issues where we all agree that we have the best chance of answering the policy maker's question.

Then we ask the analysts "Did you get the collection you needed, and if not, why not?" In some cases, it may be hard. "We couldn't penetrate that government." "It's an underground facility." "They went to land lines, so there are no communications." We deal constantly with denial and deception. This is a big problem for us. How we do what we do is more and more available publicly, so people spend a lot of time trying to avoid us or deceive us.

We then ask the policy makers, "Was this stuff useful or not?" That's the question where everyone sort of groans. It's like getting a report card. I don't care how old you are, or how senior you are, or what your job is: nobody likes getting a report card. Now we're trying to do end-to-end evaluation and ask ourselves, "What are the points in the process where it's not working right?" Then we ask, "Do we need to collect more?" Sometimes the answer is "Maybe not."

For example, one of the cartoons we're dealing with now is, "We need more HUMINT. If we had just thrown more HUMINT at Baghdad, maybe we would have known where the WMD are." Why is it that the fourteenth spy would be more successful than the thirteenth? Penetrating Baghdad was hard! It was a small group of people, most of whom were cousins from the village of Tikrit. None of you would fit in. Mary shows up there with her blonde hair and says, "Great, Baghdad! I want to set up a tourism company!" That's her reason for being there. So we had this interesting cartoon of "If we just throw enough spies at these people we can penetrate them." Sometimes they're not penetrable. A lot of the hardest targets we have are hard because you can't get in.

People say, "We should have had more HUMINT on Osama bin Laden." You show up in Kabul and say, "Where's the Al Qaeda recruiting booth? I want to sign up. And by the way, can I see the top guy?"

What we're trying to do is figure out how well these pieces work together, but you've got to remember that it's an end-to-end process. We're going to be really good at some stuff, and we're

going to be really good at some stuff even though we don't have any secret means. For example if you're worrying about health, some of the information about health will be secret. The Chinese initially lied about the SARS [severe acute respiratory syndrome] outbreak. A lot of it you can't hide. We do not need a spy to track a lot of this. People will just talk about it. So one of the things we have to figure out is if we can do this from open source, for example, even if the clandestine stuff is the stuff we're best at. We're trying to do this across the board. It's a fairly complex process. I have a whole staff of people who do nothing but evaluation all day long.

By the way, if you end up in this business or anything related and they ask you to give a briefing, remember: there's a reason they called it a briefing. It's supposed to be brief! Nobody will ever invite you into their office and say, "Give me a longing." It will never happen. So think about what those PowerPoint graphs look like.

Student: You were talking about making the analyst corps professional, more so than it has been. What do you think of the suggestions that have been put up in the press that the intelligence community adopt a kind of Goldwater–Nichols Act of 1986 and require joint qualifications?

Lowenthal: I tried that once. Actually, that's something that we want to do, and the DCI is very adamant abut this. One of the things we do badly is that we train people in stovepipes. The CIA people go to CIA University, and the NGA people go to NGA University, and everyone has their own training school. One of the things that bothers the director a lot is that we don't get them into a purple school until they're about GS-14s or GS-15s, and they're too far gone. They'll go to the school because that's how they're going to get to be SIS—senior intelligence service, the equivalent of stars for the military. "Oh, yeah, fine, I'll do my two weeks in the ICOC [Intelligence Community Officer Course] and then I'll get out of there and go back to my agency." One of the things the DCI has told me is, "We've got to get them into joint classes sooner."

The way I've been thinking about this is that it's sort of like college. You don't get to major in your freshman year or in your sophomore year. You get to major in your junior year. So, at the beginning of the day, whether you're going to be a cryppie or an imagery specialist or an analyst, you need to learn some basic intelligence skills that you can all learn together. Once you're past that you will specialize, whether you're doing SIGINT or IMINT or analysis. So we're thinking about how we can move people around so they're trained together sooner.

Student: What is the average lag time between people coming into analysis and the next time they would go to an official school?

Lowenthal: In the DI, they're with us for about three to six months before we send them to the Kent School. That's just a throughput problem. We're taking in so many analysts that we can't get them all through the Kent School. It's sort of like OCS [Officer Candidate School] in 1942: Get them smart, teach them enough so they don't get killed in their first week on the line, and then send them out to the line. We cut their training from twenty weeks down to sixteen weeks, because we're just trying to get people out sooner. They're in the Kent School for sixteen weeks, and after that it's much more random. As I said, the inter-community stuff doesn't really happen until you're a GS-14.

We used to do something else that was really stupid. The only way you could become a manager was by being a good analyst. What that has to do with managerial skills defied anyone's imagination, but the only way you were going to get to the equivalent of flag rank was to be a manager. So we wound up promoting people who had been brilliant analysts, but turned out to be terrible managers. They finally created something in the CIA called the SAS , the Senior Analytic Service. There are people who can opt out of the line. They can say, "I don't want to be a manager. I never want to be a manager. I'm just an analyst." They tend to be really good analysts. They will be able to spend the rest of their career as analysts and possibly get into the SIS by being nothing other than analysts, and not have to go off and manage, which they probably do badly because they don't want to do it. I don't care whether you manage or not.

Student: When I was in the Middle East, my CIA or DIA staffer would arrange lots of informal internships for young CIA analysts out with the military, and that program seemed to work very well. I thought it should be expanded.

On another topic, we had a symposium at the Kennedy School in conjunction with the Sherman Kent School last fall, talking about the twenty-first century intelligence issues. One of them was that we simply don't have the collection, analytic, and DDO-type resources to fight the global war on terrorism all on our own, because we can't be everywhere at once. While there's been some collaboration across borders internationally in the collection arena and in special operations, Ernest May,[3] who was there, said, "Why not establish some sort of international analytic center to collaborate on our analytic efforts in this global war?" I know security constraints come to play there, but are there any security types of initiatives to break down some of these barriers so we can tap into the German analytic BND,[4] et cetera?

Lowenthal: Actually, on the collection part we do a lot of that. We spend a lot more time on what we call liaison services. When I used to sit near the director's suite we used to see people coming in there and say "Whoa! That's really weird!" They were people with whom we never would have thought we'd have liaison relationships.

Student: Ambassador Montgomery is still very much against that.[5]

Lowenthal: Liaison relationships are very dicey. One of the issues we have is that every time you tell someone something, it's gone. You've given it to them. With the English-speaking cousins we do a fair amount of sharing of analysis: the Canadians, the Australians, and the British.

We do share some of our analysis with other people. It's not at the level, I'm sure, that Ernest is talking about. We have to, if we're going to fight the war on terrorism. More people understand that it's not just about us. The October 2002 attack in Bali wasn't about us; it was a

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[3]Ernest R. May is Charles Warren professor of American history at Harvard University, and a member of the 9/11 Commission.

[4]Bundesnachrichtendienst: the German federal intelligence service.

[5]Ambassador Hugh Montgomery is special assistant to the DCI on foreign intelligence relationships.

Jemaah Islamiyah attack on Australians. So we are getting a fair amount of cooperation with people. We share a fair amount of intelligence, and we are sharing with some fascinating people.

Student: Can you describe the level at which law enforcement is collaborating with intelligence? In your opinion, is there a basis for the accusation that we're going to trample on civil liberties if we do that?

Lowenthal: There's a basis for concern; there's not a basis for an accusation. Part of the problem is that we, unlike any of our friends (including the English-speaking cousins), make a very strict division between foreign and domestic intelligence. We always have. We're the only country that has a Bill of Rights. The Brits don't have one; the Australians don't have one. The war on terrorism forced us to figure out how we get over the divide between foreign and domestic intelligence without violating civil liberties.

We have figured out a chunk of it. We now have TTIC—the Terrorist Threat Integration Center. The TTIC's job is to take all this incoming intelligence and not prosecute the war on terrorism, but ask "Where are we vulnerable? Where are they coming at us? What do we do about it?" Then the TTIC, which is an intelligence community center that reports to the DCI, has FBI people and Homeland Security people in it, hands it off to the Department of Homeland Security [DHS]. That's where it begins to get difficult, because, first of all, how many police forces are there in the United States? Well, there are 49 state police forces (Hawaii doesn't have one)…

Student: I think there are thousands of different local police forces.

Lowenthal: If you're in the United Kingdom, or if you're in New Zealand, this is easy. They have one police force for the entire United Kingdom. Scotland Yard controls them, whether you're a cop on the beat in Stoke-on-Trent or wherever you're living or you're part of the Metropolitan Police Force. So this is easy. Push the button and send it out. We can't do that.

We also run into this interesting issue of what you do with the names of Americans. We have a problem with that. If you collect the name of an American citizen in foreign intelligence, it puts you into an interesting category of law in terms of what you can do about it. We're still feeling our way with lots of this, because we don't want to mess up people's civil liberties. We want to be really careful about how we handle this stuff. It puts us in a very difficult position, because we've never had to do this before. The British, for example, have a lot of experience with terrorism, because of the Irish problem. There are lots of Irish people living in England, but the British sort of work their way through this. We live in a different place, and are completely different from any of these countries. So far I think we've been fairly successful.

People we capture overseas don't have civil liberties. Foreigners who get captured in a military operation do not get "Miranda-ed." In fact, my Australian friends told me that nowadays when criminals in Australia get arrested they ask for their Miranda rights, and they're told "You're watching too much TV! This is Australia, and we don't do that." We've had this interesting pervasive effect on culture.

We're working very hard not to screw it up, but we're in an area where we've never been before. You've got to understand that.

Oettinger: Let me take you back a bit. You concentrated on the requirements and needs of the policy makers, but I didn't hear you say much about any responsibility of the intelligence community for what I might call supply push: in other words, that you shouldn't wait for unsophisticated users to ask. Tell us a bit about that.

Lowenthal: We do that. We don't just want to work on the issues that are at the top of the administration's agenda. There are going to be sleeper issues that they need to know about. The problems we have with that are (1) that's not where most of our analysts are, and (2) it's not where most of our collectors are. It's actually the warning function. We have a separate staff that does indications and warning. We have a national intelligence officer for indications and warning. The main problem is that by definition it's not going to be an area where we've put a lot of analysts, because we're concentrating the limited number of analysts we have on the president's top priorities.

We do still work on a bunch of those issues. Our coverage is constrained but not as bad as we would expect. It's pretty thin in certain areas. We don't have a lot of bodies, but we're doing pretty well on a day-to-day basis.

Where we get hurt is during a big surge. For example, in the run up to the war, the DCI asked the head of DIA and me to pre-plan what an analytical surge would look like, and also tell him what was not being covered, with the caveat that nobody comes out of terrorism. So I had the opposite of a Venn diagram: I had many nonintersecting circles on my chart. The uncovered part was a little scary, because the surge to support active combat was so large—and necessarily large, not larger than it had to be. I was actually amazed that it was as small as it was.

But we do understand that we have the responsibility to report on sleeper issues. I think we do that on a fairly recurring basis. If you look at the President's Daily Briefing, there are issues there that are not on his agenda now, but every so often we've got to remind him about them. The real problem is that we don't have enough resources to do it.

Student: You've talked a lot about the division between the intelligence collection and analysis process and not interfering with the policy maker. When you got involved in the intelligence community, was that the school of thought? If not, how did you come to understand that? How do you get new analysts to understand their place as people who are not supposed to control the policy makers?

Lowenthal: I've been doing this since 1975. When I left this place I really thought intelligence was a temporary career.

It's always been the rule that there's a sharp division between policy and intelligence and that they're in charge, so it's not new. We have to indoctrinate the analysts in part on this, and some analysts are going to be very unhappy about it. We have to tell them, "Then go be a policy maker."

To go back to an earlier question, we do spend a fair amount of time having analysts rotate to what we call "downtown," meaning doing a tour in the NSC, where the policy makers live, or the Defense Department, or the State Department, or serving some time in an embassy. We do try

to urge analysts to get out and about. But we also just have to spend a lot of time indoctrinating analysts that "This is your role in the system. This is who we are; this is who they are; this is what's legitimate for you; this is what's not legitimate for you."

We also spend a fair amount of time editing stuff. When I was at INR, there was a time when the CIA levels of editing were so severe that the joke was that even the guard at the VIP lot was getting a chop at the reports. It took them forever to produce papers. We have fortunately scaled back the number of people editing reports. That was one of the ways we used to lose analysts: "Oh, my God, this paper's been bouncing around this building for weeks! Will it never see the light of day?" We've gotten better about cutting down the number of levels of review.

Part of it is just acculturation. "We can't say that. We don't make a recommendation at the end of the day. We don't say, 'Oh, they're doing X; therefore, Mr. President, you should do Y.'" We have to train people how to do that, but that has always been the rule.

Oettinger: We have an interesting empirical approach to that, because there's a former Harvard fellow, Ray Cline, who has written a good book on the early history of the CIA.[6] His background and training and education were somewhat like Mark's, but thirty years earlier. So you can look at that. Sherman Kent was a Yalie, but that's okay. His *Strategic Intelligence* will give you another cut on that.[7] I don't think Ed Proctor has written any books, but he was another predecessor. He was the director for the analytic side of CIA. He was my instructor in accounting, of all things, when I was an undergraduate. I was shocked when I saw him later, and wondered how the hell he went from accounting to being a Soviet bean counter.

Lowenthal: That's right, he was a bean counter. That's always been our ethos: the separation.

Student: My previous job was working on Capitol Hill, and I know that on the oversight issue the relationship can be a little bit adversarial on both sides. I wonder if you could talk about that a bit.

Lowenthal: It is adversarial. That's built into the Constitution. Somebody said, "The Constitution is an invitation to struggle," because the powers overlap. I have to tell you that the system actually works exactly the way it was intended to work—to use a phrase coined by Warren G. Harding, of all people, in 1908. The thing that drove the Founding Fathers crazy was their firm belief that if you had an overconcentration of power you inevitably had a threat to civil liberties. So they created a system where that wasn't going to happen. The trouble is that you end up with a really annoying, painstaking, slow system. This wasn't built for speed. This was built for deliberation. So the system actually works.

When you're on the Hill staff, one of the main struggles with the executive is about getting information. You want information, and they only want you to have the information that will make their case. So you spend a lot of time arguing about whose information it is. The nice thing about it when you're on the Hill side is that inevitably you'll win. The only issue is how much

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[6]Ray S. Cline, *Secrets, Spies, and Scholars: Blueprint of the Essential CIA* (Washington, D.C.: Acropolis Books, 1976).

[7] Sherman Kent, *Strategic Intelligence for American World Policy* (Hamden, Conn: Archeon Books, 1965).

pain you will cause each other before the other side concedes. There's very little basis for actually withholding any information from the Congress of the United States, including executive privilege. No president has ever taken executive privilege to court. Why is that? He might lose.

That said, the other thing you have to remember is that it's all Congress's money. We have no money. All the money belongs to Congress. We have plans; they have money. I've been on both sides; the money side is much more fun. When you have people by their budgets, their hearts and minds will follow. Trust me on this one. So you just have different sets of powers. It's very absorbing when you're in the middle of that. I don't spend a lot of time in that struggle any more. A lot of us have had jobs on the Congress side. George Tenet was the staff director of the Senate Intelligence Committee, I was the staff director of the House Intelligence Committee, George's chief of staff was the minority staff director, and our last inspector general was the chief counsel of the Senate Intelligence Committee.

Student: Much of the intelligence community is based on what happened after Pearl Harbor, and the 1947 National Security Act. Then we had September 11, and we tacked on the DHS. Was that the proper way of dealing with so momentous an event?

Lowenthal: When I did the study on the Hill, *IC21*, one of the things we looked at was the structure of the community and other ways to structure it. I had lunch one day with Richard Helms, who is a lovely man, and fascinating to talk with. (By the way, his memoirs are really interesting. If you haven't read *A Look Over My Shoulder*,[8] one of the most interesting things about his memoirs is that Richard Helms, one of the great gods of operations, says "Analysis is the most important thing the community does." I was stunned when I read that.) Anyway, Helms said to me, "If you start from scratch, you'd end up with the same community." I thought he was wrong at the time, but the more I thought about it the more I realized he probably was right.

Now, was DHS the right answer? I don't know. We had never had a concept of homeland security. On September 10 it wasn't an issue. We were secure. Nobody had attacked us in sixty years, and that was out in Hawaii. The last major acts of violence committed in the United States were the bombing in Oklahoma and the Civil War. Those are pretty disparate events in time. When you stopped and thought about it, you had all these agencies that had a piece of it, so it seemed to make sense to bring them together to coordinate them better. Is it working terrifically? Not yet. Is it better than it was? Yes. You're going to have Bob Liscouski come up, who has a really hard job.[9] He has the analogous job to mine in many respects.

Oettinger: I think there's another element, which builds on the comments about distrust and checks and balances, that hasn't come up in this course before. There is also a serious, fundamental distrust of the military and a concern over maintaining civilian control over the military, both of which run deep in the U.S. Constitution and in the general political will. So the notion that you would take the homeland security issue and in a knee-jerk way entrust it to civilian agencies dedicated to foreign intelligence or to the military would not fit in to the American political system, even after 9/11. So if you want to do something quickly, you call it

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[8]Richard M. Helms, *A Look Over My Shoulder* (New York: Random House, 2003).

[9]Robert Liscouski is assistant secretary of homeland security for infrastructure protection.

homeland security, and we're still in the process of figuring out what the relative roles are of the military and civilian agencies in dealing with that concept.

Lowenthal: That's an important point. If you look at the defense portion of the 1947 act as originally written, there was a secretary of defense and then there were three departments—Army, Navy, Air Force—under the secretary of defense. Each of those secretaries was a member of the NSC, and the secretary of defense had an office of about fourteen in something that was not even called the Defense Department; it was called the National Military Establishment—the NME. (If you say it fast, it comes out "enemy," which is sort of silly.) Two years later it was clear that it didn't work, so they revamped the whole act. They said, "All right, the service secretaries are not on the NSC. They're minor functionaries, and we're going to have a secretary of defense and a Defense Department that has an Office of the Secretary of Defense, and he's going to run this department." So that wasn't brilliant at the outset either.

This is really a work in progress. We'll shake it out a bit. It's going to take a while, but I think it made sense as an initial response.

Oettinger: If you want to pursue the point, there's on our CD-ROM a paper done for the Center for Strategic and International Studies on the impact of the Posse Comitatus Act on the ability of the military under present law to help out with homeland security.[10] It's a very complicated matter.

Lowenthal: The Posse Comitatus Act was written in the eighteenth century, and it's still law. One of the things that the Founding Fathers were concerned about was Cromwell. Cromwell had an army, and he threw Parliament out. So we are really concerned about what you let the military do within the United States in civil roles. This is an old reaction, but it's engrained in the system.

Student: Even in the military you'll find that they don't want that. Fight wars and break things: that's what the military wants to do.

Lowenthal: That's right. The last thing they want is to get involved in homeland security in a domestic enforcement sense.

Student: After 9/11, there was a lot of talk about structural reforms of the intelligence community and moving parts of the intelligence community to the DHS. Are there any plans right now to give that serious consideration?

Lowenthal: No. You can't move the foreign intelligence community into the DHS, for the reasons I was mentioning before. The TTIC goes a long way toward solving the analytic issue: how do you take this foreign intelligence and analyze it so you can define where they're coming at you in the United States? When Bob Liscouski is here, ask him how far along he is in building a cadre, because it's really hard.

Oettinger: He's an alumnus of this seminar.

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[10]Paul Schott Stevens, *U.S. Armed Forces and Homeland Defense: The Legal Framework* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2001).

Lowenthal: He's one of the best people to do it, but it's hard in terms of training and in terms of what you're looking for. We're just in different areas. We're not going to move chunks of the foreign intelligence community, not that they want us to. Bob and Pat Hughes,[11] who is a former director of DIA, are building their own analytical cadre to do the analysis that is unique to DHS.

Oettinger: You took the words out of my mouth. Again, there is a certain amount of give and take. Pat Hughes is in charge of information analysis, not intelligence. He's a retired military officer who used to run the DIA, so you have certain skills there that an ordinary civilian would not have. The boss to whom both Liscouski and Hughes report is a man named Frank Libutti, who is a former Marine Corps general but who has had civilian experience as the security guy for New York City since 9/11. So you're beginning to see the system work in a kind of interesting hybridization of skills, yet maintain the distinction between the civilian and the military.

Lowenthal: At the NYPD [New York Police Department] they now have a deputy commissioner for intelligence whose previous job was as director of operations for CIA, although he spent most of his life in the directorate of intelligence. Again, there's another guy bringing that skill set.

We were talking about the problems of information sharing. There's no classification system in the NYPD. That drives Dave Cohen crazy: "I'd like to create 'NYPD Secret' but I don't know how to do it." So we're seeing these people moving back and forth, and they will eventually be the creators of the sort of thing you're suggesting.

Student: I might add that there is a former national SIGINT officer for the NSA now working in the FBI to create an intelligence function for them.

Lowenthal: Right, because the FBI had no intelligence function. They have a counter-intelligence function, but other than that they're police. The FBI's job was either to prevent you from committing a crime or to catch you after you committed the crime, but they didn't do intelligence in the sense that we understand intelligence. Now Mo [Maureen] Baginski is setting up a real intelligence analysis unit. This goes back to the earlier question. It's forcing all of us to move back and forth in areas where we never had to be before. We just didn't have to do it.

Oettinger: You are privileged in that sense, because the Constitution remains, in its own weird way, bedrock. That is one of the marvels of the system in this country. At the same time, we have reinterpretation and modification. If you don't believe it happens, one of my favorite examples is that 100 years ago a strike was a crime. Over a 100-year period you could see, little by little, the transmogrification of the labor strike from a crime to a sacred right. Mark is quite right: the system is working.

Lowenthal: It isn't pretty, but it wasn't built to be pretty. It was built for something else.

Student: How important is the role of the DCI in shaping the esprit de corps and morale within the organization? How does the organization deal with guys like John Deutch, who actually

[11]Lt. Gen. Patrick M. Hughes, U.S. Army (Ret.) is assistant secretary for information analysis at the DHS.

visited one of our other classes? When you have a president who has to pardon the DCI, how does that affect morale, and how do you move on and get past that?

Lowenthal: Deutch and I never enjoyed working together; I have to be fair about this.

Student: I heard that his official portrait at CIA headquarters has a computer in it.

Lowenthal: That's what he asked for. He got to choose his portrait. It has that computer in it and a satellite model, and he's in his shirtsleeves.

The DCI has a tremendous effect on morale. He lives in the building. It's his agency. It's the one agency other than the NIC that he really controls. Remember what I said at the beginning, when I was describing what my role is. Deutch spent most of his time worrying about community issues. He didn't spend a lot of time worrying about CIA issues, and he didn't show tremendous regard for CIA in some of the things he was quoted as saying. That did hurt morale.

This is something I didn't really understand until I went to work at CIA. When I worked at INR, like most other agencies, especially small ones, I resented CIA. Who said they were in charge of everything? One of the things I've come to realize by living in the CIA building (although technically I don't work for CIA per se) is that the CIA really is central to the community. When the CIA sneezes, everybody else catches a cold. It really is true.

This DCI spent a lot of time on the issue of morale. I think the DCI has a tremendous effect on morale. Even if you're going to spend most of your time on the community issues, you've got to understand that CIA is your only agency, and you have to pay some attention to that, because it's your base. I don't think his predecessor understood that at all.

Student: Who in your opinion is more powerful, the deputy secretary of defense or the DCI?

Lowenthal: It depends on the administration. In this administration it's the DCI. I have no doubt about that. In past administrations, it might not have been that way. In this administration, the deputy secretary of defense does not control defense intelligence any more; it's the secretary and the USDI [under secretary of defense for intelligence].

Student: The academic community writes a lot on security-related issues.

Lowenthal: It's a living! I used to be in it.

Student: Does it have any influence?

Lowenthal: We do read a lot of academic papers. My problem is that I read a lot of stuff by people who've never been in intelligence and who tend to write very abstract, idealistic descriptions of what should happen when they have no sense of what the reality is. I'm sorry; I don't have a lot of regard for political science, in that we're not a bunch of little blocks and lines on a chart. These are living human beings who have emotions, reactions, interests, and shortcomings, and the system works differently than it's described in the poli sci texts. That's

why I prefer history to poli sci: history is about real people. Most of them are dead, but they were real once, and making really interesting decisions.

There are certain people who write about intelligence who have interesting things to say. There are certain people who have interesting things to say and I disagree with them on a continuing basis, and we're still friends. The real problem is people who don't understand the realities of the system. That becomes problematic, and it's hard to describe it if you haven't seen it. I know that sounds snobby and condescending, and that's not how I mean it, but it's how we have to see it. It's like what [Raimondo] Montecuccoli said about Marlborough's march to the Danube: You have to see it to understand it. When you watch a DCI advising a senior policy maker, it's not what it looks like in the poli sci texts. It really isn't. It's different.

Student: You wrote your Ph.D. thesis on uncertainty in decision-making. How much of an influence has that had on your own work as a senior policy maker?

Lowenthal: I think I had a pretty good idea of some of the things that didn't work in the policy process when I finished the dissertation. I was writing about Roosevelt, who was a very tough person to work for, because he hated making decisions. He didn't like bad news. He had multiple sources of information, some of which were personal and private, and he would always say, "My sources are better than your sources." Then, at a certain point, there was this unique relationship between Roosevelt and Churchill that nobody was privy to except for the two of them. So I think it gave me an interesting view of some of the shortcomings of the system: the things that are difficult, the things that don't work well. It gave me an interesting basis to start from, but then I had to watch it work.

One of the ways that I assess people is how they react to briefings. I've briefed a fair number of senior people. I walked out of the office of a foreign minister and one of his aides, who was a friend of mine, said, "He didn't throw the ashtray at you." He used to throw ashtrays and staplers at people, and I had to tell him I wasn't going to sign his end of a conference report the way it was written.

There's also how they take in information as an intellectual process, and how they react to bad news. That's very interesting. I have a bias. I was once briefing a senior senator. It was about five o'clock, and the phone rang. He went over to pick up the phone, so I stopped talking, and he said, "Keep going." He hung up the phone, and I was still talking. Then an aide walked in and gave him a piece of paper to sign, so I stopped again, and he said, "Keep talking!" So I kept briefing him, and when I got home that night I said, "That was the worst briefing I've ever given." My wife asked why, and I said, "He didn't hear a thing I was saying. I kept talking, and he was doing all this busy work." The next day I was called back to his office at two-thirty, because he wanted to have a second briefing. It was incredible! He had heard everything I said to him. He asked a set of incisive questions, and he wanted a third briefing based on them, and I said, "Wow! He's a really smart guy! He's rude, but he's very smart!" So one of the ways I assess people is how they react to briefings and to bad news. There are certain people who just don't like bad news, and they will shoot the messenger. I've been shot.

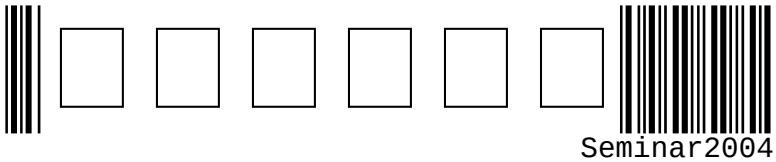
Oettinger: We really appreciate your going a whole extra mile to be with us.

Lowenthal: My pleasure, sir!

Oettinger: I want to make sure you get on the five o'clock plane, and I want to give you a small token of our large appreciation. Thank you so much.

Acronyms

A&P	analysis and production
ADCI	assistant director of central intelligence
ARC	Analytic Resources Catalogue
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
DCI	director of central intelligence
DDCI	deputy director of central intelligence
DDI	deputy director for intelligence (CIA)
DDO	deputy director for operations (CIA)
DHS	U.S. Department of Homeland Security
DI	Directorate of Intelligence (CIA)
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DLI	Defense Language Institute
DO	Directorate of Operations (CIA)
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
HUMINT	human intelligence
IMINT	imagery intelligence
INR	Bureau of Intelligence and Research (State Department)
INT	intelligence discipline
NGA	National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency
NIC	National Intelligence Council
NRO	National Reconnaissance Office
NSA	National Security Agency
NSC	National Security Council
NYPD	New York Police Department
P&E	processing and evaluation
SIGINT	signals intelligence
SIS	Senior Intelligence Service
TTIC	Terrorist Threat Integration Center
WMD	weapons of mass destruction



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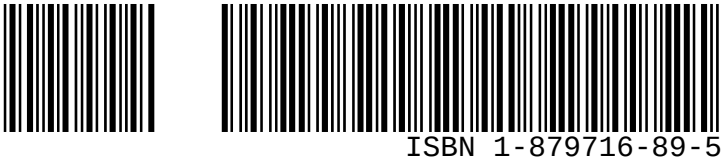

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