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Intelligence to Support Military Operations
Robert B. Murrett

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Intelligence to Support Military Operations

Robert B. Murrett

March 18, 2004

Rear Admiral Robert B. Murrett, USN, serves as vice director for intelligence (J-2), Joint Chiefs of Staff. His previous assignment was as director of intelligence, U.S. Joint Forces Command, a position he assumed in August 2002. His early assignments included serving as an afloat intelligence officer, watch stander and briefing officer for Navy civilian and military leaders, assistant intelligence officer for the commander of the Second Fleet, and assistant naval attaché to the U.S. embassy in Oslo, Norway. In 1989 he was assigned as operational intelligence officer to the commander in chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet. From 1992 to 1995 he served as assistant chief of staff, intelligence, for the commander, Carrier Group EIGHT, and deployed to the European and Central Command theaters. He was also assigned as J-2, Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) 120, aboard *USS Wasp* for operations in the Caribbean. Between 1995 and 1997, he was assistant chief of staff, intelligence, for the commander, Second Fleet, and served concurrently as N-2 for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO's) Striking Fleet Atlantic and as J-2 for U.S. Atlantic Command's CJTF 120. From June 1997 until September 1998, he was executive assistant to the director of naval intelligence, and was then assigned as director of the intelligence directorate, Office of Naval Intelligence. He assumed the duties of commander, Atlantic Intelligence Command (AIC) in August 1999, and was responsible for the transition of AIC to Joint Forces Intelligence Command in October 1999. He received his bachelor's degree in history from the University of Buffalo and master's degrees in government and strategic intelligence from Georgetown University and the Defense Intelligence College, respectively.

Oettinger: I won't take up any time introducing our guest for today. You have all had a chance to look at his biography. He has expressed a willingness to answer questions and engage in dialogue as he goes along. With that, I'm happy to welcome Admiral Murrett.

Murrett: Good afternoon. As I understand it, we have a couple of hours this afternoon, so I look forward to as much engagement as possible. I would like to keep this as much as we can a conversation as opposed to anything approaching a lecture. That will not only keep me from losing my voice, but I hope will also keep me going in directions that will be of interest to you. I

certainly hope that Professor Oettinger will weigh in and point me in directions that are relevant to the sorts of readings and projects you've been doing in this class.

By way of introduction, I would like to put things in the context of the other speakers whom you have already had in this class and speakers you'll have in the future. What I do is all about the use of intelligence to support military operations. I want to underscore that a little bit for this kind of audience, because when someone is identified as an intelligence officer it probably means different things to different people. Those of us in the uniformed intelligence service of the four services—and the Coast Guard now—are very heavily focused on the employment of intelligence to support military operations. We do some other things. We branch into the political-military arena, we branch into the interagency, and we branch into the more general—that is to say the non-military—components of the intelligence community, but our core function and our core subject matter expertise is the employment of intelligence to support military operations. That is kind of a context and a scene setter to kick off my remarks today.

What I'm going to use as a reference today, for several different reasons, is the posture statement by General Myers, who is the chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff.[1] He is the senior military officer in the United States. I mention that to you for a couple of different reasons. First, it is a useful reference from a military standpoint for a lot of things we'll be talking about today. Second, it's very current: it's dated only about a month or so ago. There's a third reason: it's unclassified, so it's fully accessible to everybody. A lot of times I'll fall back on this for reference, because in our world, which often gets into classified matters, this is something we can use as a barometer to make sure we're staying within the constraints of things that are unclassified.

Having said that, this posture statement is a highly accurate depiction of where we are in military planning in the United States today and our intelligence support to military operations today. I encourage you to use it as a reference. It's in the public domain. It's on the Internet,

A couple of points I did want to stress, going back to what I began talking about today, have to do with the present execution and the future planning efforts of the Joint Staff and the U.S. military. I'll talk in terms of the operations we're conducting today at so many places around the world, and also about the planning we're doing for future operations. A key part of that second category is the intelligence support, because one of the linchpins of planning for future operations, of course, is accurate intelligence prediction of where we're going to have to operate. Our ability to do that, and to predict accurately as we get further into the future—certainly five, ten, or fifteen years from now—is never as good as we would like it to be. Nonetheless, we strive to do the best we can to predict the future challenges the nation is going to face: the future places where the U.S. military is likely to be involved and the types of contingencies that we're going to have to cope with.

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[1]Richard B. Myers, "Posture Statement of General Richard B. Myers, USAF, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Before the 108th Congress, Senate Armed Services Committee," 3 February 2004, [On-line]. URL: http://www.globalsecurity.organization/military/library/congress/2004_hr/040204-myers.pdf (Accessed on 6 April 2004.)

In terms of talking about future planning, I will do my best not to fall back on some of the acronyms we use and some of the technical aspects of the planning. I can assure you that there is a very well-established process for looking at future planning for the U.S. military, and I can go into detail on that from a generic standpoint for any of you who may be interested.

A point that General Myers makes pretty regularly that I do want to kick off with is that he has been on active duty for more than forty years now. He states that he can't remember any time in his career when the stakes in the global war on terrorism or the threats to the United States have been as high as they are today. I think that's worth stressing, because the challenges that we're facing as a nation and as a military are indeed unique. Most of us of my generation who have been on active duty for twenty-five to thirty years had an experience very much centered on the significant threats that we faced during the cold war, when we had a huge nuclear arsenal aimed at the United States from the Soviet Union. We coped with that pretty well, but, to speak frankly, there was really never any time during all of that when we envisioned that the Soviet Union was actually going to use that nuclear arsenal. We always felt fairly comfortable with the deterrent posture and the policy of containment that we had in place as we dealt with brush fires around the world.

Today, the number of extremists who are intent on mounting attacks against the United States is indeed large, and there is a significant population we're contending with who would stop at nothing to mount additional large-casualty attacks on the United States. That's something we're contending with as well as we can. That challenge is by no means strictly a military challenge, and I don't mean to overstate the importance of the military in dealing with what is very much a government-wide challenge to ourselves and to our coalition partners. It involves all of the U.S. government and also the United Kingdom, Australia, and a wide array of other allies we have around the world. Later on during the course of the talk I'll dwell on that point in some detail, because of its importance for coalition operations from a military standpoint.

Oettinger: Before you leave the cold war, you said something that strikes me as extremely interesting. Throughout the cold war, my impression is that there never was anything approximating total loss of communications with the Soviets. Between military people or intelligence people and so on there were some tacit understandings that accounted in part for stability, so that before things got too far out of hand there was a possibility of dialogue and rational conversation. First of all, in your experience, is that a true observation, or am I fantasizing? If it's true, then is there a parallel with any of the contenders today? Do we in fact have dialogue with senior Al Qaeda people or anyone else, or is it completely a head-banging, suicide-bombing kind of relationship?

Murrett: Now that we can speak in the past tense about the Soviet Union (I won't talk about Russia), the Soviets were exceptionally responsible stewards of their nuclear arsenal. They were exceptionally responsible in dealing with the United States, the United Kingdom, and other nuclear powers on any issues that related to their nuclear arsenal. In retrospect you can probably make a case, even at the unclassified level, that the Soviet Union may have been a more responsible steward than Russia and the former Soviet republics are today.

Where I thought you were going with your question, and I'll come back to answering it, is "Do we have as much confidence in countries such as Pakistan and India, or North Korea for that matter, in their ability to act as responsible stewards of their nuclear arsenals as we did in the Soviet Union?" The answer, of course, is "No, we do not, by any stretch of the imagination."

In terms of dialogue of any type with the senior leadership of Al Qaeda, I have to give a two-part answer. The short answer is no, we have no dialogue with them whatsoever, aside from the senior Al Qaeda individuals whom we've taken into detention and are holding in prisons in various places around the world. Having said that, there really is no longer a unified Al Qaeda organization. We do have lines of communication with Al Qaeda sympathizers, although I would not characterize any of that communication as an official government-to-government type of interaction. One of the things I was going to come back to later, which I think is a subtext to the question you asked, is the transformation of Al Qaeda. They have changed in the past two-and-a-half years, and now they're no longer what can be called a cohesive organization.

Student: Are you saying that during the cold war the Soviet Union was not perceived as being as imminent a threat as terrorism is today?

Murrett: I think nuclear confrontation was far less likely to happen than additional terrorist attacks on ourselves and our allies. To put that in context—perhaps this will explain it better—people focus very heavily on 9/11. Since 9/11, Al Qaeda has mounted significant-casualty attacks in Afghanistan, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and Turkey, and on the French tanker *Lindbergh* off the coast of Yemen. It's only through happenstance they didn't mount a large-casualty attack in the United Kingdom. So, in terms of the likelihood of attacking, Al Qaeda and Islamic extremist groups that are associated with them are far more likely to conduct large-casualty attacks than I think would have happened with the very deliberate process we had in dealing with the Soviet Union for many years. Now, the kinds of attacks that the Soviets were in a position to mount were truly terrifying and of a wholly different order of magnitude from what we're looking at here. The attacks I've just listed are specifically Al Qaeda-associated attacks. They do continue, and they probably will continue for the foreseeable future.

Student: After we attacked Japan with nuclear weapons we eventually became their allies. Do you think that's possible in the Middle East?

Murrett: I certainly hope that over time we will be perceived throughout the Islamic world as a nation that is not opposed to their interests. I think that right now we have a huge image problem in the Islamic world. A lot of it is undeserved, but, as they say, "Perceptions aren't reality, but they're real." The polling data that you see—including from moderate countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Pakistan, and so forth—are not the least bit encouraging. We have some work to do there. I don't know that we will ever win over the radical Islamic extremist elements. I would like to think their numbers will diminish sometime in the future, and that twenty or thirty years from now we will be in a situation where we don't have large portions of the Islamic world fairly convinced that we are pursuing policies inimical to their interests.

The range of the global war on terrorism does present challenges from the standpoint of our overall military planning. I'd like to touch on that for just a moment. As reflected in the posture

statement that I referred to earlier, we are focused on a couple of generic kinds of missions, including the intelligence support that goes along with them. We are focused on specific large-scale contingencies, as we call them in the military, and other smaller kinds of contingencies. I won't go through the arcane system and the terminology that we use in the military intelligence planning cycle for those missions, but I will talk about them, because I think the categories are important to understand.

The kinds of generic missions that we focus on pretty heavily are the global war on terrorism, homeland defense, counterproliferation, and specific geographic war plans. Those are four categories of planning that we cover every two years in the *Contingency Planning Guidance*, a document signed off by the president, which has the plans for which the U.S. military is preparing. It is significant that the intelligence basis for that is essentially the most important supporting ingredient, because you can't plan for any of those kinds of contingencies unless you have a fairly accurate intelligence estimate of what you're going to be doing in the future. That puts a lot of pressure on the national intelligence community, and those of us in the uniformed intelligence service, even though most of the focus in our careers is on operational- and tactical-level intelligence, occasionally get dragged into this sort of debate that has to do with the strategic U.S. intelligence effort.

You're probably wondering about the geographic areas I mentioned. For that I'll draw upon General Myers's testimony, because the *Contingency Planning Guidance* itself is a Top Secret document, so I can't talk in detail about what's there.

Let me go around the room. What do you think is probably the least predictable large-scale contingency that we're looking at today?

Student: Looking at it from the political-military standpoint, the contingency that we cannot react to very well is stopping those terrorist attacks on our allies, such as Spain, where the support for the United States can be dubious at times in terms of our policies. I think that probably the biggest challenge militarily is how we can help them and their law enforcement agencies to figure out what's going on in their own countries.

Our European allies fight terrorism by withholding rewards from states that sponsor terrorism, or that's their traditional way of doing it. It's kind of like ours was. They also don't want to rile up the large Muslim populations in their own countries, whereas our policy now is that we simply go out and try to find the terrorists and then punish them, imprison them, or kill them. How do we reconcile with our European allies the differences in mindset in how to fight terrorism? How do we avoid the appearance that terrorists can take advantage of this mindset? For example, in Spain it almost looks as though the terrorists got exactly what they wanted, because the new socialist prime minister came out and said that Spain was pulling troops out of Iraq. The terrorists put out a letter and said "That's exactly what we want, so we're not going to attack you any more." Poland came out with a statement today saying "We may pull troops out of Iraq, because we feel we were misled by the U.S. government." How do we deal with that with our NATO allies?

Murrett: That's an excellent question. Let's speak hypothetically, because the Spanish situation is still pretty fresh, although I think the way you've described it is accurate. If you have a situation where a terrorist attack in a country that's on the eve of an election can effect political change and cause that nation significantly to scale back its support for the war on terrorism or against terrorist groups, that is a huge data point. It's more of a political issue than a military issue, but it can reduce itself to a military issue pretty easily.

From an intelligence warning standpoint this gets back to what I started talking about in terms of what I do for a living, because I am not a generic strategic intelligence officer. What the uniformed intelligence services do in response to that is immediately generate a list of upcoming elections in any of the countries with whom we are allied and set up a warning program for any possible terrorist attacks on the eve of those elections. I think that's an important point for this class. We in uniform and in the business of indications and warning [I&W] tend not to get off into the broader political dimensions of specific attacks and events, and for that matter, of the strategic impact of political developments overseas. We do focus very strongly on warning and anything that may have to do with the military implications of any future attacks.

Another point that I would make—and this is a segue to a longer conversation about coalition partners, allies, and alliances—is that if you sail around the Mediterranean for a year, are you in Europe or not? I think you are. But one size doesn't fit all in Europe, not by a long shot. There are tremendous differences between the Dutch, the Italians, the Norwegians, the Germans, the British, and the French, and those have perhaps been illuminated in the course of the past two or two-and-a-half years in a way they had not been illuminated before. There have been stresses put upon coalition partners—members of the NATO alliance and others—that we have not seen before. They have revealed elements of national character that were always there. They've been around for hundreds of thousands of years in some cases. They are being brought to life in ways they hadn't been before. I think that's worth talking about for just a moment.

I'll throw a couple of statistics at you that I think are interesting. We currently have twenty-four coalition partners that have forces in both Afghanistan and Iraq. In addition, we have sixteen nations that have forces just in Afghanistan, and eleven that have forces just in Iraq. So it's a fairly large coalition, and includes most of the European nations we were talking about. Right now, Canada, France, and Germany are carrying a tremendous amount of weight in Afghanistan, even though they don't have troops in Iraq. As some form of compensation, because they don't have forces in Iraq, they're covering other events. Most recently, the Canadians were very forthcoming in terms of deployments down in Haiti.

In that context, and within that broad coalition, I want to make a couple of points. I think it's important to understand the coalitions with which we're working today as things that transcend administrations, elections, and specific heads of state in the participating countries. Some of the coalitions being formed today are going to exist for ten, twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty years. That's far beyond any current political situation. I say that because I think that too often we in the United States tend to deal with everything in terms of the near-term political dynamic, and this is really about something that will last a lot longer than that.

Another point I would make is that the ways that many of these coalition partners approach current military requirements vary widely from our own. There are some things that bother us

greatly that they don't pay any attention to at all, and by contrast there are some things that we feel are very important that they do not. I'll give you a couple of examples. The Ukrainians don't care about casualties. We've learned that in Iraq. Typically, the Ukrainian response to casualties (they suffered three the first time) was that they didn't think it was a big deal, they didn't care, and they didn't see what the fuss was about.

Some of the other partners, particularly former Eastern European parts of the old Soviet bloc that have forces in Afghanistan and now Iraq, tend to view overthrow of a dictator as something that transcends any other justification for a conflict. That is to say, they're not terribly interested in WMD [weapons of mass destruction] and they don't think that's a big deal. They think that the threat Saddam posed to his own population was a more than sufficient basis for removing him from power. So they have a different perspective on things than we do in the United States.

Getting back to your point about Europe, just in the past two years Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, and Portugal have surprised a lot of us by how forthcoming and how steadfast they have been. You never know if that's going to be the same ten, twenty, or thirty years from now.

In a separate category, from my perspective of having had to deal with the chiefs of defense of those countries, the Japanese and the Koreans approach the forces they have in Iraq and Afghanistan very differently from anybody else. They have a very nuanced perspective on the host nation and the security challenges they have in both places. I think this is a useful discussion, and I would solicit your comments, because too often when we look at these kinds of military operational and strategic problems we tend to take too American a focus and too rigorous a U.S. approach to things. Coalition partners have different views of things, and those different perspectives are going to have a lot of implications for the future.

Oettinger: I'd like to add something to that, which is also implicit to a certain extent in the earlier question. The notion of the military as the instrument of choice would depend among other factors on the scale of things and also on our own predilections. You were asking about influencing the Spanish elections, and there was a time when the U.S. intelligence community took covert action and was extremely active in influencing elections. Post-World War II Europe was one place, Italy in particular. There's tons of history written on that. It has a certain bad odor that we associate with the history of Allende and Chile. Again, that's history, and a turning point when we became disenchanted with that sort of thing. With Nicaragua we were even more disenchanted, because some people were convicted of felonies and later pardoned. So you get a sense of changing mindset of the U.S. polity in terms of which instruments are appropriate, and it may well be that if the kind of phenomenon you had in Spain continues it won't just be military intelligence trying to predict things. I think you will have a rebirth of U.S. covert operations to counteract such events and exert their own influence on intelligence.

The choice of instrument is a political issue. You'll have a chance to look at other instruments, including homeland defense—a subtle variation on homeland security, which is somebody else's bailiwick, and in fact the boundary between those two is a considerably nebulous policy issue. Don't take the instrument for granted. You'll have a chance with Bob

Liscouski and Joan Dempsey[2] and some others to explore different attitudes about instrumentalities and their best use.

Student: I thought that the U.S. government supported candidates in Italy after World War II. Do we still support candidates in various nations?

Murrett: Not that I know of. I can honestly say that; I'll take a polygraph. But that's not my business.

Oettinger: That's a question you'd better ask Joan Dempsey.

Murrett: You'd better ask her or somebody else from the civilian intelligence services.

Student: You see in the news that there's a lot of criticism of the president in this country for going on the offensive and being preemptive in how we go after terrorists. How do you spend your mix fighting terrorism? Are you going to spend it all on the defense or on the offense, or are you going to do a mix? If you spend it all on the defense, you couldn't possibly spend enough money to be effective, but theoretically, if the United States were so secure, if the terrorists wanted to get the United States they could attack our allies. The allies are mad because we're going after Al Qaeda and some of these other terrorist networks, and that's why they think their countries are being attacked, but if we spent it all on defense they might go there anyway, because they can't get at the United States. How do you deal with that? I think it's a no-win situation in terms of their perceptions. I guess you just have to do what's right.

Murrett: I think you have to balance it. We're such a vulnerable nation, just because of the way we do business and the open society that we have. I think that balance is a very difficult decision. We have better understanding now than we had fairly recently of the kinds of threats that hurt us two-and-a-half years ago. As a result, when we didn't have that understanding, we probably spent a lot of resources in places where we didn't need to. But that's with 20:20 hindsight. It's based on information that we only received from senior Al Qaeda detainees. It's been in the newspapers. Over the course of less than a year, Ramzi Mohamed Abdullah and Khalid Sheikh Mohamed specifically have told us a lot of things we just didn't know until we captured them. We've verified their information through a lot of other means. There will always be discussion about the balance between offensive operations overseas and homeland protective measures with law enforcement and the Coast Guard and the new Department of Homeland Security [DHS]. I think it will be an ongoing political issue.

Student: Do you think that further attacks in Europe will prove to be more unifying, or more divisive, between the United States and our European allies?

Murrett: I certainly hope for the former. Most of the evidence I've seen from the other countries, Spain notwithstanding, has been that they do have a fairly good ability to stand up to

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[2]Robert Liscouski is assistant secretary of homeland security for infrastructure protection. Joan Dempsey is executive director of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, and was previously assistant director of central intelligence for community management.

these kinds of attacks. Also, the Europeans have been subject to terrorist attacks for longer than we have. It's not as new for them as it is for us. The attacks have come from a variety of elements: attacks by the Algerians on the French are an example that's different from the attacks we're focused on now.

Oettinger: Internal terrorism in France is at a fairly high level.

Murrett: Yes. They have a fair amount of experience at this. The track record varies somewhat among the nations, but overall, on the scale of less optimistic to more optimistic, I'm in the more optimistic category. I also think that nations around the world, including the Europeans, will actually stand up to this pretty well, because it's in their own self interest.

Student: Earlier today I was talking about American foreign policy with a professor, and he was arguing that U.S. foreign policy was primarily controlled by foreign policy elites, which he said were 1 percent or 2 percent of the population. Probably most of us could be included in that. In Europe, because foreign policy is of greater public political interest, it's likely to have a greater influence on elections and things like that. In Spain, three days after a terrorist attack they chose to make a foreign policy statement instead of rallying around their president. Another way of looking at that is to say is that it was complicated by the fact that they had a century of Basque terrorism, and the vote could have been a reaction to the outgoing government's denial of Al Qaeda responsibility in the attack. I think it's interesting, because it does touch on our immediate tendency to think "It must be about their involvement in Iraq" and things like that. It certainly played a role, but they also have this domestic history of Basque terrorism, their president essentially lied to them about who was involved in the terrorist attack, and there were all these other domestic issues.

Murrett: There are people here at this university who can do a far better job than I can of explaining Spanish politics, but the Aznar administration's handling of the information was probably as big a factor as the Iraq element.

Oettinger: There's also history fifty years later of settling old scores from the civil war. The Aznar government was identified with pretty right-wing, not to say fascist, sentiments. It's convenient to ascribe it to the United States, but my guess is that domestic issues played much more of a role.

Student: I think for that reason one can argue that future terrorist attacks could in fact be a rallying point for allied countries, not necessarily a divisive force.

Student: I know that before the bombing in Spain the U.S. administration tried to tie the war on terror to the war in Iraq. I'm wondering if that tie actually holds from a military planning point of view, or if we plan them in separate compartments in terms of operations.

Murrett: That is a hugely political question in this election year. I'm going to answer the question, but first I'm going to say something else. As General Myers stresses to us all the time, we, the Joint Staff, are politically neutral, and our ability to maintain our political neutrality is vital. Especially in an election year, we're very careful. We go up to the Hill a lot, to Congress,

and we spend equal time on both sides of the aisle at all levels, and work with the administration and so forth. I need to tell you that, because particularly in this election year it's important that we stay studiously neutral politically.

All the countries of the Middle East have had links with terrorism of one type or another. When you talk about Iraq, or for that matter Iran, Syria, or Saudi Arabia, there are links between all those nations and terrorist groups. Al Qaeda specifically has links with many different nations. There was a safe haven in northeastern Iraq, which is under the control of Ansar al Islam, just beyond the KDP [Kurdistan Democratic Party] regions in Kurdistan behind the green line. It was a sort of nongovernmental area that did have some significant terrorist elements. It was similar in the Kurdish areas, which are also beyond the control of Saddam and his regime. There is no doubt in my mind, or anybody else's, that Saddam was a terrorist threat to his own people, aside from the terrorist threat he may have posed to other countries, and that there were probably some second-order links between Al Qaeda and some elements of his government, but they were not inconsistent with links that Al Qaeda had to other governments in that region. Does that help?

Student: What I was really asking about was whether there is any difference between planning for operations against the war on terror and planning operations against the insurgency in Iraq.

Murrett: You mean today? Absolutely. With the presence of Abu Musad al Zarkawi in Iraq (that's unclassified), and the links he has had to the Al Qaeda network as one of their senior operational planners, there's a clear link between Al Qaeda operatives and what's in Iraq today. You can have a more nuanced discussion in terms of what was there a year ago, but there's no question that starting in August of last year Iraq got a considerable influx of Al Qaeda operatives.

Student: When Spain pulls out of Iraq, or when France refuses to support our operations in Iraq to begin with, is this a factor in how we treat them as allies in the war on terror? Are we able to think of it along division lines that keep them happy politically?

Murrett: From a military-to-military standpoint, I'm not going to prejudge what Spain is going to do. I think we will find out pretty soon, and some of the statements of the past couple of days will help us in that. France is one of our closest partners in Afghanistan and other places around the world. Canada has a huge force footprint in Afghanistan. The Germans headed up ISAF [International Security Assistance Force] until just recently, when they turned it over to the Canadians in terms of the forces we have on scene in Afghanistan. I mention that to you because those of us in uniform can't take a one-size-fits-all approach to the coalition partners with whom we're working in different parts of the world. We may be very closely allied to them in one place but not in another. The two partners we had first and foremost in Haiti recently were Canada and France. They were exceptionally helpful, especially the Canadians. So it tends to be different depending on the part of the world you're in.

Another thing I would tell you is that it is almost always the case that military-to-military contacts tend to be more long lasting and a little less subject to ups and downs than political-to-political contacts. That certainly characterizes our relationship with some of the nations you mentioned. The military-to-military contacts just sort of stay in a steady state because of the long-standing professional associations that we've had with our counterparts in foreign countries.

Oettinger: Professional relationships with many of these countries, not only in the military realm, are much more stable. I think it's important to discount the posturing that tends to be reported in the press, because if you look at that, then the whole world is perpetually in a state of total chaos and you wonder how anything can operate. The fact of the matter is that whether you talk about the French now or the Soviet Union during the cold war, there is a professional stability across the board, not just in the military, that I think is understated in the public reporting on this matter.

Student: Could you talk about our current challenge in North Korea in light of the WMD, and how it significantly changes the equation of military planning?

Murrett: Getting back to where we were a half hour ago, when I asked the question about the one place where we had the least predictability for a large-scale contingency, the answer is North Korea. I had mentioned that because we're often asked, "What is the place where you feel we have the biggest challenge in I&W?" or "Basically, we're finished fighting everybody we have to fight, so whom are we possibly going to fight in the future?" The response to the question is pretty clearly Kim Jong Il and the North Koreans.

We're hoping to avoid that. Our entire national policy and our political-military policy is to try to contain North Korea. The six-party talks just met again. They didn't accomplish anything, but at least they took place. You'd think that North Korea would get the picture when they're sitting at a table (they had a round table, I guess, because they did the table thing again[3]) across from China, Japan, Russia, South Korea, and the United States, all of whom are kind of telling them the same thing. You'd think that they would be a little more cooperative, but they're not. The North Korean regime is just phenomenally corrupt, phenomenally dysfunctional, and phenomenally bad for the North Korean people. There's nothing political in any of those three statements. If Martians landed on the planet Earth they'd probably come to that same conclusion in about five minutes.

North Korea is a big problem, and from a military planning standpoint Korea is probably one of the most acute challenges we have today in terms of our ability to send large numbers of forces to a region on short notice. From what we can gather in the I&W problem sense we have for North Korea, I think we have a fair amount of warning time, but it's still a very unpredictable place, and the Korean peninsula is a big challenge for all of us.

Student: What is the threat to the United States posed by North Korea?

Murrett: Essentially, they could overrun South Korea, which their conventional military forces have the full capability to do, and employ the nuclear weapons they have in their inventory against another U.S. partner in Northeast Asia, specifically Japan.

Student: It's not a threat to the continental United States?

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[3]Arguments about the shape of the negotiating table significantly delayed the start of the Paris Peace Talks in 1973–1974.

Murrett: No. The North Koreans are developing a missile delivery system that can range the United States, but it's not operational yet. That's an important question. They currently have nothing in their military capability that would allow them to attack the United States directly.

Student: Do we not have a signed security guarantee with South Korea saying that we will protect them no matter what?

Murrett: Yes. If they go to war with North Korea we're there. Our interest in Northeast Asia is such that I don't think we could tolerate anything of that sort.

Student: With reference to the opinion mentioned earlier that some of the other allies see a regime change in Iraq as really necessary because of the human rights abuses and the other issues, would they not view North Korea in a similar light? Here's a guy doing essentially the same things to his population, except we know he has nuclear weapons, whereas it was kind of uncertain in Iraq. Are those folks asking, "Why don't you take care of North Korea while you're at it?"

Murrett: I think you have to deal in the realm of the possible. There would have to be a lot of discussion before we kicked off an operation like a force-on-force conflict with North Korea, with its nuclear arsenal. I have to choose my words pretty carefully here.

Student: I know there are different types of intelligence officers in different branches, but what type of training are today's intelligence officers and analysts getting, specifically if they graduate from Annapolis or come in through an ROTC [Reserve Officers' Training Corps] program? Everyone was working on Soviet doctrine through probably the mid-1990s, so are they just training the average S-2 or G-2 in different skills, and about terrorism?

Murrett: That's a great question. What we are trained on in the aggregate is intelligence support to tactical and operational military deployment. I'll explain that in a little bit more detail. It does vary by service, but on the whole it's very heavily focused on putting weapons on target and the pieces that go around that. The effective employment of military force and the intelligence that requires is the subject matter of our expertise.

For each of the services, that means something slightly different. The training that you get for the Navy and the Marine Corps at Dam Neck, Virginia, is different from the training that you get for the Air Force at Goodfellow Air Force Base, and different from the training that you get for the Army at Fort Huachuca, because the services do their business differently. The focus in our training is on the employment of military force and the intelligence support for military operations.

Student: The reason I asked is that I did go to the basic course at Fort Huachuca in the early 1990s, and we were trained on Soviet doctrine. I'm just curious how the training has changed.

Murrett: It has developed a lot, and I think is more heavily focused on tactical operations today. All the services, for example, put heavy emphasis on THTs—tactical human teams. That's done down at Huachuca, not just for the Army, but for the Marine Corps and to some extent for the other two services as well.

I can't tell you how high-demand and low-density the uniformed intelligence personnel are in terms of ground operations throughout Central Command today. In a week and a half I'm going to Afghanistan for three months, which is normal. It's just part of the standard rotation we see for many of the one-stars in much of the Joint Staff. The demand on uniformed intelligence personnel today, particularly in the fields associated with ground operations and also for the other services, is as high today as it's ever been. We have some real management challenges in terms of recycling people back to the theater over and over again and burning them out. You'll see that.

Oettinger: Before you go on, you're an alumnus of the Defense Intelligence College, which is now the Joint Military Intelligence College. As the chair of the board of visitors for that institution, I'd be interested in your assessment of then and now.

Murrett: I can do better with then than now, because it's been a few years since I went through there. I thought it was terrific. It was a very compressed, very effective nine-month course when I went through it at Anacostia Annex.

I have to tell you one funny story. When I went to the Defense Intelligence College, it was in some World War II temporary building on Anacostia Flats on the Anacostia River, across from Southeast Washington, the Capitol district. This was in 1980. It was the same building where John F. Kennedy was stationed when he was first a Navy officer, back in 1940/41. This building was infested with various forms of animal life. We thought it was fine, but it was really a very beat-up old building. It actually had a lot of advantages, because we were kind of separate and distinct from all the other buzz and hubbub that goes on in the Washington area, so we could focus on our studies, which, as I said, were a pretty good, concise program dealing with the threats we were facing in 1980.

The entire set of buildings had been kind of condemned on and off for a lot of years, and they'd do a batch of fixes. They were finally condemned for good in 1981, and we moved into a new building at Bolling Air Force Base pretty soon thereafter. After we moved out of the schoolhouse they moved the homeless people into these buildings where we had gone to the Defense Intelligence College. Professor Oettinger can probably tell you about this: they filed a class action lawsuit against the city of Washington for putting them in these buildings. The suit succeeded in having the homeless moved somewhere else and the buildings torn down. This shows you that the people in the military don't always have the high-priced ticket that people suspect we do.

I thought it was a good course. It also enabled us to do some additional studies in the area at the same time. I went through a program at Georgetown at the same time, and it was helpful.

Student: I don't know much about the military, but how much are these programs tailored to the specific current threats, and how often do people get recycled through? You may not have gone back for twenty years. Obviously, you keep up with the current threat in your present job, but some of these people may not be that up to date. How much do they return to this training to get back into what's going on?

Murrett: All of us, in all our professions, have both functional and specific expertise. Our functional expertise as military intelligence professionals is all-source intelligence fusion: bringing together as many different pieces of information from as wide an array of sources as possible, collecting from as broad a group of sources as possible, and providing intelligence for operational decision making and force employment. I've just given you in one paragraph a pretty good description of what we do for a living. Over a period of time I think we develop that functional expertise almost unconsciously as we do it.

Another way to answer your question is in terms of how you deal with things as they change over the longer period of time. My experience with subordinates in the various commands I've had and so forth has been that just about any place you go you have some people who are better at doing things and others who aren't quite as good. In the military intelligence business, I have found that functional expertise will always trump specific expertise. That is to say: suppose you have an absolutely fantastic Air Force captain who is the world's greatest expert on Algerian air order of battle, and suddenly you have a conflict in Kosovo. If you tell Captain Smith "You are now in charge of Kosovo air order of battle, and you have basically two days to get a wrap around this and tell us which airfield DMPIs—designated mean points of impact—we want to strike with JDAMs [Joint Defense Attack Munitions]," Captain Smith is probably going to come back in two days and do a better job than somebody else who may have been looking at Kosovo for a while.

I think that's probably helpful, because it gets back to what you were saying. If you were trained in the right kind of functional expertise in 1980, 1985, 1990, or 1995, over a period of time the all-source fusion that you have to do and intelligence analysis to support operations are kind of the same. The specific problem may look different, it may involve different people and different geography, but the basics of what you're doing are much the same. They just don't change.

Oettinger: It sounds like the argument for liberal education!

Student: Going back to North Korea for a second, we're reading in the papers stories of units that came out of Iraq and Afghanistan that are now going back after however many months. It seems that manpower is an issue. If North Korea were to begin shelling Seoul and tanks were to go across the border and South Korea were to invoke its treaty with us and say "We need American help right now to repel this attack," what would be some of the manpower issues that would come into play in keeping our treaty commitments?

Murrett: The best answer I can give you is that we might fight such a conflict on a timeline that would look somewhat different from the way a timeline would look if we weren't busy in a couple of other places. We would still fight it on a timeline that would be acceptable to us. We would use measures that we might not use if we had a larger footprint of conventional force in one place or another. I don't want to deal specifically with North Korea, because then I'd cross the line into classified information. The short answer is that we would handle, it, but it would probably be handled differently from the way it would have looked three or four years ago.

Student: Talking about functional versus specific intelligence, as I understand it there's a push in the armed forces to perhaps reorganize by adding a number of divisions not in the National Guard or the Reserves, moving them to active duty, and also increasing the number of people trained to be military police or civil affairs officers, because of this homeland defense issue you're talking about. That suggests that there is a need to retrain and retool in that area of the armed forces. Are you suggesting that it's different in military intelligence, just by the nature of the way intelligence works?

Murrett: I think they're similar. At any given point in time it may look a little bit different. For example, there is now a very strong emphasis on tactical human intelligence, which is spiking, but two years from now the emphasis may be very different. I think that the armed forces writ large and those of us who are intelligence officers in uniform have continued to adjust in terms of the specialists we have to deal with certain kinds of things, and that will continue. I don't see uniformed intelligence people adjusting that much more or less than the overall Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines have in the course of the last few years. You brought up a good example: military police and civil-military affairs. People with those kinds of specialties are very much in demand now, and I think you may see slightly more of them given the current force structure we have.

Oettinger: Could I ask you to talk a bit about this question of homeland defense, homeland security, and the role of the military and military intelligence in defense or assuring the security of the homeland? How does that affect the thinking in the Joint Staff and in the various military intelligence services?

Murrett: Great question. I would start by saying that the military intelligence role in domestic matters is exceptionally low, not to say nil. It's almost zero.

Oettinger: So we're still back at the Church–Pike Committee situation?

Murrett: In my own personal experience it's more that we've got so many other things to do that it really doesn't come up on our radar screen at all. Now, there are some other things happening that relate to your question. As you know, under the Unified Command Plan, which I'll try to come back to later, the United States has divided the world into various geographic combatant command areas of operations. We've just stood up a new unified command—Northern Command, headquartered in Colorado Springs—that has military responsibility for the United States, Canada, and contiguous waters. I mention that because we do have a unified military commander who is responsible primarily for the air defense of North America. The discussion of what links there ought to be between Northern Command, headed by General [Ralph] Eberhart, and the new DHS, headed by Secretary [Tom] Ridge, is ongoing. They do have contacts with one another, mostly under the aegis of any potential terrorist threats to military installations in the United States. I have not had any experience, nor do I see any significant military role at all, in terms of anything domestic. Our primary role in homeland defense is thwarting potential opponents overseas—as far from the homeland as possible.

We're really busy doing stuff in other places right now. I don't see any potential for extracurricular activity in Kansas anytime soon. It's foolish.

Student: I think we've had this discussion before, and I don't know that Professor Oettinger necessarily agrees with me, but you guys do a lot of red team/blue team and try to figure out how the enemy is going to act. We've been very much in the law enforcement mode, and it's as though we wait for the terrorists to do something and then we react. They put a bomb in their shoes; okay, now we're going to make you take off your shoes. We're not really very proactive in trying to figure out how terrorists might think or act next. I'm just wondering why the other intelligence agencies—the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] and everyone else—don't take a closer look at how you guys do analysis here in the States. It's a very different way of looking at it. One is law enforcement, and one is being proactive.

Murrett: In some respects it's a lot harder for them. I think that Director [Robert] Mueller at the FBI is doing as effective a job as anyone could do at trying to change the culture and make it a better organization to some degree, and to move it more toward warning and a little away from arrest and conviction, which is what law enforcement folks have traditionally done. I don't see a military role in law enforcement in the United States. We're not good at it, we ought not to be doing it, it's illegal, and we've got plenty of other stuff to do. It's not part of our core expertise.

Student: If there were a WMD event in the United States you'd be involved, though.

Murrett: That's a separate category. For a large-scale WMD attack in the United States there are military capabilities under an organization called JTF [Joint Task Force] Civil Support that could be brought to bear, only because the military has unique expertise in dealing with specific types of WMD attacks. We train for it overseas. We can only do it in support of a lead federal agency, which would probably be either FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency] or the FBI. We take our directions from them when we do something like that.

Student: Prior to 9/11 a lot of discussion, at least at the Air Force Academy, centered on humanitarian aid operations and the military's role in them, and what functions they should perform. That discussion seems to have died down now that terrorism has arisen, at least in terms of a primary role that the military might have in the future. Given the demand on our forces right now, how large a role do you see the military playing in humanitarian operations in the future?

Murrett: That's a great question. I think it needs to be viewed in the context of what you do after the shooting stops. That's very important, and something we talk about a lot, especially when the shooting continues at a low level. To some degree, we will always be pulled into those types of operations. Just recently, in Liberia and Haiti, we have been called upon to conduct operations essentially to settle things down a little bit and put the humanitarian infrastructure (for lack of a better term) back on a reasonable footing. We are also doing that in Iraq and certainly Afghanistan to a large extent, for example with the PRT—Provisional Reconstruction Team—we're standing up with NATO and other coalition partners. I think you're always going to have some reason to do that, just based on the direction we get from our national authorities.

Being boneheaded military guys, we're always concerned that we don't let that interfere with our fundamental warfighting expertise. There's always a danger of that. You will always see us fall back on the importance of warfighting. Our core mission, as we exhibited again just a year ago, is force-on-force engagement and being able to defeat an armed opponent as rapidly as

possible with as few casualties as possible. Our U.S. coalition ability to conduct those kinds of operations is our core function. After the fighting stops—and in Haiti and Liberia it's not even a low-intensity conflict; it's really like a no-intensity conflict—we have to be able to mount operations to put places back on their feet, but only in a way that doesn't impact our core warfighting function. We're trying to do that.

Student: You mentioned the PRTs. I read six or eight months ago that the secretary of defense was not a big fan of the PRTs. I wonder if in the intervening time the Defense Department has revised that concept a little bit.

Murrett: I didn't see that particular bit you're referring to. The PRTs in Afghanistan have utility because of the circumstances and environment in Afghanistan. Let's not talk about Afghanistan; let's talk about Country X, because I think that's probably more useful. If you have a situation in a place where the security environment is not good, and that country will not be able to get back on its feet unless you perform certain civil-military functions, it seems that some kind of hardened entity that can do civil–military functions can be useful. I think that's true of a lot of places, not just Afghanistan.

Student: Do you think that in the future we'll be using the PRT model more for these kinds of operations?

Murrett: I think we'll use something like it. The reason I think the PRT is worthy of discussion is because in a lot of the places we're going to be there will be elements that are going to try to keep democracies and effective governments from getting back on their feet. They want a very small percentage of any given population to be able to dominate decision making in a country. We seem to run into that over and over again. Say again you've got a Country X where 3 percent of the people are extremist terrorists and they want to be able to call the shots for the other 97 percent. What they're going to try to do is keep that government from becoming effective, probably through terrorism and hit-and-run attacks. If you have a situation like that in a nation, you're going to have to have some kind of mechanism for getting the country's infrastructure back on its feet in a way that enables you not to sustain many casualties.

One of the single most effective attacks that we have seen in many years, certainly in the course of the last two years, was the bombing attack on the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad last August. People should not underestimate the effectiveness of that attack, which drove the United Nations out of Iraq, to the point where they have not come back to stay. The attack also killed Sergio Vieira de Mello, the top United Nations envoy, who I'm personally convinced would have made a big difference if he were still out there today. If you have a situation where attacks like that are being mounted with such success—because from the standpoint of the other side it was a success—you have to harden your ability to rebuild nations to some degree if you're going to be effective. That's a big challenge for all of us.

The PRTs are expanding. I can't comment on what anybody may have said specifically, but the number of PRTs will at least double in the next several months.

Student: You were talking about how reconstruction and humanitarian efforts are going to be secondary in the military to warfighting. Do you think that means that there is a place for a civilian organization to come in and take over those types of efforts, particularly in places such as Haiti and Liberia where there isn't really armed conflict?

Murrett: Absolutely. The nongovernmental organizations and private donor organizations doing these kinds of things—if they can do them safely—are far better at this stuff than we are. USAID [U.S. Agency for International Development], an organization of the State Department, is much better than the U.S. Navy (I won't pick on any of the other services) at those kinds of operations. That is not our core expertise. There are some things we're good at, and we can help out with them. We can on short notice deploy highly organized, highly mobile forces to get things going, but once there is a sufficient security environment we probably need to get out of there as soon as we can, and I think that's what we'll be doing in the future.

Student: Can you talk about the implications of horizontal integration right now: the concepts, and where we are?

Murrett: Horizontal integration basically has to do with this concept of sharing data of all types, preferably in automated fashion, across the entire enterprise of the U.S. government. That is to say that NSA [National Security Agency] gets a data point, and it's immediately available to an Army corporal on the ground someplace in the horn of Africa or wherever. I think we're making considerable progress toward that. I think there will always be tension in terms of HI, as we call horizontal integration, between the security of information and the ability to share it widely. That is probably the biggest policy challenge we have for HI. I think the systems challenges, in terms of computer technology and communications technology, are things we'll be able to cope with pretty well.

The other thing we should mention in terms of HI is our ability to act from the interagency standpoint, and also on a coalition basis with foreign partners, to share all kinds of data freely. We are making progress on all those related issues, but it is only in fits and starts, and there are significant policy challenges to fully realizing the goals.

Oettinger: As an officer who is both in the military and in intelligence, you might be able to comment on this more effectively than other military or civilian intelligence people. In your own career you've lived through the effect of the Goldwater–Nichols Act on the military and the impact (of greater or lesser merit) on joint behavior and promotions and so on. As far as I can see, there is no similar set of incentives in the intelligence community, both civilian and military, for sharing information or for acting in a national as opposed to a parochial sort of way. One of the thoughts that keeps crossing my mind is, "Why not something like a Goldwater–Nichols Act in the intelligence realm to change the reward system so that sharing or thinking nationally rather than parochially is better rewarded?" You've lived with the Goldwater–Nichols Act and possible perversions on one side of your career. Could you comment on its merits and demerits in the relationship between your military side and your intelligence side?

Murrett: The concept of a Goldwater–Nichols Act for the interagency is a very important one that I think is going to get a lot of discussion. What that means is that the Goldwater–Nichols Act,

which is almost twenty years old now, basically imposed very specific statutory requirements on the military services for joint duty and joint training. It forced us to become joint. The clearest manifestations of that are the joint staffs we have at the unified commands and also the Joint Chiefs of Staff, where I'm currently assigned. It was written very effectively. I just say this by way of explanation to this group, because, for example, you can't become a flag or general officer in the U.S. military unless you've had significant joint duty. The congressional committees have run out of waivers right now. They're not interested in granting waivers anymore, even for the Marine Corps. It was a very hard-and-fast sort of law that forced the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps to work very effectively as a joint team. That has been a very good thing for the nation. I'll come back to joint organizations later on.

If we had a similar act, as Professor Oettinger was saying, that said, "You can't be director of the NSA or the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, or the deputy director of central intelligence, unless you have done two tours in the other agencies before you get up to that level," that would have a lot of impact. That's what a Goldwater–Nichols Act for the interagency would look like. We don't have anything like that now.

It's probably a broader interagency challenge, I would say, that transcends the intelligence community. It would be very useful to have some forcing function like that. It would call upon the intelligence community to gel more effectively. It is very difficult in any nation, not least in our own, to get away from this concept that those who collect intelligence own the intelligence they have collected. One of your follow-on speakers will go into that more deeply than I need to.

Oettinger: The current buzzword is to substitute "stewardship" for "ownership."

Murrett: Yes. There's a lot of discussion about those kinds of issues that lead over to this HI discussion. Statutory language that would force additional cooperation among the intelligence community would be helpful. There's been some discussion about that, although I haven't seen any concrete proposals.

It's also easier to tell the military to do stuff, quite frankly. We saw it with Goldwater–Nichols. If the Congress passes a law like that which applies to the military, 99.9 percent of the time it will work out pretty well, especially if it affects promotions. That was a good part of Goldwater–Nichols: the statute that said you cannot get promoted and be a flag or general officer without significant joint duty. I mention that because some of you are probably going to go to law school, and legislation like a Goldwater–Nichols for the interagency can really get people's attention if it's not worded as carefully.

Oettinger: For those of you who might want to follow up on that, General Herres, who was the first vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and on whose watch it fell to implement some of those provisions, spoke about that at the seminar, so you can look him up on the Web site.[4]

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[4]Robert T. Herres, "Strengthening the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff," in *Seminar on Intelligence, Command, and Control, Guest Presentations, Spring 1988* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Program on Information Resources Policy, I-89-1, March 1989), [On-line]. URL: http://www.pirp.harvard.edu/publications/pdf-blurb.asp?ID=352 and "The Role of the Joint Chiefs After the 1986 Defense Reorganization Act," in *Seminar on Intelligence, Command, and Control, Guest Presentations, Spring 1989* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University

Murrett: He was the right person to speak on that, because he graduated from Annapolis and was an Air Force officer.

Student: I was interested in the turf wars that have been going on between the different services for appropriations and how the Goldwater–Nichols Act might have affected them.

Murrett: The only way it affected them, probably, was to significantly advance shared understanding across the services and the trust and confidence we have in the other services, because now we have to go to joint schools and joint assignments. While it has not directly affected the way we do appropriations, or the way the service staff and the service secretaries (because the civilians manage most of that) work the appropriations business, it has certainly advanced the understanding we have of each other, and greatly enhanced the importance of specific organizations supporting the Joint Staff.

Student: On a lighter note, how do you think the Air Force Academy will do against North Carolina today? Whom are you rooting for?

Murrett: I think they'll both do just fine!

Student: Transforming the military into a lighter, faster force is a big part of Secretary Rumsfeld's platform. How does that affect military intelligence? Do you think we will sacrifice longer term intelligence assessments in favor of shorter term counterintelligence?

Murrett: I think it's a bit different. It places more of a requirement on us to make the intelligence cycle even shorter than it is already, which is about as short as you can get it. The kinds of "swiftly defeat the opposition" operations that we're going to be conducting in the future and that we conducted last spring place tremendous stress on military intelligence professionals for time-sensitive targeting, time-sensitive intelligence analysis, and shortening the intelligence production cycle and the analytical cycle as much as possible.

If you have a situation where you are overrunning on the ground targets that you struck from the air twelve or twenty-four hours beforehand, it puts a lot of pressure on your bomb damage and combat assessment analysis. It calls for you to execute that kind of analysis on a much shorter cycle than the more usual things that a lot of people are accustomed to. I think that faster operations put more of a stress upon the intelligence cycle.

Getting back to what we said earlier, I'm not so sure that lighter and faster are related terms. I think you can have faster armored operations, which may be faster than an operation such as a light airborne operation or a conflict that calls for necessarily lighter forces. You can have faster heavier operations too. That's a lesson we don't want to miss.

Student: In terms of time-sensitive targeting, what about the idea of delegating authority to make strikes down to a low level? I would assume that the shorter the loop you have to make the call, in

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Program on Information Resources Policy, I-90-3, August 1990), [On-line]. URL: http://www.pirp.harvard.edu/publications/pdf-blurb.asp?ID=352

terms of intelligence going up to the decision maker and back down to the shooter, the quicker it would be. Is delegating authority down to a low level something that the military is not comfortable with?

Murrett: We're very comfortable with it. We do it all the time. Usually a component commander to a geographic combatant commander has the authority to conduct those kinds of operations. The way that works, just from a trade standpoint, is that if you go against Country X, before you conduct operations you have what you call an NSL: a no-strike list. The NSL is vetted with the interagency, and you have a predetermined set of targets that are essentially hands off. They're vetted very carefully. They include hospitals, schools, religious institutions, and all embassies. The component commander goes in with that NSL, within the guidance that he has from the combatant commander and the secretary of defense and the president. In most conflicts, and as we've seen going back twelve years now, that component commander or geographic combatant commander is allowed to conduct time-sensitive strikes. He's always going to inform up the chain if anything of interest happens from a generic standpoint, but the military tries to pass that authority down the chain about as far as it can, typically to a CFACC [combined forces air component commander] or JFACC [joint forces air component commander].

Oettinger: A point I would add to that is that technology has made that very much a matter of choice and of doctrinal and political decision rather than necessity. I could imagine circumstances where the military or the National Command Authorities would have somewhat different rules of engagement. The key I think is that flexibility has been enormously increased in this realm, so the range of available choices has increased enormously.

Murrett: Yes, and I think you need that kind of flexibility, especially in the kinds of rampant conflicts that we're likely to engage in.

There are a couple of other points I wanted to make, and also keep the dialogue going. From a military standpoint, getting back to our discussion about the war on terrorism, I think there's no question that the opposition we're up against today has transformed itself pretty significantly in the last two years or so. There's an increasing awareness that I ask you to think about. To simplify it at one extreme, we can say "We are fighting Al Qaeda," which we are, but to call that the sum total of our opposition is no longer accurate. Moreover, the Al Qaeda organization, which we now understand much better than we did until fairly recently, has transformed itself significantly. The extremism that we seem to be coming up against on several different fronts, including the attacks I listed earlier when we had the discussion of what's been happening for the past two-and-a-half years, doesn't just come from Al Qaeda. We need to have a national-level discussion—and this can happen at the unclassified level—of whom we are fighting and what kind of extremists they are.

I'll throw out a couple of ideas for you. In many quarters terrorism is really viewed as a tactic and not as an opponent. Another thing is that two years ago the way you defined an Al Qaeda operative was by using one of two definitions: either someone who had pledged personal loyalty to Osama bin Laden or someone who had been trained in the Al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan. As time goes on, those definitions don't work any more. So that's a point in the discussion we need to have about the nature of the opposition and how they are constituted, on

the basis of the increasingly federated types of operations they are conducting. That's not specifically a military issue. It does become military as we are called upon to fight them—as we are doing every day now—so that part of it is important for those of us in uniform. But there really needs to be a broader national discussion in terms of the opposition we're up against.

Student: You mentioned two questions that we had to ask. Isn't there a third question: how we define victory? There will always be extremists. Is there the idea of perpetual war, or is there a way we define victory, such as that we changed their procedures or we ruined the organization structurally? How do we know how we're doing?

Oettinger: It's immeasurable. Just the image of war makes sense. Abolishing crime one would say is a quixotic kind of objective. Are we talking here about abolishing crime? What's the relation between the groups and the drug people and other criminal elements? Are these distinguishable? Where does the political end and the criminal come in?

Murrett: There are different ways you can define victory, although I'm not so sure you'll ever have victory in the conventional sense of a capitulation or formal surrender, because we're not dealing with that organized an opposition. I'm not sure I know the answer, but I think victory for a lot of people would be assurance that foreign terrorist groups would not be able to mount mass casualty attacks on the United States. I don't know if you can define victory in this case or not. Precluding those kinds of attacks is very important, and I think our ability to constrain them has continued to increase. I say that more from a long-term perspective than anything current.

I continue to roll over in my mind a discussion I had with the defense intelligence activity now called the Joint Terrorism Task Force, which is responsible for military support for combating terrorist operations. Three years ago, in what now seems like a very peaceful time—the summer of 2001—I got a complete walk-through of Al Qaeda from this group, which was at that time fairly extensive. I remember asking this group of briefers, "If you could do one thing to Al Qaeda today, what would you do to them to make them less effective?" The answer I got instantly from the group was "We would take Afghanistan away from them." I think that illustrates the kinds of limited successes we're going to have, because it's clear that we have constrained them hugely by taking away this nationwide safe haven that they could use to mount attacks. It's not lost on anybody that all nineteen of the September 11 hijackers were trained in Al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan. That has had a big impact.

I think we'll continue to do things like that, but an absolute, firm guarantee that people of that mind who would very much like to mount mass-casualty attacks on the United States, or the United Kingdom, or Australia, or any of our other allies, will not succeed is probably an assurance that we'll never have, and it's going to continue for a long time.

Student: Going back to what Professor Oettinger started to say, then, is the military the best tool? You said the military are not going to be good policemen or law enforcement officers. Is the military the best tool for fighting terrorism, and do we have another tool?

Murrett: The answer is that it's not at all the best tool. Getting back to a discussion we had earlier about the interagency and our work with our allies and others, we are but a part of the

toolset that the nation has to deal with this problem. I wouldn't say we're the instrument of last resort, but to some degree you can look at military operations as a simple failure in our ability to deal with foreign nationals.

Just looking through my own soda straw, one of the things I found particularly useful is that we as the Joint Staff deal very regularly with the chiefs of defense of foreign countries. Of the ones we have met with over the course of the past year, those who I found have the best insights, and were by far and away the most interesting to listen to, were the chiefs of defense from Egypt, Jordan, and Pakistan. They have provided insights, from their perspective, into the vital importance of nonmilitary solutions to tamp down Islamic extremists who they feel are more of a threat to them than they are to us, which in Egypt is certainly the case.

The Jordanian chief of defense in particular talked to us more about economic opportunity for younger people in his nation than anything else. He thought the most significant thing we could do for security was to increase economic opportunity for twenty-one-year-old Jordanians. He also talked about the other moderate countries over there. As we said this morning, it's not lost on me that probably the most effective Al Qaeda operative now, al Zarkawi, who is at present in Iraq, was a Jordanian businessman who went out of business because of the lack of economic opportunity.

The military toolset is but a small part of it. We've had to resort to it because of the nature of the threat we've had for the past two-and-a-half years, but if we are not able to provide alternatives to the large numbers of fairly determined Jihadists whom we seem to have today it's going to be very difficult for us over the course of the next several decades. I think it's in our interest to look at alternatives.

Oettinger: I read in the papers about the arguments for and against outsourcing, and its economic impact, and I read about these questions of terrorism. I have never seen the arguments linked, but in the light of his last few comments a discussion of those two items should be linked, in my opinion. I don't know what the outcome would be. Are we better off investing in military might, or in paramilitary options, or in some job reduction and welfare at home in order to subsidize Jordanian businessmen? I think it's a set of questions that needs articulating.

Murrett: We—the U.S. military—tend to be kind of the last stop on the bus line of desperate foreigners. I think all of us in uniform would like to stay home. We would prefer that the bus would stop further down the line, and that the kinds of people we end up fighting didn't find themselves in the situation where they view fighting as the only alternative they have. Suicide bombers are probably the most pronounced example of that whom we have to contend with. Suicide bombings have resulted in the casualties of several U.S. military personnel over the course of the past year. You have to ask yourself, "Wouldn't it be better if we didn't have a situation where the best alternative that a twenty-one-year-old Jihadist from Saudi Arabia thought he had was to travel to Iraq and blow himself up next to a U.S. soldier?" Those are broader domestic and international questions that I think we have to grapple with.

Student: I wonder if that is related to the question you posed earlier about different cultural backgrounds. This actually may not be the case, based on the Jordanian's response, but they're

not as economically motivated as the twenty-one-year-olds in the United States or Western Europe. I'm just not sure that would actually solve the problem when their moral and ethical framework may be entirely different than ours.

Oettinger: It's true that there's a need to understand differences in culture, but when I think back on the starvation in post-World War II Europe and the importance of the Marshall Plan in restoring some measure of economic stability and hope it wasn't all that different. We did that under the banner of trying to prevent communism from taking over both the ideological and economic components. I wouldn't reach either extreme conclusion.

Student: Osama bin Laden was certainly not underprivileged. He was educated at Oxford and had all the economic opportunities in the world.

As we discuss the end state, there's an Air Force general who said that the victory that we seek is when the world views terrorism as it now views slavery, which I thought was interesting. Slavery may still exist in some corners of the world in different economic sectors, but as a whole the world doesn't embrace it. A hundred and fifty years ago people probably couldn't envision the way we view slavery now. Perhaps that's the end state that we should be working toward, which seems to me like a public relations job of enormous magnitude, both for the military and for every other sector of society. I'd like to know your thoughts on that.

Murrett: I've heard that before, and I think it would be great if we got to the point where terrorism was viewed in the same light as slavery or any other thing that's widely regarded as a crime against humanity. I certainly don't think we're going to get there in my lifetime, and probably not in yours. I'd like to be really optimistic and tell you that by 2010 everybody in the world will view terrorism the same way we view slavery today, and I think that's a commendable goal. We need to have that discussion. Terrorism has been a tactic of the weak against the strong for many thousands of years. I'd like to think it would go away really soon. It is reprehensible no matter how it is used. We need to fight it every way we possibly can. I just don't see it going away anytime soon.

Student: Nobody approves of slavery, and nobody is going to bring a slave into the United States, but even if nobody approves of terrorism anymore, it is still available and can still hurt us.

Student: Bottom up rather than top down, which I think is more difficult.

Murrett: It would make it a lot harder for terrorists. I think we could have a climate where they are not as embraced as they might be because of our foreign policy, but that's for somebody else to worry about.

Student: That brings up the point of how the American public thinks we're going to win the war on terrorism. I think your average American citizen thinks we're eventually going to capture Osama bin Laden and that will be it. Even with Al Qaeda we understand that if you get one head there's another head. Now there's a lot of talk that there's probably Al Qaeda in Spain, but are these terrorist organizations, such as ETA, linking up to it? You have Al Qaeda cells shutting themselves off because they don't want to lead back to the main cell. Do these guys then get

smart with technology and everything else and start working with other terrorist organizations? It's just so hard to get your hands around that unless you really get rid of the reasons why these terrorists are acting the way they are. It's more of a political reality: how do you prepare the American public for something that could go on for the rest of their lives?

Murrett: You hit a key point. My own sense is that the war on extremism—or whatever you want to call it, because I think there's no label you can put on it without some political connotations—will continue for a very long time. I think it will be similar in some respects to the cold war in terms of its intensity. I think there will be a long sustained period of engagement, with hot flashes in that period. Some of those flashes will be predictable; others won't be quite as predictable. I think it will last for our time and our children's time, probably, and that the task for all of us is to try to keep down those hot flashes as much as we can. At times we're going to ramp up, and there will truly be some hot conflicts—force-on-force types of engagements.

Oettinger: What I seem to hear Bob saying is that the military is best equipped to deal with higher intensity events, those more concentrated on the scale. This has implications about the lower end of the intensity: paramilitary, covert action human intelligence, and all kinds of activities that we have steadily diminished over the last twenty to thirty years. We steadily diminished them for very good political and moral reasons, so the question of whether we want to divert a larger and growing portion of our budget and resources to stuff that we fairly recently found appalling is one we've got to face. If we do go down that route, can we learn lessons from the past to avoid some of the excesses that our current regime is still guarding us against, even at a time when you might think we were overreacting?

Student: I heard a comparison to fighting piracy in terms of international efforts to stamp it out. Could you talk about things that the U.S. Navy specifically is contributing to the fight against terrorism?

Murrett: Probably the most directly relevant thing we do is that our sea-based forces conduct operations ashore and interdiction on the high seas. Those things happen all the time. Some of the interdictions that we do in the Navy are well publicized; a lot that we do receive no publicity at all. Our ability to counter proliferation on the world's oceans is a very important component of our national policy, and something that we exercise as often as we have to. The other key role of the naval force—that's the Navy and Marine Corps—is to project forces anyplace we need to around the world from any ocean area. That's also something we're doing pretty regularly. The Marines were just deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom as part of the sustainment package over there.

Oettinger: There's still the question of piracy in Indonesia.

Murrett: The Straits of Malacca remain the challenge. On the whole, the security of merchant shipping on the high seas today is pretty good. We do look after security on the high seas very carefully, and there's a lot of planning that goes into ensuring it. That planning is probably more extensive today than it has ever been.

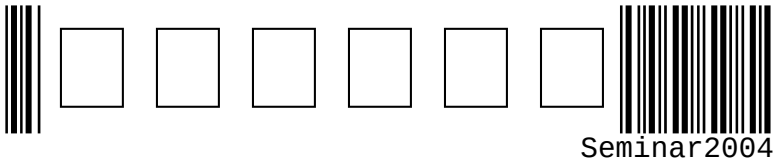
Oettinger: The rise and fall of routine hijacking would be an interesting story along those lines. There was a period when everyone was flying planes to Cuba, and then somehow even Castro realized that it was not in his best interest. I have never seen a good study of that period. Somehow, sooner or later even the rogue states seemed to come around to the notion that it was better to make common cause against it.

We want to thank you for an excellent presentation. May I present you with this small token of our great gratitude for taking the time to be with us?

Murrett: I've received a couple of military coins, but this is the first coin I've received from an academic institution. Thank you, Professor Oettinger, and thank you all for the interaction. Sometimes you can learn more from these occasions than you put in, and I think this was the case today, so I appreciate all your comments.

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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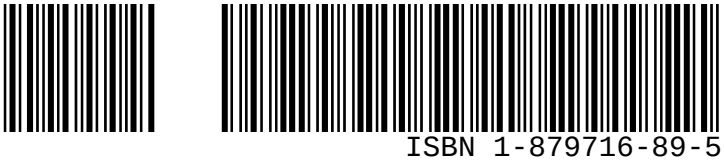

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