

Scouting the Future: The Public Speeches of William J. Casey
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SCOUTING THE FUTURE

This speech is central to any serious evaluation of William J. Casey's tenure as Director of Central Intelligence. For it is in this speech – from which is drawn the title of this book – that Casey defines his perception of the role of U.S. intelligence.

Casey believed that U.S. intelligence has a responsibility on behalf of the entire government for "Scouting the Future" – for looking "across the broad spectrum of international political, economic, military, sociological, and demographic developments. . . and to distill from them careful assessments of problems we will face now and past the year 2000."

With this perception Casey in effect doubled the intelligence community's mission. Under his tenure not only would the community fulfill its "primary purpose," which he defined as "averting war by alerting our leaders to any military dangers to our national security." Now, there was to be a "second role," which he defined as "helping the President and his top advisers frame sound policies needed to retain American strength against a myriad of political, economic, and even technological threats to this country."

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It was the effort to play this second role that led the intelligence community to produce a steady stream of long-range analyses and projections of a sort that had never been attempted before by intelligence, or perhaps even by any other branch of government. Casey took special pride in these products. "These aren't the kinds of reports we wake up the President in the middle of the night to tell him about," Casey used to say. "But these are important in a different way. These are the ones that help see ahead." Producing these long-range analyses was a frustrating, time-consuming, often discouraging business. Casey was always there to keep flagging spirits up. "We're learning while we do these things," he used to tell analysts. "Don't worry if what we come up with is a little thin. This is our first shot. Next time we take a look at this subject we'll do better. Just keep going."

Unfortunately nearly all these long-range products are classified, and therefore can't be listed here. But future historians of U.S. intelligence, and of the Casey years, will find an enormous cache of reports and analyses that provided policymakers with a glimpse of the future such as their predecessors had never been given.

In this speech Casey also offers his perception of the KGB's role. The contrast to the U.S. intelligence community's role is striking, and well worth noting.

I am most pleased to be here again at Fordham. I spent here what I count among my happiest and most valuable years. The theme of this series of Harry J. Sievers Lectures is U.S. foreign policy. I will undertake to give you a view of the range of our foreign policy concerns as seen by American intelligence.

Back when Lyndon Johnson was President, one of my predecessors, Dick Helms, asked me and a few others out to CIA Headquarters at Langley, Virginia. He wanted us to put together a scholarship fund to help keep experienced people who had joined CIA at its inception twenty years earlier and who were now tempted to move to the private sector to make enough money to send their kids to college.

I recall saying, "Dick, what keeps you here?" He said, "When you sit here every day and see all these messages coming through, and realize how beleaguered this United States is in the world, you just have to stick with it."

Now, at that time, we dominated the world economically and militarily. Russia was largely confined to the European landmass. And the only other worry was a war brewing in Vietnam.

How different the world is today!

Today, the Soviets possess a powerful arsenal of nuclear offensive missiles that is capable of taking out our land-based deterrent force. In the past twenty years, the Soviets have built up a huge weapons industry capable of turning out an amazing profusion of new, highly-sophisticated conventional and nuclear weapons.

Consider for a moment that the Soviets have developed a new missile like our *Midgetman* and another similar to our MX, both of which are road- or rail-mobile. And the steady buildup in conventional weapons opposite NATO goes on and on. Today, the Soviets have twice as many troops and planes, three times as many tanks, and four times as many guns as we do on the NATO central front in Germany.

Perhaps most alarming, the Soviets have invested between fifteen and twenty years of research on their strategic defenses – something we have ignored to our peril. As you know, they have completed a ballistic missile defense system around Moscow. We have no comparable system. Despite this feverish effort to build their own strategic defenses, the Soviets loudly beat the propaganda drum in an effort to scuttle the President's effort to build a credible strategic defense of our own.

The Five-Year Plan which Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev is even now proposing to the 27th Party Congress will call for ambitious growth and modernization of critical high technology industries that support the Soviet armed forces.

Even at a time of economic difficulty and a reordering of domestic priorities, Soviet defense programs have been protected. Indeed, the current high level of military spending will continue over the past five years; the United States has only recently begun to catch up with Soviet weapons acquisition programs.

Now, this huge military force may never be used against the United States or its NATO allies – although the Soviets clearly are quite prepared to use it if they believe their homeland to be threatened. The larger threat may lie elsewhere. The Soviets' massive nuclear and conventional forces may be only a shield for Mother Russia, making it easier and less risky for the Soviets to intimidate weaker governments and to gobble up pieces of territory around the globe. We've seen this happen

over the last two decades – and we really shouldn't be surprised at what we've seen. Indeed, three generations of Soviet leaders have told us what they were going to do.

Back in 1961 – fully a quarter of a century ago – Nikita Khrushchev, then Premier of the Soviet Union, said that communism would win not by nuclear war or conventional war, but by "wars of national liberation." Since then, the Soviets have established beachheads throughout the Third World. Today they have client states in Cuba, Vietnam, Kampuchea, Angola, Ethiopia, South Yemen, Mozambique, Nicaragua, and Afghanistan. Many of these countries are located either near strategic choke points or in areas of almost certain regional conflict. Slowly, but surely, the Soviets are linking these geostrategic positions around the world by a growing logistic network.

Let me illustrate by describing the Soviet complex in the Caribbean, where with the Cubans and Nicaraguans they are working to build the first communist base on the American mainland.

The Soviets have, over the past twenty years, created in Cuba the second strongest military power in the Western Hemisphere. Only the U.S. has a larger military establishment. Especially over the last few years, the Soviets have given Cuba massive amounts of sophisticated weaponry. Much of this weaponry – plus Cuban manpower – serves Soviet ends in Africa. Yet another extension of this Cuban base is Nicaragua. The Cubans are building in Nicaragua one of Latin America's largest airports. When completed, this airfield will be able to handle the large Soviet bombers and reconnaissance aircraft which fly regularly from the Kokla Peninsula in the Soviet Arctic down past our east coast to Cuban airfields and eventually on to Angola. The Nicaraguan base will enable these same aircraft to fly along our west coast and into Pacific regions.

During the Brezhnev era, the Soviets announced the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine which says, in effect, "once communist, always communist." There is every indication that – despite his smiles and smooth manner – Gorbachev will apply that doctrine with renewed vigor. He will do this by shipping more weapons to Cuba for use against Jonas Savimbi in Angola and Arturo Cruz and his Contras in Nicaragua. He will supply Vietnam more weapons for suppression of resistance in Kampuchea. And there is every indication that he will redouble Soviet ef-

forts to crush the valiant *mujahideen* who have resisted communist aggression in Afghanistan for more than six years.

We recently witnessed a sudden and dramatic display of Gorbachev's application of the Brezhnev Doctrine in its South Yemen satrapy. As you may be aware, the Soviets succeeded in establishing a Marxist-Leninist regime in South Yemen in the early 1970s. They soon established a naval base and communications center there to support their operations in the Indian Ocean. Recently, Ali Nasser, President of South Yemen, began to draw away a little from the Soviets and seek some help elsewhere. Less than a month ago, hardline pro-Soviet elements in his government initiated a coup against him. The coup soon escalated into a bloody civil war between military and tribal elements loyal to President Ali Nasser and those of the hardline pro-Soviet camp.

Now the hardline Yemeni Vice President happened to be in Moscow "for consultations." The Soviets sat and watched the blood flow for a few days, while evacuating Soviet dependents from the country. Neighboring countries, North Yemen and Ethiopia, sought to help the South Yemen government. A few days later, it appeared that the pro-Soviet rebels were gaining the upper hand. Moscow thereupon warned both North Yemen and Ethiopia not to help the government forces. Moreover, Moscow ordered Soviet fliers, using MiG-21s given to the South Yemen government, to pound beleaguered government forces. And Soviet transport planes started bringing in additional weapons for the hardliners. To tie things up, the South Yemen Politburo then met – perhaps at Moscow's suggestion – and declared the Vice President, then sitting in Moscow, to be the country's new President.

Now this is not new. The Soviets removed two puppets in Afghanistan in 1979, and probably were behind the murder of Maurice Bishop of Grenada in 1983. The message in all these cases is clear: leaders of governments installed by Moscow who seek improved relations with the West do so at their peril.

Yet another worrisome problem for the U.S. government is the spread of small wars, many of which are waged by proxy. There are presently 42 conflicts raging that involve some four million people in wars, rebellions, or uprisings. Few of these conflicts have been formally declared. This ambiguity about hostilities places a special premium on effective intelligence.

The massive lethal power possessed by the great nations – and especially by the United States and the Soviet Union – has had a still inadequately understood effect upon warfare. Smaller nations are infinitely more free to undertake belligerent action than are the two muscle-bound giants. This does not mean that we and the Soviets are equally paralyzed, or that the propensities of smaller nations all too often involve the interest of the superpowers and, somewhat less often, the participation by a superpower by means short of war. How, where and why such indirect intervention occurs is a crucial difference between the Eastern bloc and the West. So, too, is the freedom or eagerness with which such indirect action occurs.

The Soviet Union has pressed to the hilt its use of proxy nations to carry out its wars abroad. It is perfectly content to rely on our fear of wider – especially nuclear – war to keep us largely paralyzed.

During the 1970s, the Soviets used this process of destabilization, subversion, and support of insurgencies to gain control of Vietnam, Angola, South Yemen, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Afghanistan, and Nicaragua. From these bases they threaten other nations in Central America, Asia, Africa, and a communist-led insurgence has gained control of a large portion of the Philippines.

Now, people around the world are no longer joining communist insurgencies. Rather, close to half a million people have taken up arms against oppressive regimes in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Angola, Ethiopia, Laos, and Nicaragua.

More importantly, over the last few years democracy has taken hold or made great progress in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Argentina, Brazil, Pakistan, and other countries.

Just in the past three weeks, one-man rule in Haiti and the Philippines has been replaced by governments committed to a democratic future. We can particularly rejoice in this weeks's development in the Philippines where the whole nation took part in an election – quite free, though marred by fraud – in which large numbers of people used non-violent popular expression to free themselves of two decades of martial law. Now we must help Haiti resist Cuban subversion, and the Aquino government deal with a sagging economy and communist insurgency in the Philippines.

In recent years we have seen the growth of a new form of war – terrorism – supported, if not spawned by, national states to provide the

Soviets their foreign policy. The Soviets and their friends have discovered in terrorism a low-cost, low-risk means of attacking democratic governments in Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America. Unfortunately, some victim nations have been noticeably reluctant to punish those who unleash terror on them.

One of the most difficult tasks for the intelligence in the years ahead will be to penetrate the small, fanatical groups which carry out the criminal acts of murder, robbery, bombing, and kidnapping. These groups are utterly without moral restraint, and hold even innocent people in complete contempt.

Terrorism today is more lethal and more widespread than it was ten or even five years ago. This is so because many groups now are state-supported, sponsored, and even directed in some cases. A "radical entente" consisting of Iran, Libya, North Korea, Cuba, and to some extent Syria, is making a great effort to undermine the influence of the United States and its allies in many parts of the globe. Some tin pot despots like Muammar Qadhafi of Libya see in terrorism a new gospel of violence that will result in fundamental political change in the Middle East and elsewhere.

The Soviet Union is not far in the background. The Soviets' well-documented role in international terrorism is to provide money and training, arms and explosives, passports and other documents, infiltration and escape routes, and are aided in this effort by their East European allies, notably East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria.

Yet another challenge to the West, and one that is not well recognized for its true importance, is the threat to our national economy from rapidly growing world indebtedness. It is here that the interdependence between industrial and less-developed countries is most apparent.

A decision was made a few years ago by a handful of men which led to a reduction in the price of oil — a price reduction by more than a third in less than a month. The life and death of nations and their economies now rests on how low that price falls. Some nations will benefit. Others will face social and economic chaos.

Only wise, and swift, government policies can provide the possibility of moderating these consequences. And policy formation, if not based on sound intelligence, will be partially blind.

A number of less-developed countries (LDCs) are now indebted to banks, governments, and international lending institutions by some \$850

billion. Now, it is less the debts themselves than it is the consequences which flow from their possible non-payment that holds the world economy in thrall.

It is unfortunate that many countries that now have enormous debts are those which only recently adopted democratic governmental forms. Political and social unrest in those countries can swiftly snuff out the gains made, and return those countries to authoritarian rule.

Indeed, the situation resembles that of the Weimar Republic in Germany which was saddled with enormous war reparations that it could not pay. Even when these huge debts were stretched out under various repayment schemes, Germany's debt continued to burgeon and led to unemployment and political extremism. The result was the collapse of democracy in Germany and the rise to power of a totalitarian regime. Today, the situation is equally dangerous — perhaps more so — because the economy is global, and banking and credit sources are closely interlinked.

Even as we speak, the total Third World debt stands at more than \$850 billion. Despite efforts at belt-tightening, rescheduling, and economic restructuring, the debt burden has significantly worsened since 1982. To be precise, the total LDC debt has increased by 43 percent in just over three years, and in the case of some smaller countries like Panama, the increase has been as much as 82 percent.

As the debts continue to mount up, the economies of debtor countries weaken, and result in lower living standards. This creates conditions ideal for serious political and social upheaval and the growth or spread of radical movements.

Political pressures on leaders of debt-ridden countries are growing daily. Mexican leaders are facing growing pressures to take unilateral action that could lead to debt repudiation within the next few weeks. If Mexico goes this route, Argentina and Peru might be tempted to follow. And, outside Latin America, many African and some Asian countries, like the Philippines, could follow suit.

Given these pressures, the debtor countries may be drawing closer to the point where they face the choice between debt repudiation and upheaval. Obviously, neither option is good for us.

To stop this potential landslide, new initiatives need to be considered. The truth is that the debtor countries are ripe for something like a reorganization under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Law to private corpora-

tions overburdened by debt. Such an action usually works out into a three-way split on handling the excessive load of debt. Applying this to world debt, the industrial countries would approve the write-off of some existing loans to troubled LDC debtors. International financial institutions – the IMF, the World Bank, and regional development banks – would assume responsibility for a second segment. The debtor countries themselves would continue to be responsible for the remainder. Moreover, enough cushion would have to be created in the global financial system to follow a resumption of economic growth in debtor countries.

The advantage of this option over current discussions on interest rates is that it deals with cause – large and growing principal – rather than the symptoms – interest payments. More importantly, it puts the initiative in our hands rather than the debtors'. If the debt situation is going to unravel in any case, the United States should be in the driver's seat.

So what does all this have to do with American intelligence?

The primary purpose of American intelligence is to avert war by alerting our leaders to any military dangers to our national security. The second role is to help the President and his top advisors frame sound policies needed to retain American strength against a myriad of political, economic, and even technological threats to this country.

We live in a world in which our interdependence increases faster than our understanding of the significance of that interdependence. We are increasingly dependent, for example, even for our vital sources of military strength on capabilities and resources which are diminishing here and increasing elsewhere. That interdependence involves manufacturing and trade, commodities and credit, communications and ideas, and vital resources. Sometimes, that interdependence has the effect of stimulating tensions between nations or increasing instability within them.

Intelligence is an indispensable tool that enables us to understand the consequences of this rapid movement to a profoundly changed and interdependent world. It enables us to devise policies which enhance our ability to shape our destiny.

Increasingly, there is a broad recognition that the intelligence community has a responsibility on behalf of the entire government for "scouting the future." Nowhere else in government is there the information, expertise, or resources to look across the broad spectrum of internation-

al political, economic, military, sociological, and demographic developments taking place, and to distill from them careful assessments of problems we will face now and past the year 2000.

There is a fundamental difference in the mission of intelligence in the Western democracies, and as it is practiced in the Soviet Union and other Marxist-Leninist states. In the West, intelligence is intended to understand broad trends so as to ensure international stability and to make change as orderly as possible. It is true that, upon occasion, its errors and biases tend toward the maintenance of the status quo.

Now in the Soviet Union, the KGB's role is almost the exact opposite. Its function at home is to suppress dissent and to root out dissenters. Indeed, its primary function is to ensure the continued rule of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Secondly, its function is to generate and exploit turbulence beyond Soviet borders. "The worse, the better" is an old Russian Nihilist maxim which aptly describes the thrust of Leninist intelligence activities in other countries. The Soviet intelligence apparatus is, by its very nature, the merchant of disorder, the provocateur, the magnifier of social, economic or political weakness or distress. It is the ultimate force for enhancing the possibility of external upheaval – and is careful only that the flames ignited do not singe the hands that throw them.

Ladies and gentlemen, in closing my address to you this evening, I wish to assure you that American intelligence will protect not only our nation's freedom, security, and stability, but enhance the security and stability of all democratic nations. This mission will increase in importance with each passing year.



