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*Tough, Unconventional, and Effective*

# An Interview With Former DDCI John N. McMahon

APPROVED FOR  
RELEASE DATE:  
28-Jun-2010

## Photo Of John N. McMahon

*In 1951, John McMahon joined the CIA as a GS-5 cable distribution clerk. When he retired 35 years later, he was Deputy Director of Central Intelligence (DDCI). Along the way, he walked out of the Junior Officer Training Course because he thought its exercises were silly; he crossed swords with Counterintelligence Staff chief James Angleton over the Francis Gary Powers incident; he fought the Air Force tooth and nail to retain a role for the Agency in the building and management of overhead systems; he had more than one tiff with DCI John McCone; and he held nearly every major managerial position in the Agency.*

*A brief summary of McMahon's career shows just how extraordinary it was. He was sent overseas in 1952 to work in the German Station's cable secretariat and then spent a second tour there as special assistant to the Chief of Station (COS) Gen. Lucian Truscott, and, later, to his replacement, Tracy Barnes. In 1959, he was assigned to the U-2 program, where he handled administrative matters for the pilots and the contractors that worked on the project. The next year, he was made Executive Officer of the Development Projects Division in the Directorate for Plans (DDP), which handled the U-2 and several other projects. (During McMahon's tenure there, the office was moved to the Directorate for Research, the forerunner of the Directorate of Science and Technology (DS&T), and renamed the Office of Special Activities.) In 1965, he was appointed Deputy Director of the Office of Special Projects, the predecessor to the current Office of Development and Engineering. In 1970, he was made Deputy Director of the Office of ELINT (later the Office of SIGINT Operations) and Director of the same office the following year. In 1973, DCI James Schlesinger picked McMahon to be chief of the Office of Technical Services. The next year, he was named Associate Deputy Director for Administration. In 1976, he was reassigned to become the Associate Deputy to the DCI for the Intelligence Community. Two years later, DCI Turner named him Deputy Director for Operations (DDO), and in 1981, DCI Casey tapped him to become Deputy Director for Intelligence. The following year, he became Executive Director, serving only a few months in that job before being named DDCI.*

*In the interview excerpts that follow, John McMahon shares some of his exploits and gives his views on a host of topics, from managing in the Agency, through relations with the Congress, to covert action. The interview was conducted on 4 December 1997 and 4 February 1998.*

## To Germany and the JOT Program

The knowledge of the Agency which I had in the 1940s came from my sister, who worked in OSS. She was a cryptanalyst and also instructed OSS agents, officers really, in their communications program for dropping behind the lines in Europe. When I was getting ready to graduate from Holy Cross, the Agency had a recruiter up there who talked to a number of people, some formally and some informally. That reacquainted me with the Agency, but I decided to go to law school. I came down to Georgetown Law and started school during the day, full time. It didn't take too long for me to realize that one must eat if one wanted to go to school, so I needed a job, and my sister, again, introduced me to Agency people in communications, since they worked nights, in fact worked 24 hours. So it was possible for me to go to school during the day and work in communications at night. My assignment was in cable distribution, where one would read the cable and route it to the different elements of the Agency that ought to have it. It was rather a routine job, but it did expose me to the side of the Agency that was far greater than just communications. [redacted]

Just as I was in the midst of my final exams for the semester, the Agency asked me if I would go to Germany [in 1952]. So I did not go back to school for the second semester but instead went into communications training and then over to Germany. The intent was that I would set up a--help set up--a cable dissemination function in the Eastern Europe (EE) Registry. The Agency, at that time, was in the process of pulling together the Office of Policy Coordination [responsible for covert action operations] and the Office of Special Operations [responsible for clandestine intelligence collection], and in Germany that manifested itself by pulling the headquarters of OSO into [redacted] and the headquarters of OPC from [redacted] into [redacted] and placing both those functions under Gen. Lucian Truscott. [redacted] headed up the OPC activities and [redacted] headed up the OSO activities. Instead of going into the cable dissemination function, I ended up in the signal center working with one-time pads in both encrypting and decrypting messages and working swing shifts. That was not my intention in life, nor was it the reason why I went to [redacted]. So I announced that I was resigning from the Agency and going home. Whereby a number of people verified that I was supposed to be in EE Division, and I was summarily transferred into EE Division, [Registry Branch, cable desk] from Commo. [redacted]

In EE, I went to work with [redacted] a case officer who was setting up the cable dissem function. At that time, [redacted] and Tom Polgar were special assistants down in the front office to General Truscott, and the others [redacted] were down there. Toward the end of my first year, I was asked to come back to [redacted] and work for [redacted] in Administration. When I returned to Germany, I briefly joined [redacted] in Admin, but it turned out that Polgar and [redacted] were returning home, so I was asked to go help General Truscott as his "gopher," so to speak. That I did, and within a year or so, Tracy Barnes replaced the General as COS Germany. I stayed on as Tracy's assistant. The integration of OPC and OSO, at that point, had been fairly well cemented and executed, and two Assistant COSs showed up, all working for Tracy Barnes. [redacted]

It was planned that I would go into the Junior Officer Training (JOT) program, as we called it in those days, later known as the Career Trainee program. There, I encountered a number of stumblingblocks. The first one started with a test that we were all given. We were told that, after we completed the test, we should set our papers on the front desk, and we could leave. I went through the test, went up and put my paper on the desk. The monitor told me to take my seat, and I said, "No, I've finished the test."

He said, "I still want you to take your seat," whereupon I just laughed and walked out. The next one was more formal, when I was assigned to a room with a number of psychologists in it, with three or four other JOT candidates. There was a pile of blocks of different sizes and shapes in the middle of a table. No one gave any instructions, and I guess the purpose of the routine was to see who was going to take charge and be the leader and decide how the blocks and shapes ought to be organized. It was amusing to watch people elbow each other out of the "leadership position." When the exercise was finished, we were then sent to different rooms and asked to write an evaluation of the other students taking the test. I allowed that I was not going to do that. I was told that I had to do it. So I wrote across the paper "I refuse to write an evaluation of people I meet under such absurd circumstances." I handed it in and walked out. That was the end of my JOT qualification program. There was a furor because a lot of people had sponsored me, like Tracy Barnes, and even [Deputy Director for Support] Red White was very tolerant of me. But the Office of Training decided that I was not worthy of the position of JOT candidate. [redacted]

I asked to see Matt Baird, who was the Director of Training, and I said that I had just one question for him. I said, "You know my background, you know what I've done thus far. If I came to you for a job, what would you do?" He said, "I would hire you." I wasn't sure what I was going to do, but Colonel White was then running the DDS [Deputy Directorate for Support], as we called it at that time. He said that he would give me a personal JOT course depending on where I wanted to end up in the Agency. I knew the relative size of the different organizations in the Agency. The DDS service, which soon afterwards was known as the MG service, for Admin people as opposed to Logistics or Security, had only [redacted] people in it. The DDO had more than [redacted] and I decided that I would rather be one of [redacted] than one of [redacted]. I told Colonel White that I would like to have his personalized JOT program, and he assigned me down to the Central Processing Branch, where we prepared our people for overseas travel. The interesting part of CPB, as it was known, was that it had all the elements of the administrative offices. It had logistics, security, personnel, obviously travel, and finance. So I would be exposed to all those functional elements of the administrative service. I went down there and became the deputy to a gentleman by the name of [redacted] [redacted]

## The U-2 Program

I held that job for a little less than a year, when Jim Cunningham and [redacted] who were working the U-2 program, asked me if I would come up to H Street and be the "case officer" to the U-2 pilots. This was a euphemism for handling all their administrative chores as well as babysitting the problems that their wives or families might have, since the U-2 program for the pilots at that time was a bachelor assignment. In addition to that function, I should handle the contracts for the technical representatives of the different companies which had hardware on the U-2. So, in January 1959, I joined the U-2 program, and I was in that job just about a year when I was asked to become the executive officer for the entire office. At that time, the office was responsible for not only the U-2 program but also the beginning of the CORONA program, the beginning of the OXCART program, and our conventional air operations, which were heavily committed in Southeast Asia and, to a lesser degree, in Africa. [redacted]

[redacted] That was right after we had moved from the DDP, under Dick Bissell, to the DDS&T as the Office of Special Activities. So I kind of backed into the S&T from the U-2 program. [redacted]

You may recall that when the U-2 was established, we anticipated that we would have about a year and a half to two years before the Soviets came up with a countermeasure, namely a surface-to-air

missile. We initially felt that their radars weren't very good and that, until they got the radars working well, the U-2 was safe. That position, while not loudly touted, was put to the test on the very first mission when the Soviets tracked us and, lo and behold, we realized that the Soviets really knew how to make radars. We were able to go from the first flight in July 1956 to May 1960, when Powers was shot down. When he was shot down, there was a considerable amount of confusion, [redacted]

[redacted]  
it led to the theory that Powers wasn't shot down but defected. That confused our ability to get him out or really conjure up support right away. [redacted]

We had a cover story where we would say nothing, and the pilots were told we would say nothing. We provided the pilots with the option of killing themselves. We told the pilot if he were captured he was to tell the Soviets that he worked for CIA. And then we said we want this to be a CIA mission, not a military mission, and further that he was to underestimate the altitude of the airplane. Well, true to form, as soon as something happened, the State Department said, "We have to come out with a story." We reminded them that we all agreed there would be no story; that we would remain silent. They instructed us to say that he was on a weather mission, which was the cover for a mission from Adana, Turkey. We pointed out that they tracked him by radar coming out of [redacted] but the State Department maintained that they had to save [redacted]. The fact that State Department came out with this cover story gave President Eisenhower a huge lie, and Khrushchev finally came out and said, "Ah ha! You lie! I have Gary Powers from the CIA." The whole world said, "So what?" and scoffed at it. The Soviets then realized they made a mistake and started calling him Captain Powers from the Pentagon to try and put the military spin on it. [redacted]

When the trial came out, there were two things that were not said that should have been said had Powers just revealed everything he knew, as Jim Angleton [chief of the Counterintelligence Staff] professed. They never mentioned the altitude of the airplane, and they never mentioned [redacted]

[redacted] We know that the Soviets would have jumped on that readily. So that convinced me that Powers followed our directions to the letter. [redacted]

That started a fight between myself and Angleton on what would happen with Powers. I urged an exchange, and I wrote a paper that [DDCI] General Cabell approved. Then I attended meetings where we tried to figure out, as a community, where to go next. Those meetings were usually at State. President Kennedy approved that we try and get Powers out. Our friends in the CI Staff did everything they could to torpedo that exchange. I can remember several officers in State speaking against the exchange. I pointed out that President Kennedy authorized the exchange, and I wanted the names of those that were against it. The objections disappeared. John McCone, who was the head of AEC when Powers was shot down, proclaimed then that he defected. So, as Director, he wasn't too happy eating those words. We finally effected the exchange, and the individual who met Powers at the bridge and brought him home was [redacted] [of the Office of Security]. [redacted]

What I did here was handle all the correspondence, much of it to the chagrin of Dave Murphy and Dick Helms. We had our own commo system, and I would send cables to [redacted] who was [redacted]. [redacted] handled our end in [redacted] and had a lot of contact with [Wolfgang] Vogel, the lawyer for the Russians on the exchange. After we managed to get Powers back, and after all the debriefing of Powers, it proved that he did exactly what he was told, and sure enough he was shot down. McCone didn't want to accept that. We had [redacted] a number of technicians, and Air Force experts agree he was shot down. But, at McCone's insistence, the Powers incident was brought

before a three-judge panel of Federal judges. They concluded that Powers was indeed a hero. Then McCone planned to have the general in charge of Air Force OSI [Office of Special Investigations] conduct a separate investigation. He just had that bit in his mouth, and he wouldn't let go. President Kennedy called McCone and told him to forget it. [redacted]

McCone got excited one day because two authors, [David] Wise was one and I forget the other name [Thomas Ross], but these two journalists had written a couple of books on intelligence. They just completed a book on the U-2 program. The book was coming out just about the time that word got out that Powers was going to write his own book. He had vetted this through the Agency, and everybody thought it was an OK idea, and we could censor it for classified information or whatever. I can remember McCone called me upstairs, and [Acting Director, Office of Special Activities] Jim Cunningham was with me. The authors had complained to Bobby Kennedy, who in turn called McCone, saying he thought that it was inappropriate for Powers to write a book. What they were really doing was making sure there was no competitor to Wise's book. McCone said he understood that Powers was writing a book, and he said, "Can't you convince him that that's not the thing to do?" or "Can't you handle it?" I said, "No, sir, my biggest problem is trying to convince him that your decision isn't political." Jim Cunningham said, "Jesus Christ, John, what are you doing?" McCone gave a wave, and I walked out. Powers wrote his book. It was too bad that Powers was not heralded as the hero that he was. He was a unique pilot; he was one of our best pilots. [redacted]

This is a flashback to when I had thought I had spent enough time as executive officer in the aircraft and reconnaissance business. I went to the ADDA, [redacted] who was technically the father of the career service that I never had. I asked him what the service might have in mind for me over the next year or so, and he said he wanted me to go to [redacted] as the deputy admin officer there. Having tasted the rarefied atmosphere of Executive Officer in the Development Projects Division and Office of Special Activities, I felt that that was quite a step down. That is, from a GS-17 position to a GS-13 position. When I complained to [redacted] about the wisdom of that selection, he said, "Look, John, frankly we don't know what you've been doing the last few years. You've been in all these special projects." My response was that that was not a problem for me, that was a problem for the Agency, and I thought the best thing I could do was to have no career service at all, since the one that I had didn't keep very good track of me. He allowed that I had to have some career service, but I countered that, since I did OK without it so far, I guess I could do OK without it in the future. Not having the career service had its drawbacks though, since there was no one looking out for my future. In fact, when it was suggested that I be promoted to a GS-16 by [DDS&T] Bud Wheelon, [redacted] who was the head of the DS&T career service, didn't want to do it because I really had no technical qualifications. Wheelon prevailed, however, and the DDS&T assumed career responsibility for me. [redacted]

## Fighting for the Overhead Systems

As you may recall, Dick Bissell ran the reconnaissance programs as special assistant to the DCI, who was then Allen Dulles. Bissell, from that assignment, was appointed DDP, which is now DDO, but he took those "recon" programs with him. It was only after the Bay of Pigs, as well as the shutdown of Powers, that the reconnaissance activities were migrated over to the DDR, Deputy Director for Research, under Pete Scoville. John McCone came in to replace Allen Dulles, and he placed the reconnaissance activities under Scoville. McCone was surprised that the Agency was in the reconnaissance business at all, so he gave our budget away to the Air Force, and that act created a large hassle between those of us who were trying to save the satellite programs for the Agency, and

the Air Force, which wanted to take them over. [redacted]

As part of the quid pro quo for McCone giving our budget to the Air Force, Brockway McMillan, the Air Force Assistant Secretary for Research and Development, was designated to run the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), but Scoville was to be named a co-equal. Brockway procrastinated on implementing such an arrangement, and Scoville was too meek to fight for it. Instead, he suggested that I be assigned to the NRO staff working under McMillan and the Air Force folks that were with him. But a general named Leo Geary convinced McMillan that if I went in to the NRO staff, I would be running it in a short time. So that assignment never came to fruition. Instead, I continued to fight the battle to maintain our reconnaissance role in spite of Scoville's willingness to let McMillan take the lead. [redacted]

Bud Wheelon then entered the scene and DDR became DS&T. Bud was to consolidate all science activities, including the scientific analysis activities, and he set up an office called FMSAC [Foreign Missile and Space Analysis Center] to analyze foreign missiles, principally through the telemetry that we collected. Bud was indeed a leader and immediately took up the challenge of stopping the erosion of the Agency's reconnaissance position. He not only fought to preserve our role in CORONA but also to branch out and establish follow-on satellite programs. With Bud's arrival, we were able to challenge the Air Force, and a rather dramatic series of actions unfolded which resulted in a great bitterness between the Air Force and the Agency. But the end result was a clear recognition and definition of the Agency's role in the current and future reconnaissance program. [redacted]

That settled that part, but things in Washington were still pretty heated. McMillan, since he controlled our funds, had literally starved us in doing much research, and at a meeting with McCone--he was still uneasy with the Agency's reconnaissance role, but we now had Bud Wheelon, who was very much a champion for it, breathing down his neck--at the meeting, McCone got rather upset with our activities. I sounded off that McMillan had lied to him repeatedly and had gone out and spent [redacted] on an improved version of [an overhead system] and he, even as DCI, didn't know it. [redacted]

McCone left the room in a huff. Gen. Pat Carter, who was the DDCI, said that he hoped that I was right. And I told him that I could prove it, and he said, "Please do." I went downstairs and typed up seven different incidents where McMillan had lied to McCone, or did things with McCone not knowing it. I gave them to Carter that night. Carter gave those seven items to McCone, and within two or three weeks McMillan was fired from the Air Force. I submit that there was a cause and effect. [redacted]

At any rate, that caused the DCI and the Deputy Secretary of Defense to address the entire reconnaissance program for the nation. Two panels were set up to determine what role the Agency would have in reconnaissance. I represented the Agency, and a general and colonel represented the Air Force. The second panel addressed technical issues associated with any division of labor. The end result was that the Agency was given the responsibility to develop an entire SIGINT system and, further, was given the responsibility to develop the camera system for the next-generation imaging satellite, and also responsibility for the film path and film spools that would be integrated into an Air Force reentry vehicle. [redacted]

At about that time, Bud Wheelon left the DDS&T for industry. Huntington Sheldon was appointed to carry the workload associated with the NRO, in lieu of the DDS&T, until a new DNRO could be appointed. Shortly, that happened in the name of Dr. Al Flax, who in addition to becoming the director of the NRO was the Air Force Assistant Secretary for R&D. Jim Reber, who was running the requirements committee for reconnaissance activities for the DCI, was appointed DDNRO. The

DDS&T set up an office known as the Office of Special Projects with John Crowley as Director and myself as Deputy Director. [redacted]

In looking back over the wrestling that had transpired with the Air Force, I'm reminded that, when Gen. Jack Ledford came in to take over the U-2 and OXCART programs, Crowley and I were thrashing around on the satellite side of the house. Ledford tried to establish an arrangement with the Air Force where the Air Force could take the Agency's satellite stuff, and he would keep the Agency's aircraft programs. That obviously led to a fair amount of discussion on our part with him, but I felt that I was given the ultimate tribute: when he retired, at his party at the Madison Hotel, he said the only reason why the Agency retained the satellite effort was because of John McMahon. I don't think his statement is all that true, but I was more than happy to take credit for it that night. [redacted]

## Three New Directors, Three New Jobs

Then our friend DCI Schlesinger came on the scene. He came in after Richard Helms left and, if you recall, we had a lot of rattling around in 1973. He called me one day and said that I should come over to his office at 9:30 a.m. I called [DDS&T] Carl Duckett to tell him and proceeded to the ADCIA's office. Schlesinger wanted to know if I had gotten my 18. I said, "Yes," and thanked him. He said, "I've got a job for you." I said, "What's that?" He said, "I want you to go down and run OTS" [Office of Technical Services]. I said, "I don't know anything about OTS." [redacted]

[redacted] He said, "I want you to go down there and run it anyway." And he said, "Make sure you know what's going on." He asked Duckett, "When would be a good time?" Carl said, "How about the first of the month?" Schlesinger said, "How about 10 a.m.?" I literally went out the door, got in Carl's car. We drove down to OTS and I walked in and said, "Hi, I'm your new leader." It was a very awkward occasion. [redacted]

I never cease to be amazed at the ingenuity of OTS people and how they can cause things to happen. There was no reason for me to have a night's sleep the two or so years that I was there, because we always had operations going on worldwide. [redacted]

[redacted] It was just fabulous, and they were dedicated employees. I can't speak highly enough for OTS, which does a vital job. [redacted]

Then from OTS, Bill Colby asked if I would become the Associate Deputy Director for Administration (ADDA) to Jack Blake. I thought it was rather amusing that after all these years I ended up as Chairman of the MG career service, which I had never really spent any time in. The job as ADDA was fascinating. Of course, Jack Blake was a sharp, fast-moving individual, and the DDA had a number of growing pains, particularly since the Agency was beginning to enter the world of technology through the Office of Communications and the Office of Information Services, that is, computers. The latter was eventually to be assigned to DS&T because of the technology rush in computers. In retrospect, I'm not so sure that it was a bright idea since computers and communications have really folded one into another in more recent years. [redacted]

It was not too long that the role as ADDA was engulfed in the Church/Pike [Congressional] investigations, and the Associate Deputy Directors in all Directorates formed a panel under the DDCI to address the questions, as well as the call for documentation, from the committees. It was always a hassle, and our meetings were filled with tension prompted more out of frustration with the



committees than with each other. I am confident, however, that without the ADD panel, the Agency would have been savaged by the Congressional committees. [redacted]

In a couple of years, George Bush entered the scene as DCI, and he was anxious to breath life into the Intelligence Community (IC) Staff and have the DCI play the role as the head of the IC and not just the head of CIA. He had selected Adm. Dan Murphy to be the Deputy DCI for the IC Staff, and he asked me to be Dan's deputy to represent the Agency's interests. Dan and I played a harmonious role in trying to help the DCI carry out his Community function. In spite of all the Executive Orders previously issued, we put together the first consolidated IC budget in the history of the nation. We really had to do some arm twisting with the members of the Community, the member agencies of the Community, not only to tell us about their programs, but also how much they were spending to perform them. It was only later, under Stan Turner's tenure, that the DCI really got ahold of the Community, thanks principally to the will and intervention of President Carter. [redacted]

A small, maybe meaningless anecdote, but one which convinced me of the beauty of having a DCI with close relationship to the President, occurred with the appointment of George Bush as DCI. I felt that the Agency would run the risk that usually attends a Presidential appointee assignment. However, I soon became a believer in the effectiveness of a close DCI/President tie. It occurred once when Dan Murphy was on a trip, and the Department of Defense and the State Department had been active in trying to chew up DCI prerogatives in the aftermath of the Church/Pike investigations. Those entities realized that the Agency was weakened considerably, and they were looking for any piece of the Agency's action that they might assume. The Pentagon had been active on this score, and I went into George Bush's office and complained to him about what the Pentagon was trying to do. He said, "Tell me one more time." And when I did, he picked up the phone and got ahold of Don Rumsfeld, who was then Secretary of Defense. When Rumsfeld came on, Bush had a few smalltalk words but then acknowledged that some of his people were trying to grab DCI responsibilities, and he asked if Rumsfeld could take care of it, or should both of them go see Jerry? Meaning President Ford. Rumsfeld allowed that he'd take care of it, and, indeed, the door slammed shut on the Pentagon's ventures shortly thereafter. It was then that I realized that having a DCI who can call the President by his first name was well worthy of the assignment. [redacted]

## DDO and DDI

Getting back to the subject of manpower, DCI Stan Turner has taken a bum wrap for the "reductions" within the Directorate of Operations (DO). I think it's important to set that record straight. You may recall when George Bush came into the Agency as DCI, he wanted his own Deputy Director for Operations (DDO). He moved Bill Nelson on, and Bill chose to leave, but as a departing gesture Bill left a memo for Bush telling him that the DO was [redacted] people fat, and that it should be cut. Bush never acted on that, but it was in the in-box when Stan Turner came onboard. Bill Wells, Nelson's replacement, was asked to follow up on that recommendation by Turner. Wells went through a variety of options, all looking at reduction. The question was how soon and how many. He came up with a formula that had a reduction of about [redacted] people in a three-year time frame. Turner took that recommendation and told Wells that he wanted that [redacted] reduction but that he wanted it in a two-year time frame. It was just about then that Wells left and I came onboard as DDO. It may be worthy to note that I was running the IC Staff in the summer of 1977, when Stan Turner asked me to take over the DO. I demurred, saying that he ought to go to a career DO officer to do that. He said, "Name some." I named [redacted] Turner interviewed both of them and, for some reason, he came back to me and said, "I want you to take this job." I had put him off a number of



times, and he finally said to me in December, "If you don't take the DDO job, then I will go outside." That forced me to acquiesce, because I felt that regardless of how poorly I might handle it, it would be a hell of a lot better than an outsider. [redacted]

I took the job and started the first part of January 1978 as the DDO. I was faced with this reduction going on in-place. I'll admit that the DO found ingenious ways to hire people who were on contract in various capacities, so that I don't think that we lost that much talent. I was content that the DO was on its way back and seemed to have the support of Congress. As things happened, a change of administrations, Reagan came in and so did Bill Casey as the DCI. Bill Casey and I wrestled a bit with some of his activism and role that he wanted the DO to play in a number of things. I usually had to argue, but I think always successfully, that we had certain ground rules to abide by. It wasn't a question really of Bill trying to skirt any law or procedure, it just wasn't something that he was familiar with. It took constant care to not let things get loose. I don't think that I was as aggressive on covert action as Casey would have liked me to be, because if it didn't make sense, or if it was beyond our means at least by my standpoint, I argued against it. I think Bill decided that it was time for him to get a more inspired activist in the DO, and that's when he asked me to take over the Directorate of Intelligence (DI). I chose to retire. He asked me not to do that. He said give the DI a shot for a year or so. He said that he was not happy with the DI and asked me to take a look at it and see what's wrong and fix it. I agreed to do that, and he immediately put Max Hugel in to replace me. Max fell quickly on his own sword and was replaced by John Stein. [redacted]

I went over to the DI and was puzzled by what made an analyst analyze what he was doing. I appreciated that we needed to have a reasonable balance between answering the mail on a daily basis and reacting to a crisis worldwide. I also realized there had to be a proper balance between answering the mail and yet permitting the analyst to do research so we could build up a database of understanding, so that when a crisis did occur, we had the basis of our research to fall back on to give us a point of reference. I also didn't appreciate what countries received what analysis. I decided to take a brute force approach to finding out what the DI was doing. Only then could I figure out what needed to be fixed. I got together with [redacted] and we set up basically a time card, a computer time card, where the analysts could and would fill out their card everyday as to what they were analyzing and how much time they spent on it. Then, when I overcame all the grumbling over that, I could run the cards through a computer and get a printout of what kind of analysis, whether it was economic or political or military, was being done on each country and for how much time. I was stunned to learn that here we were in 1981, and we had one man-year devoted to [redacted] At that point, I became convinced that we had to have a great deal of revamping. [redacted]

I also realized that if I ever asked the question about what was going on in any particular country, I would have to ask at least three different offices to get the input on economics, military, and political, and then I would have to do the integration, which didn't make any sense whatsoever. I decided that we had to reorganize and get away from the functional structure and go regionally so that we would have all of the players in one section working on a certain region and a certain country. That way we could put a military analyst and an economic analyst and a political analyst in the same room and focus on a particular country. That way, they could interchange ideas and hopefully that kind of synergism could produce fuller and better intelligence. [redacted]

When I arrived at this conclusion, I sounded out several former Deputy Directors for Intelligence (DDI) like Ray Cline, Bruce Clarke, and Jack Smith. I may be doing them a little bit of injustice, but in essence the response was that they felt that it was the way to go, but they weren't courageous enough to attempt it. It so happened that when I decided to do it, I talked to [DDCI] Bobby Inman and

Casey, and explained to them how I would go about it, and they endorsed it and said go with it. So it turned out that we were having an offsite [REDACTED] to discuss the budget needs for the different DI offices. I think we were still known as NFAC [National Foreign Assessment Center], but maybe we had changed to DI. The office chiefs were planning to tell me all their requirements and what they felt they needed, and we were going to argue in an open forum about what was required. I decided it would be an excellent forum to have the office directors tell me how they were going to organize to satisfy my desire to put them all together in a regional approach. So I went to the meeting, took the floor, and said that there are two ways to do this: I will tell you what I want done, and I can either tell you how I am going to do it, or be smart and ask you to tell me how to go about accomplishing it. I told them what it was I wanted, and I walked out the door. There was a lot of hooting and hollering. Some crashing of rice bowls, but sure enough the majority came through and told me how we ought to do it. That's how the reorganization took place. [REDACTED]

The Office of Economic Research, under [Maurice] Ernst, raised all kinds of hell. He went running down to the Department of Commerce. He went running to the NSC. He told them the sky was falling, and I got calls from various people. I only assured them that their intelligence would get better, not worse. And so we went forward with the reorganization, and I found it best if Ernst found a job as an NIO [National Intelligence Officer] for Economics, and I put him in it, and he seemed to be happy. Anyway, we went through with our reorganization, and I am confident that the intelligence did improve. We did ensure that there was proper research done and, further, that we had an integrated product whenever a paper was written, because it was written from a context of military, political, and economics, and not just one of those functions on their own. And to this day, as I found out quite recently, the DI still professed that it was something that was needed for a long time, and they were grateful that it was accomplished. [REDACTED]

After I reorganized the DI, Casey said he wanted someone to manage the Agency, and he would have Adm. Bobby Inman worry about the IC for him. In January 1982, I became the Executive Director, a job that had not been filled in a number of years. The role in managing the "day-to-day" activities of the Agency was fairly easy, since I had spent a considerable amount of time in all the Directorates, and I was fairly current on all the activities. It also was of great help to have the Community experience permitting the interface of the Agency to the Community, a rather familiar and knowledgeable chore for me. Bobby Inman was very helpful in letting me run the Agency as I saw fit. I was religious in keeping him informed of what I was doing but experienced no friction between him and myself relative to my new role. That job lasted six months, and, in June 1982, Inman retired, and I was appointed by President Reagan as DDCI, and Chuck Briggs took over the role of Executive Director. Chuck was a natural for the job, since he in turn had assignments and experience with a number of the Directorates. [REDACTED]

## DDCI

The transition to DDCI seemed natural from the Agency standpoint, but I soon realized that Casey had major problems with the Hill. As a result, I spent a good deal of time putting out fires that Casey lit on the Hill, or trying to smooth feathers which he didn't necessarily worry about ruffling. I was also able to pick up a good deal of the workload with the Community, but we had placed Admiral Burkhalter as head of the IC Staff, and he had great rapport with the directors of the various agencies within the Community. So he took a good load off our shoulders. Casey and I seemed to develop a work relationship that spanned the entire DCI's responsibilities, and we did not necessarily parcel out our work but took it as it came. He, of course, did a lot of traveling, which caused me to mind the store

quite a bit. And with his relations with Congress being so poor, I took a great deal of the Congressional hearings. When there were substantive representations to Congress, he and I both would prepare for the hearing and then if, for whatever reason, he decided not to take it, I was prepared for it. When we had NSPG [National Security Planning Group] meetings, normally both of us went. And on Cabinet meetings involving intelligence, or requiring intelligence input, either he or I would go and give an intelligence introduction before the meeting got underway. Of course, both of us went to the luncheons or meetings with Shultz [Secretary of State], Weinberger [Secretary of Defense], Clark, McFarlane, and Poindexter [National Security Advisers].

## On Congress

The Church and Pike Committees set a bad tone for Congressional oversight. Of course, they came into the Agency seeking resolution of the so-called abuses, and unfortunately Senator Church used the forum to enhance his presidential aspirations. And he made no secret about that. As a result, really the first baptism that the Agency had with Congressional oversight was one of an adversary on the loose within the Agency. The Agency had to take great measures to contain the security of Agency operations and its agents. Wisely, the Agency set up a panel of the Associate Deputy Directors to look at the requests from Congress, to see how the Church and Pike Committee staffers were handling themselves and try to modulate reasonableness in the approach. We weren't always successful, but I think that we did come forward to expose where the Agency went wrong, but we were judicious in assuring that we would protect our sensitive operations and personnel in the Agency, and in our agent corps. The whole process, and the publicity which the Church and Pike Committees used to denigrate the Agency, left an uneasy feeling relative to Congressional oversight.

At any rate, when the Congress decided to establish the select committees on intelligence, both in the House with the HPSCI [House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence] and in the Senate, the House panel was formed under Representative Eddie Boland from Massachusetts, and I know he called for a hearing on the DO in January 1978. It so happened that I took over the DO three weeks before that hearing was to take place. The natural reaction within the DO was to stiff them, principally because Congress didn't show any thought of being a reasonable oversight agent. I concluded that we had to develop a good relationship with Congress wherein they would trust us. Much to the chagrin of most, if not all, of the people in the DO, I decided that I would take that hearing even though I had been the DDO for only three weeks.

I was blessed with a pretty good feel for the DO through my tenure in OTS. I decided to use OTS as a vehicle to translate DO operations to Congress. I selected a number of the spy gadgets out of OTS, and I went down to Congress and described to them what it was like to be a case officer. Of course, this was a presumption that took a lot of guts, if not stupidity, to try to do it. I passed around the devices that are used in operations--miniature cameras, audio devices, small video cameras, even secret writing, and the famous rollover camera--and those gadgets mesmerized the Congressional members. They passed them one to another all around the room, and then they began to ask questions that went to the heart of what the DO was trying to do, and the complexity of running agent operations. In other words, they became novices in what the DO was all about. The whole tone of the hearing went from, "We're from Missouri," to the point where they appreciated the DO and realized that we had one hell of a chore before us. Eddie Boland was a fantastic leader in exploring with me at that hearing how we ran operations, and what was needed to do that, and what support could Congress give us. I think that hearing went a tremendous distance in setting a tone so when we went back to Congress they listened to us as a person who was telling them the truth.

My ground rules were, wherever I could, I would tell the truth. When I couldn't answer a question in order to protect a source, I told them that, and they respected that. To prove my point that Congress did a complete flipflop on questioning the DO to supporting the DO: it was manifested in the next budget cycle, when we were going through reductions and Admiral Turner, who was then DCI, was holding the DO to the reductions of personnel and positions that the DO had signed up to years before. Congress didn't like the thought that the DO was being cut. So I was called down and I was asked how many more positions did I need in the DO. I responded by telling the Boland Committee that the President's budget has asked for so many people. Boland said, "I don't care what the President asked for, I want to know what you need to get this country a reasonable Directorate of Operations." I told him I needed [REDACTED] more slots or something like that. Sure enough, the Boland Committee gave us those slots and fenced them so that the Director could not put them in any other Directorate. That to me was a great indicator that we had Congress on our side and that they were intent on making sure we had a viable operations entity. This was in 1978, when we were going through the budget cycle, which I guess commenced in about April, leading to the October budget process. Whether or not the Congress acted by October I don't know, but it was for that 1979 budget. [REDACTED]

As a corollary to Eddie Boland, the Senate was supportive in the same vein, even though it was Boland's HPSCI that took the point on this. The Senate followed suit. One of the key players was Pat Moynihan from New York. Pat's changed a few horses since then, but he was very supportive in helping the DO at that time. As years went by, from 1978 onward, I realized that Congress was a many splendored thing, but the key was not to sandbag them or surprise them with a major operation that went sour when they weren't given a hint that it was going on. Under the ground rules, we were obliged to brief Congress on any significant operation. Let me hasten at this point to say that I never found Congress to violate our confidence, except when we got to the Nicaragua program. Some members would get briefed on what we were doing, what we were up to, and run downstairs and have a press conference and indicate what was happening in Nicaragua. That's because they were dead set against the program. [REDACTED]

On the whole, I found Congress to be supportive of the Agency and the IC. The questions and concerns they did have were not outlandish, and often, when they would get mad at us, it would be because we missed telling them something which to us wasn't a big deal, but when it hit the fan we had not had that on their scope. [REDACTED]

I think that is essential. I'll give you one item that really ripped it with them, and I was surprised at first but in later years realized it was well justified. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

That opens the door to Bill Casey's role with Congress. Bill Casey had contempt for Congress. He always felt that they had slighted him in claiming that he was politicizing intelligence. They always questioned his motives, and, to an appreciable degree, I handled a lot of hearings in Congress that maybe the Director should have taken--except for his relationship that existed there. [REDACTED]

It proceeded to get worse, not better. I can remember when there was an issue over Casey's stock

holdings because he didn't have them in a trust. Congress started beating on him, proclaiming that he was exposed to sensitive intelligence, and he could use this intelligence for his own benefit, financially. It ticked Casey off that they would question his integrity. He took the position that he was not going to put his stocks in trust. This was aired over the public media, and it really exacerbated the ill will that was rapidly growing. I went to Casey and said, "Bill, does it make any difference to you?" He said, "Hell no, I have a guy up in New York that buys and sells, and I don't even know what he's doing. But those bastards are exposed to the same intelligence I get, and when they put their stocks in trust, I'll put mine!" Barry Goldwater wrote Casey a letter, and Casey's response was to tell him that: "You put your stocks in trust, I'll put mine." Goldwater went through the overhead and gave me a call. He just said, "You've got to solve this, because this thing is unraveling quickly. You've got to fix it." I talked to Rob Simmons, who was then the Staff Director, and told him that, if he could cool the Senators for a while, I'd work on Casey. I went to Bill and again said, "Bill, does it make any difference?" He said, "No." I said, "Then put it in trust." And he did.

If you remember during my confirmation hearing, the Senators urged me to use the technique that Bobby Inman used, and that was when Casey was not telling Congress the full story, he would bend down and pull up his socks. I don't think such a signal existed, but that's what they professed. The heat that they showed me during those confirmation hearings against Casey made me tell Bill that he was losing it in Congress, and he had to go down and placate them. It was essential, not for his ego, but for the well being of the Agency that we maintain a decent relationship. While he acquiesced to the wisdom of that, I don't think he ever went out of his way to stroke Congress at all.

Today, I think the Congress and the Agency have a good dialogue. They seem to be issue-oriented, as opposed to a frontal assault. It's OK to have problems over certain issues and have them talked out. With George Tenet's background in the Congress, I think that will aid the Agency and IC considerably in maintaining the right kind of dialogue and relationship.

The major sore point in the Agency's relations with Congress can quickly fester, and that's over Findings [a formal presidential intelligence directive, including contingency funding, for a specific covert action]. Usually Findings, I like to think, are a subtle articulation of our policy. That's not necessarily always the case. They often are a substitute for lack of policy or failed policy. Let me editorialize right here and say, to me, the Findings are the weakest link in the Agency's relationship, not only with the Congress, but also with how Congress portrays the Agency to the American people. I was always a great believer in making sure that Congress was involved in our Findings from the very start. If there was a crash, I wanted the oversight committees to be with us when that happened. It seemed that whenever the President would take advantage of the law, written by Congress, which permits him to direct the Agency to undertake a covert action and not tell Congress, we would always get in trouble. When the President invokes that law, and untoward things happen, Congress does not rise up and criticize the President, they rise up and fault the Agency. Even though what was done was totally legal by their own legislation. I have urged Congress in hearings a number of times to revoke that permissibility of not informing Congress, and insist that Congress be informed on all covert actions within 48 hours of the President's signature. I would do that to protect the Agency, because I feel there are only so many blows that the Agency can take on behalf of the Finding before bad things happen, whether it happens by reduction of personnel, or a reduction of funds going to the Agency.

I can't think of one Finding in my knowledgeable lifetime that we could not have told Congress about when it was signed. That goes to the hostage rescue at Desert One. No Congressman would publicly reveal that before it happened. We saw what happened on the Iran-Contra when we didn't advise

Congress, and not telling them permitted the NSC Staff to do the stupid things they did that led up to that debacle. It's also interesting to note that Findings do not necessarily demand partisan support. A great deal of them are bipartisan in nature, and I think that we had more Findings on the book under Jimmy Carter than we did under Ronald Reagan. Toward the end of my tenure as DDCI, the Senate began to hold joint hearings with the Secretary of State and the DCI, so that they could appreciate what was happening from a policy standpoint and what would be expected from a Finding in support of that policy the Agency would undertake. I don't find that at all bad. I think it does show that we work hand in glove with the Department, and we don't get "track two" started by using a Finding that runs contrary to what we're trying to do with our foreign policy.

Where that came to fruition a number of times was centered around Nicaragua. In fact, you recall the famous mining of the harbors. When we went forward with mining, we tried to get to the HPSCI and to the Senate Select Committee for Intelligence (SSCI). HPSCI held a hearing the end of January, and we advised them that we were mining three harbors. We tried to get to the SSCI, and they kept putting it off and putting it off, and finally, around 16 or 17 February, I told Senator Wallop that we had a Finding under way that we should advise the Senate about, and he said, "OK, we'll try and set that up." It was set up for the end of February. They were going to have a joint meeting with Casey and George Shultz. Shultz couldn't make it at the last minute, so they postponed it to, I believe, 8 March. We went in, and Casey and George Shultz talked about the Finding and how that complemented the actions we were trying to force in Nicaragua. Casey went back on 12 March and reiterated the mining of the harbors to the SSCI.

We received a letter shortly thereafter from Senator Pell, of Foreign Relations, saying we understand you are doing certain things, would you come tell us? And we did. In fact, I think that came by letter, and we answered it by letter. We also told the Appropriations Committee chairmen in both houses. No one said a word, except Senator Pat Leahy, who was against doing it. In the caucus with the SSCI, he objected to it, but they voted him down. I think the vote was 14-1. Then, in April, a foreign newspaper carried the story that CIA was mining the harbors in Nicaragua. That should have been no surprise because the Contras put out a NOTAM [notice to shipping and to aircraft] that they were mining the harbors. So it was out on the street. *The New York Times* wrote an editorial castigating Senator Moynihan, who had claimed he did not know anything about it. Barry Goldwater, who was chairman, wrote the Director a letter that said, literally, "I'm pissed off that you didn't tell us about this." So I went in to Casey and said, "What's going on?" It was a Friday, and he and I went down to see Senator Moynihan. We had an appointment at 6 p.m. We arrived there, and there was a team of TV photographers in Moynihan's office, so we cooled our heels, and they went out one door, and we were invited in the other. We said, "Senator," he was then Vice Chairman, "We don't understand your reaction or Barry's letter." Goldwater had gone off to a visit in Taiwan or someplace, and Moynihan said, "Well, you know how it is."

We never really got a crisp dialogue going on that; he seemed to pass it off. We found out that what he had just done was taped a show, which was aired the following Sunday, saying that he resigned as Vice Chairman of the SSCI because he could not trust CIA. Our employees were astounded that Casey and I allowed this to happen and didn't tell our good Senators. So I wrote a notice to all employees and sent it out to everyone hoping that it would leak. I never saw a copy of it anywhere in any of the tabloids that Washington calls newspapers. There was a great furor, and collective amnesia struck the SSCI, except for Pat Leahy, who said, "Yeah, we all knew about it, and I was against it, but I was the only one." Not one paper carried his denial.



## Iran and Afghanistan

When we got going on the Iran weapons sale, if that had been dumped on the Congressional platter, we would have never had the mess that we had afterwards with the diversion of funds. I think the best thing that happened on the Iran issue was when I insisted that the President sign a Finding retroactively. Stan Sporkin [General Counsel] wrote up the Finding, and the best I know it was signed. Poindexter [National Security Adviser] said it was signed, and he later destroyed it. Ollie North told our lawyers that it was signed and in his safe. The reason why our lawyers were involved is I asked them to get that copy from North, and he assured them that it was signed but it was in his safe. That, I think, saved President Reagan in the long run. The Agency was duped into supporting that which they never should have. [redacted]

I had retired before the Contra aspects came to the fore, although the movement and sale of TOWs was just getting started under the 22 January Finding in 1986. I think it's worthy of note how Iran got started and how the Agency was drawn in. There obviously had been some chatter with some Agency officials in Latin America Division and the Europe Division. On a Saturday morning in November, I went down to the DDO's office, as I usually did on a Saturday morning, in fact every morning, and I would get briefed on the "Blue Border" traffic that came in over night. Clair George [DDO] was away, so [redacted] [ADD0] was there, and [redacted] asked me if I had seen a certain cable. Of course, I hadn't. I looked at it. It was a cable from either Poindexter or McFarlane [redacted]

[redacted] It was out of context as far as I was concerned, but I said to [redacted] "Look, it's permitted for the Agency to send correspondence or cables on behalf of other government entities when a security issue is involved, but you make sure that the Agency doesn't get involved in any of this." Monday morning, when I went back down to the DDO, [redacted] said to me, "Do you know what those guys did?" And I said, "What guys?" And he said, "Poindexter and North." And I said, "What?" And he said, "They used our proprietary aircraft to ship oil supplies to Iran." I got somewhat heated and said, "I told you not to get involved with what those guys were doing!" He said, "We're not involved. They used our proprietary. They came to us, and I said we can't help but here's the number of a commercial airline." That's when I called up Stan Sporkin and told him I wanted a Finding to cover this flight, and I wanted it retroactive and everything else. It was a misstep that was rationalized that it's a proprietary therefore it's not the Agency. Of course, we were guilty on that, and that drew us into this mess created by the NSC Staff acting as an action agent instead of a staff. The rest is history, ad nauseam. [redacted]

With Iran behind us, I think it's appropriate to talk about the Afghanistan program. It was the kind of program that the Agency is best at, particularly when compared to Nicaragua. In Nicaragua, we, in essence, were trying to run a war. We, as an Agency, were no longer equipped, either with experience or resources, to run the kind of war that we ran in Laos and Southeast Asia. In Nicaragua, it got too much for us, and we had to recruit talent from outside--people who had no allegiance to the Agency and no sense of the Agency's mores, culture, and way of life. To these recruits, war was war and not necessarily by our kind of ground rules. That is why we ended up with this stupid comic book that some major took out of his trunk from the days when he was in Special Forces. The comic book instructed the Contras in how to go in and take over a village and dispense with the chief of police and the mayor and anyone else in authority in the community so that the people would be beholden to the Contras. Of course, that again was done without any review on the part of the Agency. It was done locally [redacted] without anybody in command knowing it, and shipped back. That was a major breakdown in discipline on the part of the Station and the people



down there who knew about it.

[Redacted]

The beauty of the Afghan program was that everybody was for it. That's because we were tying up Russians directly. We were no longer dealing with their surrogates, but we were taking the Russians on head to head through the Afghan rebels, or Freedom Fighters. Everybody liked that. What I became concerned about, and had expressed my concerns to McFarlane and some of the folks at the NSC, was that it became an end to itself, and we had no policy moving forward to try and seek a diplomatic resolution to the Afghan issue. It seemed like we were quite content to fight the Russians to the last drop of the Afghan rebels' blood. My pronouncements in this vein, and in this milieu, were not received gracefully. It seemed that no one was looking beyond getting the next shipment of weapons over there. Eventually, that did sort out, and all along we knew that, when the rebels would stop fighting the Russians, they would fight each other. That seems to be the case to this day in Afghanistan. It was a clean operation. The Agency held itself in check and handled it quite appropriately.

Our whole intent, at least early on, was to give the rebels Soviet weapons so that it would cut down on the logistic tail. If they needed more bullets or more rifles or whatever, they could acquire them simply by overrunning an Afghan Army garrison, and they could replenish themselves as they moved all around Afghanistan, and we would not have the logistic worry about resupply. You had to remember that everything that went into Afghanistan went in on a mule, horse, or on the backs of the rebels themselves.

[Redacted]

### Human Resources

The DO also had vital training programs to handle the new employees. We had a fairly aggressive Career Trainee (CT) program to get the sort of employee that we wanted. You must appreciate the

backdrop of this--this was the "me generation" coming into its own, and patriotism was no longer the focus of our approach in acquiring people. We had to have a rationale and a sales pitch for having people move in our direction. We were quite content that, once on board, they would come to the realization of the value and the need for the Agency, but to catch them cold off the campus was not an easy thing to do. I found that the new CTs were preoccupied with retirement benefits, which left me somewhat nonplused as to how we could stimulate them for different needs that we had in the Agency. We also found that more males were married, and that meant that we had to get smart on how to provide for a career for females. This prompted the Agency to begin to look closer at the value of female officers.

It's strange that the DO for years had made full use of wives in operational activities in some of our more hazardous Stations, because they were less prone to surveillance and had an ease of movement that the male case officer didn't have. But now we were reaching a stage where there were a number of professional women that we felt we could call upon to have a greater value in contributing to DO needs and objectives. This recognition of the value of the professional female officer made us look inward to those that we had on board and realize that they could play a vital role in our operational activities. This caused me to think of placing females in Chiefs of Base positions and also in COS positions, and we did that. It had a twofold effect: it worked as far as the Station was concerned, though maybe some of the liaison folks gulped a little over it; it also sent a signal to women, both inside and would-be recruits, that women could have a career path in operations that can result in the highest assignments that we have to offer. My experience in placing women overseas was gratifying because it worked well.

It opened the door for women to aspire to higher positions across the board in the DO, and I think that was not only fair but also healthy for the DO.

As I found the women to be extremely successful and helpful in the DO in operational jobs as opposed to just staff jobs, I found the same was true in DI. There were brilliant women in the DI who just cried out to be made office chiefs. So I made two of them office chiefs and one of them a deputy office chief. I never regretted it, and I can safely say neither has the DI. They knew their countries. They knew their regions. They knew how things worked in Washington and how analysis was fashioned, and I think they have done a great service to the Agency during their tenures.

One thing that I didn't mention was training. One would like to see a rule of thumb where 10 percent of your people are in training at any given time. I don't know who cited 10 percent as good, bad, or indifferent, but it is now folklore among a lot of management schools. There are some companies that will have as much as 20 percent of its people either in training or taking advanced courses so that they stay on the cutting edge of technology. I must say that, if you look at my file, you'll probably see that, compared to most employees, I didn't spend that much time in training. That was because I was "so important" I couldn't be freed up to have the benefit of training. But I remember going to the management course, career management course for middle managers, and the centerpiece of the course was the grid system for measuring how a person gauges the welfare of his people versus the need to get the mission accomplished. The perfect person is a 9, this is on a scale of 1 to 9; a person who's a 9 and worried about his people and 9 in accomplishing his mission. He is a great manager. So everyone tried his best to be a 9/9 as opposed to being a 9/1, where you get the job done and don't care about the people.

We had an exercise where the purpose was trying to prove that a group solution is always better than a single solution. In other words, if you get a group of people together they will come up with a better answer than one person by himself. We broke up into teams, and then we individually took a test.

After the test, it was set aside and the teams were pulled together and were given the same test. You would think that with such give and take that everybody would finally agree on the right solution to every question, and you'd come up with a far better score than what you did individually. That was true for all groups, except mine. In my group, there was one individual who had all the answers right individually, but our group didn't have all the answers right. I said to myself, how can one person have the answer and the group walk away from the test without the right answer. This is where it became very personal.

I went back and looked at our discussions and found that the people who were the noisiest and would elbow their way in saying here's the right solution, and would pound the table, would convince the others to agree to it. This one individual was a mathematician who was an analyst from FMSAC. A brilliant person who could analyze the trajectories just out of certain data points and could determine exactly what the missile was doing. He had a mind that was so abstract it was unbelievable. He had all the right answers, but he was shy. He sat there, and he didn't say "boo." He never offered an answer. He never even said, "No, you're wrong because of this." He just sat there and let us come up with the wrong answer. That taught me that to be a good boss, you can't let people who have the right answer sit quietly. You've got to draw out from them everything they have to offer to the group.

That convinced me to be an advocate for diversity. If you look at our Asian population, and this is particularly true in industry, on a whole you can't generalize or stereotype people, but on a whole Asians are reticent. They are quiet, they don't intrude, they are polite, and they don't like to argue with people. I found out in meetings where I had Asians I would draw them out. I would make them feel like their word was important because I wanted to milk our employees of everything they had to offer, and that's true of Hispanics, or blacks, or anybody else. If you have a group of people, make sure you listen to them. The Agency taught me that, which I have employed in my entire life, and that's why you saw women come into the DO and the DI.

In my 34-year career with the Agency, I never pushed for a job. It seemed that I was always drafted for my jobs. And my goals centered simply on a career in the Agency, but not one earmarked in one Directorate or the other. Once I got with the U-2 program, which, again, was back in 1959, things just seemed to flow and did prove that hard work and a lot of luck can permit an engaging career, with luck being the predominant factor. I never had an attribute that centered on expertise. I guess my greatest attribute was a willingness to take any job, whether I thought I was prepared for it or not. I know I was never afraid to take a risk. I felt that knowing what you were doing was a major portion of any activity. My managerial style was not to have any style at all, but rather to adapt my handling of people based on the needs of the individual. Some people need to be led all the way, all the time. Even talented people. And, if you're anxious to get the best of their talent, then give them what they need, namely leadership. On the other hand, some people simply like to be told the dimension of what is required of them, then let them go do it and be clever enough to have enough visibility into their efforts so you're not blindsided. Finally, others not only want to be led, but also to be pushed. Given the immense reservoir of talent available within the Agency, the demands of management are rather easy. I was always anxious to surround myself with smart, knowledgeable, talented people. In fact, I was always quite content to be the dumbest person in my office and not necessarily embarrassed or threatened by that.

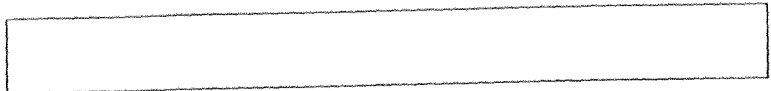
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An Interview With Former DDCI John N. McMahon



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