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REFLECTIONS FROM THE INTELLIGENCE WORLD

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REFLECTIONS FROM THE INTELLIGENCE WORLD

(11:00 a.m.)

MR. ERVIN: All right. Our next session, as you see, is titled "Reflections from the Intelligence World." As we all know, in the popular imagination intelligence is a science. The intelligence professionals always "get it right." In the real world, of course, intelligence is more an art. It's very difficult, impossible, in fact, to be right one hundred percent of the time. So we have a wonderful panel to discuss these intricacies of the intelligence world.

And moderating this session we're very pleased to have Gordon Corera who has been a security correspondent for BBC News since June 2004. He covers counterterrorism, counterproliferation, and international security issues for BBC TV, radio, and online. Gordon has also been a State Department correspondent based in Washington, and a US affairs analyst for BBC News. His latest book *Intercept: The Secret History of Computers and Spies* has just been released. With that, Gordon Corera.

MR. CORERA: Thank you very much, indeed. Thank you for joining us. Intelligence is rarely off our TV screens or out of the pages of the newspapers. Sometimes it's fiction like *The Night Manager* which I think is now running in the US. Sometimes it's fact. Sometimes the two get a little confused in the public mind, perhaps even that of policymakers. We're going to try and untangle all of that in the next 45 minutes.

It's certainly true there's more about intelligence agencies and their work that's in the public domain than in the past. That's also probably increased the scrutiny on them, the questions about how effective they are, about intelligence failures, questions about how secret, secret services need to be, and how far they've adapted to the modern world and the world of open source and big data. Big, difficult questions.

Fortunately we've got two very experienced intelligence professionals to try and answer them. John

Scarlett on my immediate left joined Britain's Secret Intelligence Service popularly known as MI6 in the 1970s, rose up to be the chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee, and then the chief of SIS from 2004 to 2009.

John McLaughlin joined the CIA in the '70s as well and rose up the analytic arm to become deputy director of intelligence, then acting director of CIA until 2004 when he retired, and is now at Johns Hopkins. John McLaughlin, let me start with you. When you hear phrases like "intelligence failure" bandied around, particularly over something like whether the intelligence community should have predicted the rise of ISIL-ISIS, what do you think of that? Do you think it's a fair criticism?

MR. McLAUGHLIN: I don't think it is a completely fair criticism. In the United States we have a -- something we say in the intelligence business which is there are only two kinds of outcomes -- policy successes and intelligence failures.

(Laughter)

MR. McLAUGHLIN: And it's I think very hard to judge success and failure in intelligence. Intelligence sometimes succeeds when nothing happens. I remember calling a State Department official in 2001 and saying, we know there's going to be an attack on an embassy. I can't -- I can tell you how we know that and therefore you should evacuate that embassy. And that happened and there was no attack and no one knows about that until this moment.

The other thing about intelligence success and failure I think is that intelligence is generally more successful in predicting capabilities than intentions, and lots of examples of that. On the specific question of ISIL, I guess one could challenge the premise. I mean it's often assumed that somehow people missed in the intelligence world the rise of ISIL. I don't know that that's actually true.

Sometimes when the rest of the world is surprised, the assumption is that intelligence was clueless too. It turns out -- I think that -- certainly I have confidence that my former colleagues certainly recognized the trends that were pointing to ISIL -- of course we did on the outside. People on the outside, myself and others were writing. They now have -- say, in 2013 they now have the largest safe haven they've ever had -- terrorists.

Generally the drawdown in Afghanistan and Iran has opened up a whole field of endeavor for them that we no longer have the same granular survey of. And the disaffection of the Sunnis was evident to everyone so that the preconditions were there. And I am confident my former colleagues were aware of that. I'll stop there. There's a lot more that can be said on that question.

MR. CORERA: John Scarlett, similar question -- you spent much of your career looking at Russia. Do you think there've been mistakes, failures in assessing, understanding Putin's intentions? We heard a lot about that this morning. Is that something you'd expect the intelligence community to be able to offer policymakers inside (inaudible)?

MR. SCARLETT: Well, in a way it picks up, and it's linked to what John has just been saying. And I'm just tempted to add that for obvious reasons in the intelligence world failures get learned about and you know about them. And then a vast majority of successes can't be known about and shouldn't be known about and it's just the way it is because intelligence is meant to be secret. In intelligence world secret is good, you know, in other worlds it's not.

On the -- and then the second thing is there's a tendency somehow or another to pick intelligence out as if it was some unique part of the overall decision-making and understanding sort of mechanism that one has looking at a whole range of global issues. And of course it's only part of it. And so there is a tendency in the case of Russia and Russian behavior and Russian actions in the last -- in the most recent period and obviously in Eastern

Europe and then in Syria and so on to talk about intelligence failures.

But -- well, first of all, you know, like John, I don't know and how could I know exactly what we have known and what we haven't known because I'm no longer serving and if I were serving I wouldn't be sitting here. The -- so we have to be saying that don't assume that one knows things when one doesn't. And secondly it goes much wider than intelligence in order to get your head around, say, a Russian policy or Russian decision-making.

It's a broad policy issues and analytical issue. A whole range of people have to understand that and get this right. And they will be -- at the end of the day, the decisions and the policies are set by policymakers. They're absolutely not set by the intelligence leaders and professionals. And the policymakers are influenced of course by what they read and what the intelligence knowledge can tell them. And so the expertise which is in that community could help to guide this --

MR. McLAUGHLIN: If I could add just a point to that. Intelligence successes are often woven into a successful policy in invincible ways. Let me give you two examples. Well, we look back at the Balkan Wars now as a regrettable chapter of human history. Things are still not perfect in the Balkans, but they're no longer fighting. That's seen as a policy success. I can tell you that intelligence was intimately involved in that although no one would ever cite that as an intelligence success necessarily.

SPEAKER: Right.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: The disarming of Libya in 2004 is -- when they gave up their nuclear, biological, and chemical programs is seen I think as a diplomatic success. But in truth it was preceded by about 6 months of intensive secret intelligence work that was mandated by the Prime Minister here and the President in the United States. Again, most people don't think of that as a big intelligence success. But it could not have happened without intel woven into the fabric of a successful

policy.

MR. CORERA: The public and perhaps policymakers think intelligence agencies should give them warning, prediction whether it's specific events like 9/11, whether it's big trends -- end of the Cold War, the Arab Spring. Is that realistic? Is that what intelligence agencies should be doing? And if so, have they been doing it successfully? Because often these events have taken us by surprise. Could they be predicted?

MR. SCARLETT: Well --

MR. McLAUGHLIN: Go ahead.

MR. SCARLETT: I mean you've made a division there between two, you know, types of issues and I think that's exactly right. Predicting precise events I mean clearly is an intelligence function. It's actually knowing precisely if you possibly can, you know, that there is going to be a terrorist attack and you want to -- if there is you want to know as much as you possibly can about where it's going to take place.

And there'd be a whole stream of some of (inaudible) obviously, most not -- of successes of that kind in recent years. And time and time again they go back to just good intelligence. The best form of protection against a terrorist attack is good intelligence. It's simple, you know, it -- that's quite precise. And then that can -- that of course can include, let's say, the sudden deployment of significant Russian military force to Syria.

You know, that's an event and of course that is something which intelligence can make a critical difference to understanding, anticipating, deter you might say deployment in Crimea. It could be a combination of knowledge of the policymaking and decision-making process in Moscow. And then also a study of movements on the ground which, you know, might not be quite so good as having, you know, the papers from the Kremlin.

But still can form a basis for analytical study

and conclusion and that's based on intelligence. That's one thing. Predicting, you know, the fall of the Soviet Union is a completely different question. Sometimes you know, I hear people say they predicted the fall of the Soviet Union. Personally I was around at the time, I was there, and I just don't believe it. If you hear anybody telling you that, don't believe. Nobody predicted before the Soviet Union --

SPEAKER: Or the Arab Spring.

MR. SCARLETT: -- which goes -- and then picking up the Arab Spring, well, did they? I don't think they really did. Again, quite a lot of involvement in that although I'd left the service by that time in terms of watching it starting and trying to understand it. Of course you know, I know people who were aware of the depth of unease and misunderstanding, the weakness, all the fragility in many of the security forces and so on.

But I don't think I've heard anybody really convincingly tell me that. And it's not an intelligence event. It was a wider policymaking understanding of the region, relationships with governments and much wider set of events than pure intelligence.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: Let me just add of course intelligence tries to predict -- tries to predict. But -- I don't know whether it was Einstein or Yogi Berra, but one of them said, prediction is very difficult especially about the future.

(Laughter)

MR. McLAUGHLIN: And so on that score what I would say is that sometimes intelligence predicts things quite accurately. A missile test, for example, again, capabilities, occasionally a terrorist attack. I'm thinking of getting on to the fact that Najibullah Zazi was about to attack the New York subway system and preventing that in advance. With terrorism in particular, you don't so much want to predict an attack, you want to catch it before it happens.

You want to disrupt it further down the chain, not at the point when they're striking the match or pressing the detonator. And so on terrorism in particular, I think, you know, both UK and the United States been pretty successful in terms of getting ahead of the terrorist game with obvious exceptions. The more interesting question might be how does intelligence do once an event occurs that hasn't been predicted. That's another subject.

MR. CORERA: What advice can it offer policymakers at that point you mean?

MR. McLAUGHLIN: That's often where intelligence has to step in. Countless examples of that. Let's take 9/11 as an example. You know, I often characterize 9/11 as not a strategic intelligence failure but certainly a tactical intelligence failure. Not strategic in the sense that -- you know, read the 9/11 commission report. The CIA was saying the lights were blinking red all summer long before 9/11. We could see a big attack coming, we didn't know the precise target or method. Once it happened though, we had teams on the ground in Afghanistan within 15 days.

MR. CORERA: Yeah.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: Once it happened, we had a plan on the President's desk within a week for what to do about it and that plan was largely followed. And you know, countless other examples of kind of responding to something very quickly in a way that allows policy to kind of get ahead of it.

MR. CORERA: One of the criticisms of the intelligence community after 9/11 was that it got too close to policymakers, too close to politicians.

SPEAKER: Yeah.

MR. CORERA: And of course that relates to Iraq and I'm sure with the Chilcot Inquiry, how much you can say about that, John Scarlett. But that's been a criticism about that period -- that the distance the -- an

intelligence agency needs to speak truth to power was somehow lost in that period, was sucked into that political maelstrom post 9/11.

MR. SCARLETT: Well, I can only for the UK. Of course I know that that criticism is there. And I don't accept it. I don't think it's true. And I think -- and time and time again if you look at the way the British intelligence services and community has performed or behaved, you know, over the years -- the last 20 years, let's say, it's a very strong feature of it that there's been an acute understanding of the dividing line between the policymaker and the decision maker and the intelligence world.

What is different and what I certainly saw change in my embarrassingly long career, and it's nice for you to say that I joined in 1970's. You didn't go into too much detail, which is part of the 1970's is that the intelligence of services and capabilities, just because of the knowledge and expertise and contribution that they can present. Of course drawn, certainly in the UK, you know, into the sort of center of the government and how they then behave in that center of government, you know, is the important issue but they're sort of centrally involved in the key meetings and National Security Council and all this sort of thing, in a way that simply wasn't true, when I started my career.

MR. CORERA: There are risks to that though, aren't there?

MR. SCARLETT: Of course there are, of course there are. There are big risks to it, but what you want, you have to not to be involved and for their capabilities not to be deployed in support in an attempt to get government policy right, and if mistakes are made and things have gotten wrong, then of course they have to take the weight of that too. But it's an interesting, it's a very interesting feature and you can see it happen over the decades, from the sort of 80s onwards.

MR. CORERA: John Laughlin, CIA is sometimes been criticized as being too close, to the White House.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: Yeah, intelligence has to walk a fine line here. In other words, on the one hand you are a member of the team, particularly in a conflict in a war you want your side to win too. So you've got to be a member of the team, on the other hand you have to be the one who walks into the room, we say skunk at the picnic and says "By the way it isn't working." And as someone who's done that many times, let's say, used the phrase everyone uses, "Spoken truth to power" sometimes power doesn't like it, but you still have to do it.

I don't accept the judgment that we were somehow too close and I can give you just as one example the fact that the CIA successfully resisted a strong commitment, strong view on the part of many policy makers, during that very period that somehow Saddam had been behind 9/11, we said "No, he wasn't, there was no operational connection, no control that's not on" You can read various commission reports documenting that both the British and the American services took that position and held it against considerable conviction on the part of many policy makers.

Now that said, of course intelligence around the world was wrong about Iraq WMD and that was a consequential failure, and you know, we can talk more about that. We learned a lot from it. I mean, we learned a lot from that intelligence really went to school on that failure, intensely, and I would say many things that have happened successfully since then, including locating Bin Laden and taking him down as Admiral McRaven's people did in 2011, was in part a result, and a large part a result of studying what had gone wrong years earlier.

Then additionally I would say on that point we go back and look you know intelligence success and failures, it's a tricky thing. In that very period when we got Iraq WMD wrong, we got the Korean efforts to cheat on plutonium exactly right.

We discovered in 2002, I remember doing the briefing that North Korea was acquiring materials that appeared to be for uranium enrichment at a moment when they said they were out of that business, out of their

enrichment business for plutonium, and we didn't know where this was happening. We didn't know how far along it was, but we had the conviction on that. It turned out to be right and that was the same kind of issue, so sometimes when intelligence is failing at one place, it's succeeding in another.

If I could use a sports metaphor from the United States.

MR. CORERA: Sure, we'll manage.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: I don't know how many people here are into basketball and baseball, the Americans are. In basketball to succeed, if you're a foul shooter, you've got to hit about 85% of your shots, okay.

In baseball, to succeed, you can get into the all-star game with a 300 batting average, so where do you want intelligence to be on that spectrum of difficulty? Over toward 90%, of course that's where we try to be, but remember in intelligence we are dealing all the time with incomplete information, opponents who are trying to deceive you, and deny you that information and pressure to come to conclusions, it's a tough business.

MR. SCARLETT: If I can just again, pick out an area where in my own personal experience or career experience, I would say, you know, is a great potential strength of the particular work, possibilities of good intelligence, and what can mark it out if you get it right, is the ability to sort of see the world and to see issues through the eyes of the other side or get inside the brain of the other side. I tended to think that above all else that is, you know, that that is the top target for successful intelligence work, and somehow it's reasonable to see that as something that intelligence can do that maybe is more difficult for other people, decision makers, policy makers and so on to do, and we were talking earlier at some length about various issues around Russia, and that seems to me, now and as it was in the past a very good example of what I'm just talking about.

MR. CORERA: And that's something that in your mind only secret intelligence can do, get inside the mind or the intentions of someone like Vladimir Putin.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: No, it's not only, definitely not only secret intelligence, but clearly it can help. If you -- because I think it's reasonable to say that policy makers in the Kremlin make some effort to -- they're not exactly completely open-minded and transparent and they are making some effort to conceal, you know, what they're deciding or what they're doing and so on and get surprised and all the rest of it, and to mislead people and what have you. And some of the (inaudible) do that but it is a particular feature of the policy makers there, and so clearly sometimes, really to cut through it all, you've got to get to something that only secret intelligence can produce, and it may be pretty limited.

It may be quite small, it may be only a small percentage of the total information available, good information available but I've seen time and time again, examples of where just that little -- that one crack can make a fundamental difference to your understanding, you know, of a particular problem. That in essence is the role of a true traditional secret intelligence, and I really think that, you know, most people from the profession would agree with that.

MR. CORERA: There is debate about how much the intelligence community has adapted to a new world of open source information, of big data, of the ability to take Twitter feeds and look at sentiment analysis and look at how maybe a population is thinking and changing or use it for predictions of unrest even in places, for some of the traditional functions, which we thought of as being intelligence community and secret intelligence functions.

Do you think that Britain and US have adapted to this new world. Do you think that if it does offer these opportunities, which I think a lot of people think it might in the future, of changing, if you like, the way intelligence analysis is done?

MR. McLAUGHLIN: You know, the way I would think about that is that it's a work in progress. There is no question that intelligence understands the importance of this new technology, social media and all that it implies for change in the world, but I say it's a work in progress, without of course being deeply involved in it personally now, but from what I know, I think what we are seeing is a gradual adaptation to this, and an awareness.

Here's the key point, intelligence is aware first that this is something you need to be on top of. I did do a study for the -- after leaving government -- for the Director of National Intelligence, in 2010 of something that did surprise the United States, which was the failed so-called Christmas bomber, underwear bomber, or whatever you want to call it, Abdulmutallab, who almost blew up a plane over Detroit, didn't, but the attempt surprised us.

And when we would look back at that and this report has just been partially declassified on the web, one of the things we found was volume, just volume was a problem. In other words if you could find the ten reports that you could lay down in a row, you would read them and say "Other, okay there's something that's going to happen here." But they were lost in thousands of documents, because of the explosion of information and the -- so awareness of things like that is causing the American intelligence community, to -- the Director of National Intelligence right now, has two of his key agencies working on essentially a new information architecture for the intelligence community that would, the phrase we use is that would cause data to speak to data.

In other words, at present you've got to dig through it. You want the data to speak to data and deliver you the kind of things that Amazon delivers you when you order a book or Google delivers you when you do a search. This is difficult in intelligence, because you are kludging together databases from about 28 to 30 different agencies of different classification levels in an environment that you're always in of counterintelligence, where people are trying to penetrate

you and discover these things. Or in the case of Edward Snowden, leak them, so again, tough business.

MR. SCARLETT: Well, I'm a bit involved in this, and there is no question about the intelligence communities are acutely alert to this issue. Certainly that's true in the UK and in the US, and there is a major reorganization going on at the present time, you know, to respond to this and to make sure that the huge machine is adaptive and responsive to it.

Of course, almost by definition it's not a question of secrecy. I know, by definition it's not, but as John said, it is fundamentally volume and then, therefore; related to that is analytical capability and how do you adapt analytical capability, which is being developed in other contexts to this complete transformation in volume, both to sort of get the alerts so that you know -- you know it when you need to know it and it is out there somewhere, and obviously it makes sense that you know about it, and then of course what are the analytical capabilities that are there and potential that's there, given -- but then you've got the problem of the big data.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: Can I just add a point to that, a broader point on this point that John just made. Here's the dilemma for intelligence, your technology always has to be ahead of what's available publically, because the adversary always has what's available publically. So, you know, back in the late 50's, someone has the bright idea of "what if we could take photographs from space?" I say that to students today and they say "Film, what's that?"

Well, of course, now we have Google Earth, it's no longer novel, but back then we were way ahead and I will give you other examples from the 70's of things that kind of looked like cellphones back then before anyone could imagine such a thing that's also on the web these days.

So you can imagine, you've always -- and this task has become harder in the era of Silicon Valley, when so much sophisticated technology is being developed in

garages around the world and instantly marketed, so we are not in the era when intelligence just gave a bunch of money to a big defense contractor and said "Build me something." We are in a much more, chaotic -- _

MR. CORERA: To some extent, other countries even individuals can acquire some of the high end, intelligence capabilities, which were the preserve of a state --

MR. McLAUGHLIN: Look at what Jim Comey said last night.

MR. SCARLETT: Well, that absolutely.

MR. CORERA: Whether its encryption, whether its satellite photography, whether it's, you know, data analysis. The change in intelligence --

MR. McLAUGHLIN: So you can imagine that today, intelligence must be pretty good to be ahead of that.

MR. CORERA: Yeah, how far ahead I suppose is the question and how important is human intelligence in that because in this world of data, some people would say data, (inaudible) are now the giants in terms of the intelligence world, in terms of size and budget, always true but the dominance of data, isn't human intelligence still got a lot?

MR. McLAUGHLIN: Well, I've got a standard answer to this one, because I am the Chairman of the Trustees of Bletchley Park, okay, and in 1945 that's exactly what people said, you know, that now the incredible success of the intelligence and the intercept and the communications achievement out of what was done there means that that's the future and human intelligence is irrelevant, that was 70 years ago. And my career started quite some time after that and, you know, it was in human intelligence and absolute time and time again, one sees where it makes a difference.

I mean, just quoting two obvious examples, if you, I mean, you can have, you can deploy an enormous

amount of technology, around let's say, studying terrorist activities, studying movements, studying grouping, studying associations, finance and so on and that can be a fundamental basis, which can begin to identify the target that you've really got to worry about and so on and group identification, but if you've got a human source inside the group that is actually plotting the attack that's better. And then indeed you can deploy and I've seen it happen many times, all the technology to support the investigation, which comes because you know where to look in the first place.

MR. CORERA: It's the integration of the human and the electronic which is --

MR. McLAUGHLIN: Of course.

MR. SCARLETT: We call it tipping and cueing, something tips you, something cues you to go somewhere else, and human intelligence is essential in that whole process. It gets you under the roof, so in 2007, if someone sees from space a facility out in the Syrian desert that's all you can see, a building. Look online, a CIA video has been declassified on this issue, Syria 2007. Funny in that video there are photographs of something on the ground.

When we did that you didn't do that from space, but time and time again, intelligence problems are solved not by a unique single source but by the integration of all of these sources, and human intelligence, has been there since Biblical times and always will be.

MR. CORERA: Yeah, if I may -- one slightly historical point here as well, sorry to be a bit of a historian, the final point. Another example of that is the enormous technological and sophisticated effort for its time was put up around NATO operations and so on, in the 1980's you know, in Central Europe and so on. And we thought we had really a fundamentally good understanding of Warsaw Pact maneuvers and capabilities and intentions and attitudes, but when it was spotted that something odd was happening in late 1983, in response to a NATO command and control exercise, famously now for those who watch

Deutschland 83, Able Archer, what told us actually what was behind that behavior on the Soviet and Warsaw pact side was straightforward, old fashioned, human intelligence reporting.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: Or the Cuban missile crisis, everyone thinks of the photographs, how we interpreted the photographs was largely through the testimony of Oleg Penkovsky, he told us more or less what to look for in those photographs to understand that this was Soviet medium range missile facility.

MR. CORERA: Penkovsky debriefed in Marble Arch, just up the road actually, by joint CIA SIS team okay, I think we are heading towards questions. Now, I've got a few more, but I think I am going to let other people ask them as well, go on here at the front.

SPEAKER: So, of course, intelligence involves both collection and analysis, and you talked about how there's so much data coming in, so perhaps we've solved much of the collection issue, but you know, after 9/11, we had so many new analysts, who had no context and understanding, so how do you get them up to speed quickly enough that they can take all this information and pick out what's important and pick out what's different that they should be thinking about, because they just have no context and experience.

They're really smart, but they don't really have the history that helps them understand what's really important and what the meaning is and how to interpret it?

MR. McLAUGHLIN: Train them, we created a school in 2000 to do exactly that, it's still going and getting better, it took a while but you train them in basically thinking about thinking. So, you take them through techniques like structured brain storming, quantitative analysis, Delphi analysis, Red teaming, Devil's advocacy, in other words how do you think about, how do you check your own thinking? How do you challenge your assumptions? I had a sign hanging in my office, which sounds vaguely menacing, so anyone in my office could see it.

It said "Subvert the dominant paradigm," which meant, don't accept what you see, what you're thinking. You just push and push and push, but this is hard too, it's very hard because we interpret things as through a prism, all of us, and you just have to fight it all the time.

MR. SCARLETT: And it's not true that we have solved the collection problem.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: Yeah, that's true.

MR. CORERA: Okay, and we have one question over here.

MR. MALERITAS: Thank you, Tomas Maleritas (phonetic) Aco Worldwide (phonetic). How do you create incentives for very secretive institutions to cooperate between each other, between different countries, which as we've seen with the terrorist attack in Paris and Brussels, apparently was a major issue with the lack of communication. And I have a second question, which is you are reporting to the political leadership of your respective countries, how sometimes, would you consider communicating to the outside world on some of the issues you consider that are important and when you see that the leadership of the country is not listening to you, is this happening sometimes.

MR. CORERA: Two very interesting questions.

SPEAKER: I've never heard about it, of course.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: Well, on the collaboration point, I mean, you could be careful here actually. It's become an accepted truth in the aftermath of Brussels and Paris and so on that there isn't good enough collaboration. It's not as simple as that there is a huge amount of collaboration in different fora and in different contexts, but clearly, you know, it could ideally in an ideal world be better.

It's easy to make judgements about that from the outside, but you know, if you are, if you have collected

and hold very sensitive, very secret information, of course you're careful about who you share it with and who knows about it, it's a very sophisticated business. You can't just spread it around without, okay you can't just dare to share that's one of the lessons.

Of course, one of the other lessons of recent years is complicated area it's fast moving and we have to adapt to the threat that we see it, and quite clearly in that particular case of counter terrorism work, in the -- lets say, in the EU and Schengen area and so on, this is fast moving stuff and it has to adapt. You know that is clear to me.

MR. CORERA: The old five eyes model doesn't really work anymore, does it. You can share very closely in the five eyes and it's just a little.

MR. SCARLETT: But it's never, but people talk about the five eyes, since it became known after Snowden that the five eyes existed. You know, everybody talks about that and suddenly, you know, I kept getting people coming up and applying to join, I never know at a club it just had so many potential members. But at the end of the day it's five eyes is five eyes that's it but it's vastly more complicated than that.

I wrote, you know, and usually so I can quote it, and not that the other month in which I had mentioned the point that when I was about to leave my service and so on, I was looking back at other things, one of the questions I asked, you know, my colleagues was in the five years plus when I had been head of the service, from how many services around the world, not just in Europe or the five eyes, had you received intelligence reporting, of direct relevance to operational relevance to counter terrorist investigations, and the answer was 60.

Sixty separate services, not countries from around the world and I quote that just to make the point that this work is far more complicated than the five eyes. You know, five eyes is a fundamentally important thing but I'm getting fed up with hearing about it, because its leading to a misunderstanding of what really happens.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: I will take the second part of your question, although just on the first part, I will say the incentive for us in the United States, say what John said as well, the myth that we weren't talking to each other before 9/11, we certainly could've done better but we weren't at war with each other as often portrayed. But after 9/11, the incentive was that 9/11 happened.

In other words, sharing information, intelligence information involves a risk that you will compromise and lose some of it, because you're putting it out more broadly. We simply calculated that the risk of not sharing it was greater than the risk of sharing it and I think that was the right calculation, so we really worked this in the States.

On your second question, I once had a senator ask me a testimony when he knew that we disagreed with the Bush administration on a particular issue, "Why don't you call a press conference and tell the world you disagree?" Well, it's a fair question, but what I said was "It's my duty to tell the official that I disagree." And to do it in writing, which I did and that was reasonably effective.

If you're at the point where you want to call a press conference, I think you're ready to resign and that's a fair outcome as well.

MR. SCARLETT: I entirely agree with that. I was about to say exactly the same thing. If you feel that strongly and the problem is that big, you know, really it's hard to think exactly of when that might happen, then you resign but you do owe it to power. Let's use that term to be very clear, when you disagree and to say, you can have that.

Here's what we used to say "You can have that opinion, you have a brain too. You're reading all the reporting but you cannot say that that's the opinion of the intelligence community."

MR. CORERA: Okay, we've got time for a couple more quick questions, one?

MR. THOMAS: Thank you very much, I'm Crawford Thomas (phonetic), I'm from Clydesdale Bank. I've got a background in human intelligence from UK armed forces, and I was going to ask about something that was touched on about the FBI, you mentioned yesterday, the director about human intelligence and having people on the ground and maybe bobbies on the street and things like that we can influence in that, but I would like to talk or ask the question about the skunk at the picnic, really and the dodgy dossier and understanding, the language of understanding within intelligence that I don't think is understood by sometimes the decision maker.

So it's a gift within the intelligent community that we understand that language saying likely, probable, blah, blah, blah, and understanding those percentages, but the decision maker sometimes doesn't, but do you think that this could've been worded better for 45 minutes sort of WMD?

MR. McLAUGHLIN: Well, another point about getting language right and understanding the difference between language, which is suitable for experienced, policy makers and language which is suitable for the media, is of course, is clearly is a good one. You know, I'm not sure, really it's easy to sort of go beyond that really, but I mean the basic point clearly language is important, yeah, yeah.

MR. CORERA: And one of the lessons of Iraq I suppose was the public understanding of that language and the ability to, if you're going to put intelligence in the public domain, you think quite carefully about it.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: One of the lessons learned.

MR. CORERA: One of the big lessons learned, because it's happening more and more. I mean, you saw it with the, I thought it was interesting with the Syrian chemical weapons issue. You know, there was this pressure. We want to see the intelligence. The public now expects to know what intelligence lies behind a

decision, when the administration was considering a strike, some of it came out.

So there's an expectation now from the public to see almost, not even assessed intelligence, sometimes raw intelligence and to know it, do you mean that's healthy is it realistic?

MR. McLAUGHLIN: It's, as John said on a number of things, complicated. Up to a point it's realistic, but again, you know, intelligence has to earn public trust and the Iraq issue set it back considerably on both sides of the Atlantic, and looking back at it, we could do an excavation of that endlessly here, but the point was going to an earlier point that someone made about language. When we look back, one of the problems was, not expressing uncertainty as clearly as we should have, but its more complicated than that because, in our writing on this, there was maybe 10 percent of it was dissents, which someone went past a lot of people, who should've seen that it was not as solid as it could've been interpreted.

So I don't know the answer to that question about whether the -- how much the public should see. I think that obviously the dilemma is if you put it all out there, you sometimes lose the --

MR. CORERA: Lose the edge.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: You lose the edge, and if you don't put it out there, you probably struggle with public confidence on issues of controversy.

MR. SCARLETT: I think that's right and obviously a lesson from all that period is that how you publish and talk about publically intelligence. You know, these very careful thought, but I don't actually accept that there is a great public demand to see the intelligence -- and the media said it of course, and some politicians and so on say that I've never been my experience, and the great British public thinks that and there is a great deal of evidence to show that the Great British public understands perfectly well that intelligence is supposed to stay secret.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: This is also why what we call Congressional oversight is so important in the United States, because if you have trust in the Congress.

MR. SCARLETT: Pause.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: We have two committees that are entitled to see everything, and they do. Increasingly they see everything, and that is how we are connected to the public, so when that relationship is healthy, I think it cancels out a lot of this issue, and its healthy sometimes and sometimes it isn't. Right now, it's probably somewhere in between but that's why that is so important to get that right.

MR. SCARLETT: They sometimes forget they've seen it, I've noticed.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: Yes, there's a little of that going on.

MR. CORERA: One more question here, at the back.

SPEAKER: (inaudible)

MR. CORERA: Yeah, so I think that's an interesting point that whether the public, whether officials have the sufficient understanding and how long it takes officials to learn that and then, if that goes to the point we had earlier about public understanding as well. How much the public grasps about intelligence, how much they need to know, how much they appreciate the need for it to remain secret in some cases?

MR. SCARLETT: I would only say to that that over the last 20 plus years, there's been a vast increase in the UK, in the amount of information, which is available to the public, to the media, whatever about the intelligence community, the intelligence services, what they do, why they do it and so on.

MR. CORERA: And John, do you think ministers as well and officials have the understanding to deal with this stuff?

MR. SCARLETT: Well, it depends on you know, their background, but clearly if you have a policy making machine and a government machine, which is properly structured and has a, you know, good career and training development and so on, then it by definition, I know this is something we have been doing for hundreds of years. You know, by definition, by the time they reach the decision making level, they should be capable of managing that I mean obviously it can be more typical of politicians, because they might come suddenly from nowhere and then, there is a you know, big education and briefing exercise involved, but then the longer they're in government, the less that becomes an issue.

MR. CORERA: I think we're out of time. I could ask you about President Trump and the CIA and what the relationship is likely to be but I'm not sure if you could answer that in election season.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: I briefed four presidents and I will leave it at that.

MR. CORERA: Well, with that we're out of time, I'm afraid but thank you very much. If you could join me in thanking both John's, thank you.

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