



governmentattic.org

"Rummaging in the government's attic"

Description of document: National Security Agency (NSA) Oral History of
[REDACTED] NSA OH 2007-31-[REDACTED], 2007

Requested date: 25-June-2022

Release date: 11-June 2025

Posted date: 07-July-2025

Source of document: Mandatory Declassification Review
National Security Agency
NSA/CSS MDR Appeal Authority P133
National Security Agency
9800 Savage Road, Suite 6881
Fort George G. Meade
MD 20755-6881

The governmentattic.org web site ("the site") is a First Amendment free speech web site and is noncommercial and free to the public. The site and materials made available on the site, such as this file, are for reference only. The governmentattic.org web site and its principals have made every effort to make this information as complete and as accurate as possible, however, there may be mistakes and omissions, both typographical and in content. The governmentattic.org web site and its principals shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused, or alleged to have been caused, directly or indirectly, by the information provided on the governmentattic.org web site or in this file. The public records published on the site were obtained from government agencies using proper legal channels. Each document is identified as to the source. Any concerns about the contents of the site should be directed to the agency originating the document in question. GovernmentAttic.org is not responsible for the contents of documents published on the website.



NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY
CENTRAL SECURITY SERVICE
FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, MARYLAND 20755-6000



Serial: MDR-114604
11 June 2025

This responds to your request of 25 June 2022 to have *Oral History of [redacted]*, NSA OH 2007-31, reviewed for declassification. The material has been reviewed under the Mandatory Declassification Review (MDR) requirements of Executive Order (E.O.) 13526 and is enclosed. We have determined that some of the information in the material requires protection.

Some portions deleted from the document were found to be currently and properly classified in accordance with E.O. 13526. The information denied meets the criteria for classification as set forth in Section 1.4 subparagraphs (b) and (c) and remains classified TOP SECRET as provided in Section 1.2 of E.O. 13526.

Section 3.5 (c) of E.O. 13526, allows for the protection afforded to information under the provisions of law. Therefore, the names of NSA/CSS employees and information that would reveal NSA/CSS functions and activities have been protected in accordance with Section 6, Public Law 86-36 (50 U.S. Code 3605, formerly 50 U.S. Code 402 note).

Please be advised that the responsive document includes another government agency's information. We have protected its equities with the other government agency (OGA) redaction code.

Since your request for declassification has been denied you are hereby advised of this Agency's appeal procedures. Any person denied access to information may file an appeal to the NSA/CSS MDR Appeal Authority. **The appeal must be postmarked no later than 60 calendar days after the date of the denial letter.** The appeal shall be in writing addressed to the NSA/CSS MDR Appeal Authority (P133), National Security Agency, 9800 Savage Road, STE 6881, Fort George G. Meade, MD 20755-6881. The appeal shall reference the initial denial of access and shall contain, in sufficient detail and

Serial: MDR-114604

particularity, the grounds upon which the requester believes the release of information is required. The NSA/CSS MDR Appeal Authority will endeavor to respond to the appeal within 60 working days after receipt of the appeal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jacqueline M. Amacher".

Jacqueline M. Amacher
Chief
Declassification Services

Encl:
a/s

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//TK//20291123~~

OHNR: OH-2007-31

DOI: 09 November 2007

TRSID: [REDACTED]

DTR: 20 November 2007

QCSID: [REDACTED] 17Dec07 sptck

Text Review:

INAME: [REDACTED]

Text w/Tape:

IPLACE: [REDACTED] office, NSA, OPS2B; Ft. Meade, MD

VIEWER: MURDOCK, Linda L.; BERNARD, Richard

[Tape 1, Side 1]

Murdock: The classification of this interview will be TOP SECRET COMINT//TK unless otherwise specified at the end of the recording. Today is Friday 09 November 2007. We are interviewing [REDACTED] in his office in OPS2B of the National Security Agency. [REDACTED] is currently assigned ((click)) as the [REDACTED]

Defense Special Missiles and Aerospace Center, DEFSMAC. [REDACTED] joined the National Security Agency in 1976 and has held a variety of operational and leadership positions in Intelligence Production, Foreign Relations, Policy, and Support at NSA Headquarters, the United Kingdom, [REDACTED]. Prior to joining NSA, [REDACTED] enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and served as a linguist in Turkey and Germany. I am Linda Murdock from the Center for Cryptologic History. With me is Richard (Dick) Bernard, the DEFSMAC historian. The primary purpose of today's interview is to discuss the many contributions [REDACTED] provided to DEFSMAC while he was [REDACTED]. Can we begin by you please telling us a little bit about yourself, your background, your education, and how it is you came to the National Security Agency.

Okay, thank you. ((Rustle.)) I, uh, studied Russian, at, uh, [REDACTED] College, graduated from there in 1971 and it was almost quite by accident that I ended up studying Russian but it came on the recommendation of my uncle who was attending Defense Language Institute for the Air Force at the time and, uh, he was studying Russian ((rustle)) and recommended that I consider ((snap)) that if it was an option at my school. I didn't know if it was an option. I checked the curriculum and, lo and behold, it was an option, so I erased "Spanish" as my elective language and wrote down "Russian," and was very fascinated with the subject from day one and ended up majoring in it, uh, ah, within a, within a few semesters. ((Click.)) Ah, back in 1971, ah, we still had a military draft and I was, uh, considering several options, um, ah, particularly with the Army, uh, and then the Air Force and ended up enlisting in the Air Force, ah, with the hope of, uh, getting to use my Russian as a Russian linguist ((smack)) and, uh, was awfully excited. Uh, I was told that I would probably go to Monterey for at least part of the full course, uh, because I perhaps was not exposed to enough military vocabulary, uh, during my, ah, four years at University. ((Rustle.)) Unfortunately I scored too high on the exam I was

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//TK//20320108~~ - 1 of 21

NSA Center for Cryptologic History Oral History Program

OH-2007-31-[REDACTED]

EO 1.4.(b)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

given in basic training and instead of going to Monterey, California, I went directly to Goodfellow Air Force Base, and, uh, I saw that was nowhere close to Monterey on the map. But, uh, after completing tech school (GoodFellow AFB, Texas) there, the Air Force sent me to, ah, a remote part of the globe in Sinop, Turkey as a Russian linguist. ((Smack)) And while not the ideal location for a single airman, ah, a few friends and I, uh, maximized the assignment to the hilt. It was, uh, certainly interesting from the mission standpoint. Ah, but every opportunity we had to take some Maryland courses or do some traveling during breaks, ah, we got out and saw quite a bit of the...the countryside. I had the good fortune to go from Sinop to Augsburg, Germany, um, where ((click; rustle)) the mission wasn't quite as exciting but indeed it was Bavaria and I got to practice my high-school and...and my college German that, uh, that I had also taken. ((Rustle; click.)) After that I went to grad school at [redacted] University, ((rustle)) and, uh, completed a masters in Political Science. And it was while I was at [redacted] that, uh, ((click)) a retired Air Force sergeant, um, came into my office and befriended me and...and we talked about career possibilities for the two of us. And, uh, he recommended that I investigate the possibility of working at NSA. And I hadn't seriously contemplated it, but, uh, I was about to get married and, uh, I thought, "Gee, I may have to have a career one of these days," and, uh, sent off a few, uh, inquiries and, ah, was scheduled for a battery of exams and...and employment interviews. And, lo and behold, ah, got picked up to start, ah, work here as a Russian linguist in January of 1976. Um, I joined NSA fully believing my inflated, um, Air Force evals about being this, you know, wonderful, first-term linguist and I very quickly was given a dose of reality. I...I fairly sped through the training team but I was put into a very difficult, uh, civilian, ah, transcription shop that was, uh, ah, [redacted] Soviet communications and, uh, it was a huge challenge. Um, it humbled me very quickly that perhaps I was not the walk-on-water linguist that, uh, that I thought that I was. ((TR NOTE: There is frequent and continuous movement noise and rustling throughout. While I will try to annotate it as it happens there will be places where I am unable to note each one individually.))

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

Murdock:

Do you remember the NSA designation for that office?

[redacted] Yes, it was [redacted] And, uh, fortunately I had a team chief [redacted] who was, ah, patient with me and...and everyone else and helped us grow to the maximum extent possible and, uh, I, at least I believed, reached, uh, a fairly decent level. Um, then in...I want to say it was late 1977, I saw a call for volunteers for a shift operation in [redacted] ah, for Russian linguists and I believe I was the first volunteer for that because I was excited at the prospect [redacted] And, uh, that started, I believe, in February of '78.

Bernard:

Was that [redacted] at the remote site here at the Fort or was that at the ground station?

EO 1.4.(c)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

EO 1.4.(c)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] Yes, um, here first from 1978 until 1981 and then [redacted] from 1981 to 1984. And it was really a fantastic assignment on both ends. Um, the variety of the [redacted] that, uh, we were processing and the organizations and the locations was just so wide, ah, that, uh, it really challenged you to, uh, to be your best. ((Rustle.)) And it was like being paid to put crossword puzzles together in [redacted] ((smack)) and, uh, you know, a few of us felt that we did, uh, did pretty fair jobs of that. ((Smack.)) Um, [redacted] was an absolutely fabulous assignment. Again, I was there as a, initially as a ((Ms. Murdock coughs)) linguist my first year and then became team chief, um, for my second and third years. And, uh, I went from there to NSOC. I had actually been picked up for an analyst job in Denver but then director, ah, General Faurer had instituted a policy that, uh, you got one field assignment; uh, you could not extend; and you had to come back to the mother ship. ((Smack.)) And the, uh, ah, leadership in Denver indicated they were prepared to fight for my... my going out there but I discovered some openings in NSOC and I'd always wanted to work in NSOC, so I thought, "Well, I'm not going to rock the boat. Here's an opportunity to, uh, get back to Maryland," which was close to my, uh, my mother and brothers' homes up in [redacted]. So, uh, ((smack)) I came back into NSOC and took the, ah, [redacted] Product Control Officer desk and we evolved that into the [redacted] desk, which was the [redacted]. And, uh, it evolved that way because we saw opportunities to take more off the plates of the [redacted] who was there and my particular [redacted] were happy to share additional, ah, workload with... with us, so we helped evolve that. ((Click.)) It was while I was in NSOC that I discovered we were doing these things called third-party relationships. Certainly in Britain ((telephone)) I was familiar with the second-party relationships but, uh, this was, I saw a list of vacancy ads and the one that caught my eye was [redacted]. And ((telephone)) I thought, uh, "Wow, that would be fabulous going to [redacted]." I didn't see an... an actual vacancy announcement, but, uh, I did see one for [redacted] and ((click)) we had a person who had just returned from there and I didn't believe there was one job that had so much responsibility to it. In essence you were doing [redacted] work; you were doing [redacted] you were doing [redacted] work; you were your own personnel, your own security, your own logistics, uh, environment. ((Click.)) And the gentleman said, "Not only do you do that but you actually do a whole lot more." So after reassuring my wife we had no chance whatsoever of being picked for this job, she said, "Go ahead and apply for it." And a few months later we're on the plane heading out to [redacted]. Um, it was supposed to be a two-liaison-officer operation with, uh, one admin support staff. Ah, it turned out to be just a one-liaison-officer, uh, operation after the other fellow curtailed and it was an incredibly busy first year and a half. Um, a lot of sixty, seventy-hour work weeks; a lot of TDYs because the partnership with the [redacted] was really starting to burgeon, and every TDYer who came out from [redacted] or [redacted] who needed to do some in-country travel, ah, I usually

EO 1.4.(b)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

accompanied them. So it gave me great insight into the, uh, the Agency's missions in those areas as well as insight into the [redacted] operations out there and the politics associated with same.

Murdock:

What year did you get there?

That was in 1986. And we left in 1989 and I went from there to the Office of Policy. I was invited by the former, ah, Chief, [redacted] to join his team in the Office of Policy. And I went in as the Deputy Division Chief of [redacted] which was the Information Policy Division. And, its responsibilities were, ah, classification. We were the... the Agency, ah, guru for classification, ah, Public and Media Affairs; um, working with academia; ah, working FOIA and Privacy Act issues, as well as unauthorized disclosures. So I went [redacted] into an element that actually dealt fairly openly in the unclassified realm ((rustle)) and I can remember another former Chief, [redacted] telling me that, uh, I would be exposed to things that the Agency was involved with that, uh, I hadn't a clue that, uh, we were doing that and he was... he was correct. ((Click.)) So, uh, I was there until 1992 when I transferred [redacted] And it was almost quite by accident again that, uh, I ended up with that assignment. There was an issue that, uh, we didn't believe that the cover office was handling, uh, adequately and we called the chief and he was working with us to... to correct the situation. And when I called over for a status report, I ended up speaking to his boss because he was out for the day. And I queried who would be replacing ((thump)) the... the fellow who was running cover because was about to retire and I was asked if I was interested in the job. ((Rustle.)) It was like a bolt out of the blue. And, uh, I went over and interviewed, ah, with the, ah, with the chief. And, uh, he offered me the job. And I thought, "Wow, going from [redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

EO 1.4.(c)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] exciting and it was a very interesting time to be there because we had some folks who were content with the cover programs running as they were. And when asked why we did things certain ways, it was often met with a, "Well, that's just the way we've always done it." And, you know, I at least believe a lot of the movies that I watched about folks in cover situations actually being in potential life-and-death situations. And fortunately for us, and... and I can't take any credit for it because it ((snap)) happened a month before my arrival in cover, we had hired somebody who had done HUMINT for the Army for most of his 20-year career. He understood what legitimate cover requirements really entailed and was equally shocked at the status of some of our programs. So I empowered him to be our bull in a china shop and break those covers that clearly had outlived their usefulness or... or could even perhaps, ah, jeopardize some of our travelers. And, uh, he did that and stood up, uh, ah, several more replacement covers and, uh, ah, we were moving, ah, full speed ahead when I was, ah, selected for the Senior Cryptologic Executive Development program. And the way the program worked was you were

supposed to spend perhaps a year, perhaps half a year in various developmental assignments to fill some of the gaps that, uh, that you experienced or that... that you had not yet experienced in your career. So, it was with some misgiving that I felt I had to leave, ah, [redacted] job. I was there for about a year and a half before moving into this place called DEFSMAC [redacted] to a fellow who, uh, became a very dear friend of mine, ah, Jim Kline, who was the Chief of Operations. And unfortunately for me it was only a six-month assignment. And I drank from the proverbial fire hose, uh, lots to learn in such a highly technical environment. But, uh, by the time the six months were over, you really came away with an appreciation for the Herculean... Herculean things that, uh, people on both the watch and in the Intelligence Division, ah, were doing on a... on a daily basis. Uh, and, ((Ms. Murdock coughs)) uh, again for me personally, ((rustle)) the highlight was, uh, befriending, ah, Jim Kline, who, ah... who was an institution, ah, himself in... in the organization. I went from there to perhaps my least favorite--well not perhaps--to definitely my least favorite job and that was in the old, ah, DDO budget office. And fortunately it, too, was only a six-month assignment. So with a finite end, I figured I could... I could do that and survive it and learn enough about, ah, the budget process to be dangerous. I was anticipating graduating from the SCEDP, um, within the next year. So I got on the calendar of a person who had become my informal mentor, and I reminded him that the old DDS, the Support Directorate, um, because it owned my billet, it probably had the responsibility to find me a job in Support once I graduated from the program. He indicated that, uh, there were very few senior positions available, ah, eh, expected at that time. And he asked me if I wanted to go overseas. I perked up because we had very much enjoyed [redacted] and I asked him what he had in mind. And he said, "Ah, well, we have the [redacted] job open in [redacted]. We have the Chief [redacted] job opening in... open in, ah, [redacted] and a similar one at [redacted] [redacted] and I leaned forward and called a time-out and asked him, "Don't you have to sort of know something about [redacted] to take these jobs?" He pretended to be offended and, uh, he said, "Well, doesn't a good leader rely on the technical expertise of his subordinate leaders and the work force?" And I used a line that I had used with him and... and once before with then Captain, ah, [redacted] was, "Well, I've never been accused of micro-managing, because you have to have a clue before you can micro-manage." ((Bernarc chuckles.)) And, uh, so, he said, ah, "We would arrange for your final SCEDP assignment to be in the old [redacted]. I went in as Deputy Office Chief of [redacted] which was [redacted]. And to this day, if you look at my house, you will see that I have never mastered [redacted]. But, uh, again, it's really drawing on the strengths of people who really, really know the business and getting the heck out of their way, which was, ah, again, a chat I had had earlier, a few years earlier with Admiral, now Admiral or Mister McConnell, who said,

EO 1.4.(b)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

((smack)) [] I identify who the good people are and then I get out of their way. And, ah, um, I realized then that that was the philosophy that I, too, was, uh, ah, trying my best to, ah, to do. Um, I did the [] job for X number of months, I really can't remember the... specifically when I went in there. But then in, uh, 1995, ah, we left for [] and I went out there as the [] Ah, it was a neat job besides being in relative paradise at the [] there. I think I had the neatest job on base because I got to practice my [] with our largely [] ah, as the [] Much of, uh, my responsibilities ((clicks)) lay outside of the operations compound, although, of course, we did have, uh, responsibilities therein. But, uh, it was just a wonderful opportunity; and, uh, ((click)) not just for me professionally, but, ah, our children really, really flourished there. Ah, our oldest took a year off of school and, uh, lived at home with us [] and [] and worked on base and every spare moment or every free moment []

[] our daughter flourished academically and, um, it was such a small high school. Uh, there were, on average, maybe ten or eleven or twelve kids, uh, in each graduating class. [] uh, did extremely well academically and, uh, really flourished, uh, going up [] younger boys, uh, played ice hockey off base with, [] was rarely used and, ah, it was total absorption in a game they both loved. And, ah, again they benefited, uh, linguistically and culturally and, uh, all of them, all, all four kids really believed that [] was home. We ended up spending [] there, the last two of which I was the [] There had been some, shall we say, leadership issues in the J1, Personnel Department and the J2 Security Department, and I was asked to head up [] So they merged the J1, the J2 and the J4 together ((rustling)) and we did the math. []

And, uh, while it was a rewarding ((click)) professional experience by learning other pieces of the business, anything that anybody could complain about on base became part of my portfolio. []

[] It was really difficult being there with so much chatter, increasingly loud chatter, about the prospects of []

uh, um, helped perpetuate its [] its longevity there ((Click; smack)) But, again knowing that much of my workforce would have to, in the near-to-medium term, face, um, ((movement and clicks)) unemployment, it [] It was really, uh, difficult for me, personally, ((scrape)) but, uh, we came up []

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

EO 1.4.(b)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

with some programs. And again I can't take credit for them ((rustle)) but it...it was subordinates who used some real clever, out-of-the-box thinking. Um, for instance, in the case of our engineering shop, while dollars were diminishing ((click)) in the pay accounts we still needed to do some new projects because the Army kept moving additional people onto the base even though it was, uh, targeted for ((Murdock coughs)) closure. So we enabled the engineering workforce to complete these projects instead of bringing in contracted workforce. So they could do it for about ((rustle)) maybe one third the cost while sharpening their skills, so that come unemployment, two or three or however many years down the road, their skills would be fresher than they perhaps may have been, ah, two or three...((rustle)) two or three years earlier. Um, ((smack)) I applied for the only senior job that I had ever really coveted, ((scrape)) uh, the Chief, [redacted] job from [redacted]. After you've PCSed ((background voices; scrape, thumps)) to some of these locations, um, you do try to keep your ear close to the ground and...and hear what's happening and hope that things are, uh, continuing to move in the direction that...that you had hoped. Um, and what I was hearing was that that was not the situation in [redacted]. We had sent some very well-intentioned folks out there, but, ah, folks who had really zero operational experience. And ((loud thump)) had not really taken advantage of some ((thump)) additional partnering opportunities with the [redacted] who had an interest in many of the same targets we had, had control geography that we did not or no longer occupied. ((Thump.)) So I was, uh, hoping to get picked for it, and, uh, I can remember a visit out to [redacted] uh, by, uh, then Deputy Director, Mr. Black, and then, uh, [redacted] Mr. Grantham. And, uh, Mr. Grantham indicated that he believed that the director would be selecting somebody who was already a senior executive. I was disappointed to hear that news because I felt that we had perhaps not sent the right people out there previously. And while I may not have been a senior executive, I knew [redacted] I had, ah, worked the relationship personally, uh, very intensely for three years. Um, so I went home and told the kids that, ((scrape, voices)) "Hey, it doesn't look like we're going to [redacted]. And they were thrilled because they thought that perhaps that might enable us to stay in [redacted] longer, which really was no longer an option. ((Rustle.)) And about, ah, two weeks after Mr. Black's visit I got a call from the base commander at [redacted] and he said, [redacted] just read a message that names you as the new Chief of [redacted]. So, uh, ((snap)) while the kids were perhaps disappointed to hear that, within days of our arrival in [redacted] they admitted to each other, but never to me or my wife, that, ((background voices)) "Hey, this is a pretty cool place, too." Um...

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

Bernard:

Um, did you get your promotion concurrent with your transfer?

I actually got my promotion just prior to my transfer, and I was even asked by Mr. Black if I felt it needed to be earlier, because there was concern that we might not retain the house that I believe NSA had paid for on

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//TK//20294123~~

[redacted]

it was referred to. And I said, "Mr. Black, ((voices)) I'm just thrilled to be getting the promotion, please don't rock the boat ((rustle, steps)) by making it any earlier than it really needs to be." ((Rustle.)) So, ah, I believe it was in June of 2001 when I was, uh, when I was elevated. Um, ((click)) my observations at [redacted] were, there was a lot of backbiting going on. We had attracted folks who perhaps applied for European assignments ((click)) but weren't picked up for those. And they became nomads, ((scrape)) going from field site to field site and really didn't have a whole lot of, uh, basis of reality, ah, dealing with the change that was going on back here at headquarters. And, ah, there was some, again some real hostility and nastiness going on, yeah, person-to-person, and that was actually affecting ((rustle, acknowledgment)) how they, how they were doing their jobs. Um, I was asked, was actually invited to TDY to [redacted] shortly after I arrived ((rustle)) and I actually heard about that from my, uh, from the deputy I would be getting at [redacted] while I was still in [redacted]. I said, "Well that's not the message I want to send out first. I don't want to be focused externally. I want to be focused internally, ah, to [redacted]. So how about a couple of weeks after I'm there, how about if my first TDY is up to [redacted]. I said, "I want to make it clear ((rustle)) because I've heard some criticisms that previous senior visits up there were only when there were visiting TDYers from NSA headquarters, and then our sen... our previous senior would hold their hands to go to [redacted]. I said, "I don't want to go up. I... I want to go up there on my own and I want to meet with the NSAers. I want to meet with the [redacted] commander and any other MILPERS that, uh, would like to chat." Well, unfortunately—at the time I thought unfortunately—um, [redacted] who was the field advocate at the time ((smack)) had scheduled a TDY to [redacted] that the dates coincided with mine. And I thought, "Well that's going to look like I'm here holding his hand as my very first TDY out of the barrel." So I was... I was disappointed. But, um, interestingly, during a courtesy call with the then, ah, [redacted] ah, [redacted] He said, "You know, we have infrastructure problems here. We have mission guidance problems here. We've taken on a lot of national missions with no additional bump up in personnel. We have HR issues. We have, you know, fill-in-the-blank issues." He said, "And whether you guys come out here TDY, looking at [redacted] Or whether we go back to NSA, we get the north-south head nods, you... you understand our plight, you feel our pain. But nobody ever responds to that or nobody ever responds to our formal or our informal e-mails." And I'm sitting there wondering. I mean, [redacted] didn't know me from the man in the moon other than my name, and I'm thinking where in the heck has [redacted] been in this. While, it was my clear understanding that we didn't own [redacted] where were we with respect ((rustle)) to understanding their issues ((click)) and becoming their advocate. ((Click.)) ((Smack.)) So, when I got back to ((thump)) [redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//TK//20294123~~ Page 8

NSA Center for Cryptologic History Oral History Program

OH-2007-31 [redacted]

a... I checked with my deputy because I vaguely remembered hearing that we had some jobs that had gone unfilled for a long time because we couldn't recruit anybody out there. And he confirmed that we had five or six empty billets. And I said, "Well, let's move five of them up to [redacted]. And he looked at me incredulously, "You mean give billets away." I said, "Well, first of all they're not ours, they're the corporation's billets. Secondly, ah, [redacted] made a compelling enough case about this much extra mission being taken on with no additional, ah, people." I said, "And, they're not doing us a dam bit of good sitting here empty for these years." So we moved, uh, the... it ended up being four or five. Uh, there was a call for billets after 9/11 that interfered with our movement of those, but eventually we got to move a couple more up there. ((Rustle continues.))

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

EO 1.4.(b)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

EO 1.4.(c)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

examples as illustration that the situation that we... we found the organization in it was that folks who were not only passive, but even resistant to... to wanting to do what I believed we were all sent out there for. And my initial take was, if we can't turn this *Titanic* around, I would send a note back to DIRNSA after two or three months and say, "Leave the cadre downtown that does the daily interface [redacted] [redacted] disperse the technical work force, [redacted] and pull the plug on [redacted] ((heavy breath)) because it's really... it hasn't been doing anything. ((Smack)) We probably took it too much in the other direction. Ah, one of our most productive employees in the operations division at one point said, [redacted] we've done more in the last six months than we had the previous five years that I have been here." Um, ((smack)) after 9/11 and [redacted] call for billets, um, ((smack)) we decided to pull the plug on [redacted] and return the billets for ((acknowledgment)) the Global War. ((Paper sound.)) And again, uh, ah, I was told that our CSG was vulnerable before I went out there because it was not supporting a, uh, ah, a MACOM. It was supporting a sub-unified command and the command it was supporting was not a war fighter, it was a policy and liaison kind of staff. But, uh, when... Again, when the appeal came out for billets it was our decision to close the CSG. We sent a formal message

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//TK//20294423-~~

back to NSA saying, "Propose to pull the plug on [redacted] in June of 2002. We want to keep a handful of the billets so that we can still satisfy not just [redacted] and some of the [redacted] military units requirements from [redacted]. But we could do that, we felt, on a Monday through Friday and an emergency call-in basis because everybody lived within five or ten minutes of [redacted]. Um, interestingly, um, we didn't get a response from headquarters. And here we were offering billets back for the global war and, uh, we had no response. So I kept pulsing the status and finally I asked our chief of operations who had this action. I said, "Well, did anybody say No?" And he said, "Nobody said anything." I said, "Well, if they didn't say no, this is the date we told them we're pulling the plug. Here are the points of contact for, uh, the organizations to whom we're returning responsibility for the billets." And that's what we did. And, uh, ah, ((smack)) again we knew it was the right thing to do. Ah, [redacted] certainly supported our... our, uh, doing that. We also created the [redacted] while we were out there, um, ((thump)) that actually... Uh, The... The team—it used to be called the Technical Support Division—it was already doing theater support in the software and the hardware and the IT arenas. But, with a name like Technical Support Division it was getting zero visibility for, uh, its work. And with zero visibility comes zero dollars and zero additional people despite there being a wealth of requirements out there that had gone unsatisfied. So, with the re-org that we did in October of 2001 where we made anything that looked like [redacted] Customer Relations and Analysis and Production, we put that within our operations division and anything ((click)) that looked like [redacted] we called that the [redacted]. That caught [redacted] attention and she tasked us to put together a paper to identify the resources we would need to mirror the [redacted]. So we did that. A long story short, it really helped, ah, when we put forward a... a budget request for one of the out years as if the [redacted] had been ((click)) fully authorized, which we knew it had been blessed ((click, rustle)) at the highest level but none of the budgeteers (sic) had matched the... the previous blessing with any real dollars. It really helped when [redacted] became the Deputy Director, SiD. When he was the question about this new organization called the [redacted] and its new requirement for additional dollars he said, "I support it wholly. Um, I was aware of its creation from [redacted] ah, perch and it's providing a lot of value out in the theater and it needs to be resourced appropriately." So, you know, we stood up the [redacted]. We pulled the plug on [redacted]. We, ah, significantly expanded the relationship, the SIGINT relationship with the, um, [redacted] partners. Ah, actually we started to weave in a healthier [redacted] partnership involving the [redacted] and NSA. Um, drew ourselves much closer to the Chief of Station who was a... an absolutely fabulous, ah, partner to work with. Um, we gave her insight into everything we had going on. ((Click.)) And she helped by, uh, providing

EO 1.4.(b)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//TK//20294423-~~ Page 10

NSA Center for Cryptologic History Oral History Program

OH-2007-31. [redacted]

some background on some of the people and organizations we were dealing with. So, it was really a terrific place to work. Um, ((smack)) and, uh, I probably could have stayed a fifth year, but after four years it was pretty much of a sprint, and, uh, interestingly I came back for a mini-field chiefs' conference that General Hayden, ah, had laid in place and I met with the Director of Executive Programs about my next assignment, uh, for the summer of '05 and he said [REDACTED] it's still a little too early to know. Um, I still have to fill some of the field vacancies and then," you know, "We'll see what opens up back here." So, "Okay, I... I understand how that works." Well, same day, just a few hours later I had lunch with a friend of mine, my friend Jim Kline, and as we're heading into the cafeteria, ((rustle)) we had just decided what side of the cafeteria we would link up with, he said, uh, he asked the question, "Did they tell you your next assignment?" I said that they don't know my next assignment. And he looked me curiously. He said, "I know your next assignment." "How do you know my next assignment?" And he said, "I know your next assignment." I said, "Well, please hurry through the line so I can hear, ((Bernard laughs)) you know, my fate there." And, uh, we sat down and he looked over at me and he said, "You're going to [REDACTED] DEFSMAC." And I almost did cartwheels, ((click)) ah, in the cafeteria. I would have hurt myself and would have been a spectacle, a poor spectacle. But, uh, I could not have imagined a better job to, ah, come back into. And, uh, fortunately I got to use, uh, ah, some of my home leave that I had accrued, but, uh, [REDACTED] DEFSMAC. Um, interestingly the... the [REDACTED] have a term for some of the revered analysts that they have working, you know, in their... in their SIGINT arena. They call them [REDACTED]. And it became readily apparent that DEFSMAC had six or seven people in that [REDACTED]. Um, I didn't drink... didn't bring a whole lot of technical SIGINT background into the job, uh, but I felt that I was pretty decent at... at helping all the moving parts to operate much more effectively. So, again, with... with Admiral McConnell's guidance in mind, again it was, you know, stay out of the heavy lifters' way. And that was working ((rustle, thump)) real fine at the analyst-to-analyst level, watching, again the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Im, the [REDACTED] ((Rustle.)) Ah, the [REDACTED] Ah, the [REDACTED] a.c. ing... these people get together and X and O the next upcoming significant missile or space event was one of the most awesome things I observed in my entire career. That these folks were very dedicated. They were very passionate about what they did. Um, not once did I hear a self-serving comment by any of those folks when they were... ((click)) when they were so strategizing. What wasn't working so well was there was tremendous animosity amongst the senior leaders in the organization. And my early observation was my repeated observation that it was largely some of the more senior NSAers were not treating the more senior DIAers

EO 1.4.(b)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

with the respect that ((rustle)) I believe that they needed to... to the point

[REDACTED]

Murdock: Do you mind naming the deputy?

[REDACTED]

Um, I would prefer not at...at this point but obviously folks can do the homework if they need to.

[REDACTED]

OGA

very exasperated that many of these issues had not been addressed and they were just allowed to fester and I believe the analysts probably saw some amusement in it. It did not directly affect their day-to-day strategizing on the next, uh, [REDACTED] launch or the next, you know, fill-in-the-blank launch. But, uh, it was to the point where, during his

[REDACTED]

in place all of maybe two weeks or three weeks. So I gathered as much feedback as I could from the parties themselves. We sat down and I told them how I expected much more civil deliberations and...and much more a kinder, gentler environment. And it still wasn't working. And I was also, um, aware that in our operations arena, we were not as strong as we were when I had been there in the...in...in the 1993 timeframe. We had one or two really solid ((rustle)) mission directors but, over the years, we had lost a lot to retirement and the military personnel that were now in our watch center, while most of them were eager and energetic and brought some, you know, technical skills that, uh, ah, some of us older folks perhaps, uh, still don't have, um, they were really, really short on experience and the

[REDACTED]

So while we were traditionally drawing from the SIGINT well to populate the Ops Center, I realized that we really needed more of an all-source flavor rather than drawing from a traditional SIGINT world. Obviously, the service members were more junior in grade because ((rustle)) many of them were being deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. So DEFSMAC was not the only organization that had fairly junior MILPERS. ((Rustle.)) So we built a campaign ((thumps; click)) to, ah, uh, put a memo together to push it down to General Maples, the Director of DIA, asking for additional people for our watch, an, more of an all-source flavor. That memo is still being deliberated. It's actually held hostage to another study regarding the ideal

EO 1.4.(c)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

location for DEFSMAC, which is being done by [] who just recently ((scrape)) relocated to, ah, to Denver, to NSA Colorado. We made a similar appeal to NGA even though they're not a charter member of DEFSMAC. It's, uh, DIA and NSA who are the two charter members. We figured that [] was working himself, uh, very long hours, twelve, fourteen hours for every significant event. He would be in weekends, holidays. ((Rustle.)) We thought, "Wow! What a win-win opportunity to bring junior personnel up onto the watch ((click; rustle)) and [] could serve as the mentor ((scrape)) because he was already acting in that capacity at least once a week, driving down to NGA or ((thumps)) or would serve as mentor. Um, NGA told us they would like to support us and even put us in as a... OA... over guidance for five additional NGAers, but I don't believe there's any... much prospect of that happening. But they said perhaps after they ceased their supporting surge operations, perhaps ((rustle)) they might be able to, ah, ((scrape)) um, give us the five NGA imagery analysts, uh, for each of our watch teams. Unfortunately, we had to collapse from five watch teams to four because we were lacking some expertise to continue ((rustle)) a fifth team. But while we were having five teams, uh, one team would always be on two weeks of straight days so they could take formal training; they could take trips to some of our collaborators and partner and peer organizations in the DC area; but most importantly, they could tag team with the Intel Division analysts who, by and large, worked straight days. But they could help grow the... that... the watch cadre by developing more expertise on, you know, [] or fill-in-the blank. So each team when it rolled around to straight days, ah, would have a project that it would work intensely with the, uh, with the Intel Division.

EO 1.4.(c)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

Bernard: My recollection that it was [] that DEFSMAC went from a four-team base to a five-team.

[] Right! Right! And it was for that... for that reason, so that we could try to get a...

Bernard: Yeah. Of course, the five-team one parallels the model that NSOC has used for, as far as I know, since the beginning of... of their... to give the shift people time off, so to speak, to... to brush up on some things, uh, do some personal business that might be hard to do ((acknowledgment)), on a shift ((acknowledgment)) and... and get... get training and, uh, just, in effect, relax a little bit instead of sort of always...

[] Right!

Bernard: Being on watch.

[] It... It probably helped to have had that earlier NSOC assignment where I benefited from those, uh, two weeks of... of straight days.

Bernard: And at several times during the history of DEFSMAC there had been a... an attempt made to go from a four...

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted]

Bernard:

Um hmm.

Team based effort to five

[redacted]

Um hmm.

Bernard:

But the subject of the extra billets always got in the way.

[redacted]

Yeah. Yeah.

Bernard:

And every time it was thought that it was approved in concept, quote "We'll look for the billet." It turns out that the billets were never found.

[redacted]

OGA

[redacted]

running circles around some of their peers who had been there and, um, you know, NSA, I felt, um, maybe took a left turn when it should have considered going straight or a right turn when it encouraged everybody ((click)) to self nominate themselves for promotions. Um, everybody was made to believe in the early stages of that transition that it was solely the supervisor's responsibility to get their people promoted. And while supervisors by and large were good naturedly providing feedback on to how to improve performance and enhance your promotability, if everybody in your workforce followed that guidance, the competition remained just as it... as it... as tough as it was the year before. So there was ((verbal pause)) a cadre within not just DEFSMAC but throughout NSA with some chips on their shoulder about, you know, everybody believes that, uh, ((rustle; sniff)) you know, they should be fifteens or a senior executives. And probably after seeing the most recent senior executive in DEFSMAC, ((rustle)) that gave them additional ammunition for that thought ((Acknowledgment.)) But, uh, ((click.)) it was interesting watching the dynamics between some of these more senior, um, NSAers, in particular, with the more junior, uh, [redacted] and it really helped raise the performance bar in, I believe, every case of the NSAers who had those, ah, chips on their shoulder and, uh, really started to be more thorough and, ah, it really helped having Linda Rosko as the, then, new Chief of Intel because she raised the bar from an accountability standpoint of expectations for personnel at... at certain grade levels. She insisted that, uh, that they become briefers. Ah, she found it, ah, almost unconscionable that, uh, if you hit the thirteen or fourteen level and you've never briefed before, that, uh, you know, we try to get people training, whether it was supervisory training or briefing skills or writing skills. But I

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

credit a lot of the improvements in...in DEFSMAC to the leadership that, uh, that Linda Rosko, uh, brought to the table. ((Interruption attempt.)) And with, ah, the next dep.

OGA

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

Bernard:

You've mentioned a couple of the challenges ((rustle)) that faced you both early on and, uh, Ah, what other sort of major challenges do you feel you've had in the last couple of years?

Um, boy that's a... that's a hard question. Um, ((click)) I... Let me talk a little bit about why I took this job because it's... it's tied into some challenges. Um, I told several people that I could have easily stayed at DEFSMAC for the rest of my career. Um, I loved the people. I loved the mission. I mean it was... You couldn't help but get excited about every launch that was taking place. Uh, it... It was a big challenge for me even keeping straight, you know, who was launching an SRBM and who had which SLBMs in their inventories and what now. Um, I can remember inconsequential baseball information from 1958, but, uh, you know, some of the more, uh, ah, recent ((rustle)) launch, uh, specifics, ah, fortunately I could draw on the memories and the expertise of... of so many of our experts there. ((Clicks.)) But when I was in [redacted] I was really disappointed that there were several [redacted] issues that ended up being too difficult to address, so they weren't addressed. And when I saw this vacancy pop open and I, uh, had heard from Mr. Grantham actually, uh, about the time it was opening that I should at least keep an eye out for it. And I subsequently, ah, talked to [redacted] about it, as well. I thought, "Well it would be an opportunity to hopefully make a difference in lashing FAO closer to SID so that when these real serious issues pop up it's not so much loggerheads but it's, "you know, "Talking through things, uh, ah, corporately and cooperatively." Um, ((click)) the final day to submit an application for the job, um, I actually started an e-mail to Mr. Grantham and [redacted] saying, "Thanks for talking to me about the job, but I've decided to stay in DEFSMAC. I'm passionate about the people, the

mission, blah blah..." And I thought, "You know you don't have," and I won't say the word here, "If you don't roll up your sleeves again and take on some issues that you think really, really, ah, at least previously, needed to be addressed." And...and some of those are still somewhat ((rustle)) dangling as I...as I've seen from this perch. And it was with great difficulty that I made the decision to, ah, to leave DEFSMAC. Um, when I arrived...Actually the...that lunchtime chat that I had with Jim Kline when he told me I was going to be the [redacted] he said, "I think it's probably the best job in the Agency." And at this point in my career, which is, uh, ah, close to hitting 32 years here plus my three years in the Air Force, um, I think he's...he's probably...he was probably right. Um, ((smack)) you know, again, uh, as the [redacted] when we visited COCOMs and you could tackle issues head on. I mean there were some contentious issues that we had, especially with PACOM, and, uh, you know, going, uh, into the lion's den of a two-star or a three-star or a one-star, and...and professionally tackling these things, it was...it was pretty, ah, a heady experience. Um, and, of course, when you visit COCOMs or you visit, uh, ah, foreign partners, you know, they almost throw rose petals at your feet because you're the [redacted] and there's a lot of prestige and visibility that comes with it. But that wasn't what was floating my boat. Again it was...it was great and...and one of the greatest experiences in my entire life...

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

Bernard:

Should...

But this was a chance yet to try to tilt at a few more windmills ((acknowledgment)) and see if we could knock some over.

Bernard:

Since your transition to this job happened relatively quickly, ((smack)) ah, what couple of things, uh, do you think you might have left on your desk that your successor ought to...to, ah, look at as sort of the first things when...

That's a...

Bernard:

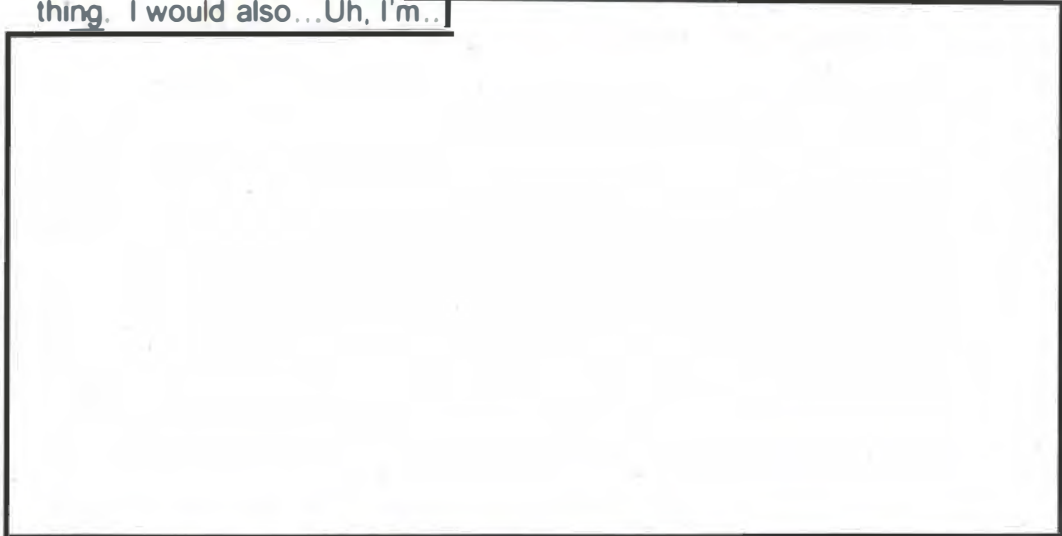
That need to be done in the near future?

That's a... That's a great question. Um, I mentioned the [redacted] study about the optimal location for DEFSMAC. Um, several of us involved in the question and answer and review sessions of...of the study made it clear, frankly, if the decision is made to keep DEFSMAC here or to move it to Denver [redacted]

OGA

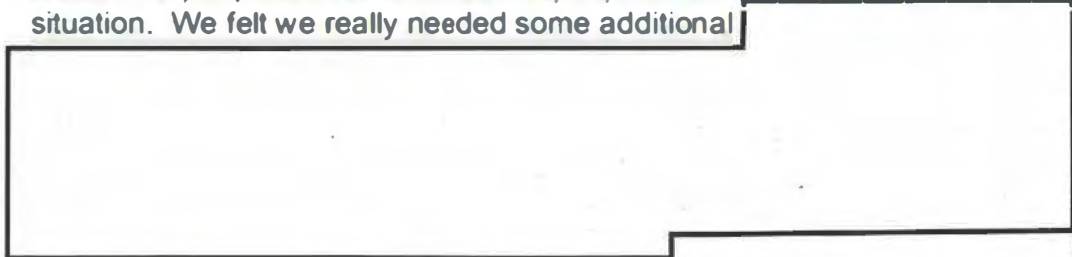
[redacted] um, we should salute and execute. But there is some driving force--um, I don't know how persistent it will be or how successful it will be--to move DEFSMAC to Colorado. And again, ultimately if that's what a sound, intellectually honest paper leads to, everybody should salute that and...and try to make it, uh, ah, take effect with...with minimal breakage. Um, I will caution--and I know who the...who the nominee is, and assuming he makes it through the selection

process—um, that will be one of the first things I caution him to keep an eye on to, again, just make sure that whatever paper is...is produced is intellectually honest, talks about the...all of the associated costs to relocate, ah, and to beware of taking on a mission for which would change the very nature of...of, uh, ((click)) DEFSMAC. Uh, that's...that's one thing. I would also...Uh, I'm...



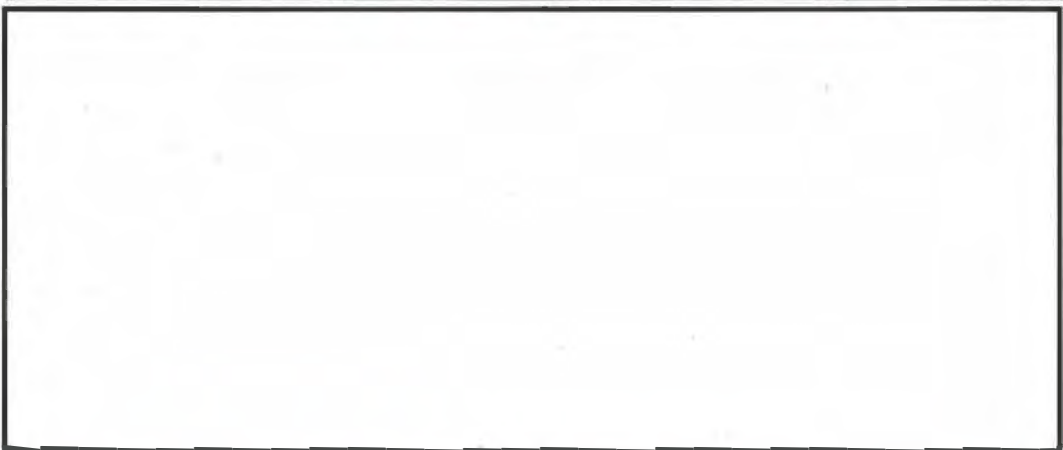
OGA

Bernard: Not sure I had mentioned this to you before, but when I was Director of DEFSMAC, ah, between 1980 and '83, ah, it was a almost similar situation. We felt we really needed some additional



Um hmm. Um hmm.

Bernard:



PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//TK//20291123~~

that the [] study, which initially inferred that it would also address resource requirements--I don't believe that it will--but they're waiting to see that study before they even contemplate, ah, additional resources there.

Bernard: Do you have any other thoughts on, uh, other topics or...or papers on your desk that might need attention in the near future

[] ((Chuckle.)) Ah, you can see my in box there that, uh...

Bernard: I mean your

[] Soon it will be...

Bernard: Your DEFSMAC desk

[] My Defsmac desk. Um, those. Those are the ((rustle; rub)) main one.

Uh, again I...I consider myself extremely privileged to have served in...in DEFSMAC and I, you know, occasionally would look up at the photos of all

[] can...I can say that about, uh, ((whoosh)) some of the other really great ((acknowledgment)) opportunities I've had through this entire career. Um...

Bernard: I'm not aware of all the details, but I understand that there had been a... a fairly robust development of what I'll call a...an another DEFSMAC modernization or FIS modernization that would have included DEFSMAC that isn't proceeding so well. Do you think that...

[] Yeah!

Bernard: Will do any serious damage ((click)) if it

[] Eh, it will...

Bernard: If it isn't rectified?

EO 1.4.(c)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[] available. But whether DEFSMAC moves or whether it stays put, the corporation--I make that plural--the corporations should invest in, ah, in additional modernization. And I don't know if we have to go completely back to the drawing board for it, but, uh, clearly there needs to be a re-look as to what is absolutely bare-bones, ah, necessary. Because, as you're

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//TK//20291123~~ Page 18

NSA Center for Cryptologic History Oral History Program

OH-2007-31-[]

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//TK//20291423~~

aware, we do draw [redacted] budget line and they were ((clicks)) identified as one of the down-vector organizations in terms of, ah, resources. And I... I can only say terrific things about, ah, [redacted] in support of DEFSMAC's sustainment, ah, during the two years that I was there. Um, and... and in terms of, um, his, ah, oversight, ah, he was involved when he needed to be. He was always helpful and he really gave us the latitude to run the organization in a manner that, uh, that we felt, uh, it needed to... to thrive.

Bernard: Uh huh,

[redacted] So, I give [redacted] an A Plus for... for his support of us.

Bernard: Watching and being involved in DEFSMAC literally since its beginning in 1964 ((Murdock coughs)) when the... almost the only set of targets were the Soviet Russian targets on... on different types of missiles, then expanding to China and then certainly in the '90s and now, so many countries with so many different variations and so many different types of weapons, it... obviously it made tremendously complex the job at DEFSMAC. Do you think that that continued growth in complexity is... is going to continue or do you think that it's sort of peaked out at, uh, at the moment?

[redacted] I... I think it can only continue. Um, you know, some of our allies are even developing missiles for export. And I already talked about the [redacted] of many of those targets. But, even some of the COCOMs on whom we rely so much for the [redacted] their resources are also stretched very thin. ((Rustle.)) And in some cases there's some... some political considerations. We had a previous, ah, PACOM commander who really didn't want to do anything to antagonize the [redacted] but, who still didn't inhibit, uh, most of the, uh, ah, request for [redacted] support that we got. Ah, but they had established a high-threat area [redacted]

EO 1.4.(c)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] It didn't help that, uh, the planners of [redacted] missions, ah, flew it on the same path, I believe, for, uh, three consecutive days, ah, which, you know, gave the enemy a... a really good insight into the likely pattern it would, ah, it would be flying. But be that it as it may, ah, PACOM put up that, uh, that, ah, high-threat area, which inhibited our ability to [redacted]

[redacted] activity last summer. So we would lecture... Ah, you know, we visited STRATCOM, we visited PACCM, ((click)) and we said, "At risk are future generations of soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines. ((Rustle.)) If you can't help us collect this data ((clicks)) so that we can build countermeasures to these missiles that are being designed to... to kill, ah, you know, future generations of service members. Um, a previous

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//TK//20291423~~ Page 19

EO 1.4.(c)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

PACOM commander even suggested, uh... And I don't know if it would... I don't believe it was the commander himself, but some of the J2 staff were discouraging us from collecting

[redacted] Well, I'm sorry but, you know, even President Reagan said, "Trust, but verify." ((Bernard chuckles.)) And I believe there are things--I'm led to believe by comments by, ah, folks whose opinions I highly value--that the U.S. knows things about

[redacted] Everybody is becoming increasingly resource constrained whether it's COCOMs, whether it's the U.S. Intelligence Community and there being so many trouble spots. You can't always count on the availability of... of, ah,

[redacted] continue to make that, uh, ah, the [redacted] job even more difficult.

Bernard: Alright. I think we're going to have to break this off, ah, now. But, uh, there is no reason that we can't later make another supplement...

[redacted] Okay... Okay.

Bernard: And add to this as you, maybe, think about some other items you might want to, ((click)) to add to the very excellent list of topics that you've covered for us today.

[redacted] Well thank you. That. Again, I'm... I'm humbled at the opportunity to do this, and, um, the [redacted] that there are so many luminaries, ah, before me that got to do it is really staggering when I stop to think about it.

Murdock: Sir, when we began this interview we classified it as TOP SECRET//COMINT//TK. Um, I don't... not sure if we covered anything in the TK arena.

[redacted] Ah, when I talked about [redacted] um, I... yeah, I would leave it as TK.

Murdock: Okay. The final classification of this interview will be TOP SECRET//COMINT//TK. Sir, on behalf of Dick and myself and the Center for Cryptologic History, I'd like to thank you very much for sharing your experiences and your career with us.

[redacted] Oh, thank you very much.

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//TK//20294423~~

Murdock: Thank you

XXXXXXXXXXEND OF INTERVIEW/TRANSCRIPTXXXXXXXXXX

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//TK//20294423~~ Page 21

NSA Center for Cryptologic History Oral History Program

OH-2007-31

Declassified and Approved for Release by NSA on 06-12-2025 pursuant to E.O. 13526, MDR Case #114604