

**Joint Military Intelligence College**

**VERNON A. WALTERS:  
PATHFINDER OF  
THE INTELLIGENCE PROFESSION**

*Conference Proceedings  
3 June 2004*



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Center for Strategic Intelligence Research

*Conference Proceedings*  
*3 June 2004*

**VERNON A. WALTERS:  
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THE INTELLIGENCE PROFESSION**

*The views expressed in these remarks are those of the authors  
and do not reflect the official policy or position of the  
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LTG Vernon A. Walters, U.S. Army

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## **Key Life Events and Professional Assignments** **Lieutenant General Vernon A. Walters**

Born in New York City	1917
Entered U.S. Army	1941
Service in European Theater	1941-1945
Army Attaché to Brazil	1945-1948
Military Attaché-at-Large, Paris	1948-1950
Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), Western Europe, Executive Officer	1950-1955
Pentagon/White House Staff Assistant/Interpreter	1955-1960
Army Attaché, Rome	1960-1962
Army Attaché, Rio de Janeiro	1962-1967
Defense Attaché, Paris	1967-1972
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence	1972-1976
Retired from U.S. Army	1976
Private Consultant and Lecturer	1977-1981
U.S. Ambassador-at-Large, Reagan Administration	1981-1985
U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations	1985-1988
U.S. Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany	1989-1991
Private Consultant and Lecturer	1991-2002
Buried in Arlington National Cemetery	2002

**Joint Military Intelligence College  
Conference 2004**

**“LTG VERNON A. WALTERS: PATHFINDER  
OF  
THE INTELLIGENCE PROFESSION”**

**Thursday, 3 June 2004  
Defense Intelligence Analysis Center, Tighe Auditorium  
CONFERENCE PROGRAM**

0700-0825	Registration	DIAC Lobby
0820-0825	Admin	Major Che V. Russell, USAF, Executive Officer, JMIC
0825-0830	Introduction	A. Denis Clift, President, JMIC
0830-0845	Welcome	VADM Lowell E. Jacoby, USN, Director, DIA
0845-0930	Keynote Address	Ambassador Hugh Montgomery
0930-0945	Break	
0945-1145	Video Clip 1	Colonel John F. Prout, USA (Ret.), JMIC (Moderator) Brigadier General Clarke M. Brintnall, USA (Ret.) Captain Philip Siff, Masters Candidate, JMIC Major Brian Shellum, USA (Ret.) Deputy Historian, DIA Michael Richter, Masters Candidate/IC Scholar, JMIC
1200-1400	Luncheon Bolling Officers' Club	Luncheon Speaker: General Alexander M. Haig, Jr., USA (Ret.) Former Secretary of State
1415-1545	Video Clip 2	Mr. Benjamin Fischer, CIA Historian (Moderator) Mr. Henry Appelbaum, Former CIA Analyst Dr. David Robarge, CIA Historian



Dr. Douglas F. Garthoff, CIA Historian

1545-1600 Break

1600-1700 Video Clip 3

Mr. Jon Wiant, JMIC, State Chair (Moderator)

Ambassador George Ward

Mr. Joseph Carlton Petrone, Former Ambassador

Mr. Bowman Miller, Director of Analysis for Europe,  
State Department

1700-1715 Closing Remarks Dr. Perry Pickert, JMIC Faculty

1715-1815 Reception DIAC Cafeteria

## WELCOMING REMARKS

### Vernon A. Walters: Pathfinder of the Intelligence Profession

**A. Denis Clift**

*President, Joint Military Intelligence College*

Good morning everyone. What a pleasure it is to welcome all of you here to the Defense Intelligence Analysis Center and on behalf of all the Joint Military Intelligence College to welcome you to this conference on “Vernon A. ‘Dick’ Walters: Pathfinder of the Intelligence Profession.” Thank you all for being here for what should be a fascinating day. In September 2002 I had the pleasure of corresponding with Mr. Peter Adams, Executor of the Estate of Lt. General Walters, and this College had the pleasure of accepting a gift from that Estate of correspondence, photographs and awards documenting a half-century career that was both distinguished and extraordinary. I am delighted to welcome Peter Adams. I’m delighted to welcome family and friends of General Walters here this morning. It is so good to have you with us. “Why do we need intelligence?” General Walters asked. “We needed it,” he wrote, “because our leaders are required to make their decisions in an entirely new framework of time and speed. We can no longer deliberate,” he said, “at great length about what we ought to do. Shrinking distances and time factors compel decisionmakers at a far faster rate than we have known in the past to make decisions and to act. Their decisions are

more complex and have more far-reaching consequences. Such decisions must be made on the basis of maximum knowledge of all the factors involved.” These words, absolutely on target today, were penned by General Walters in his book “Silent Missions” more than a quarter-century ago at the conclusion of several remarkable chapters in his career, with several more remarkable chapters still to come.



**A. Denis Clift, President, JMIC**

Our keynote speaker and panelists will be reviewing and assessing General Walters’ contributions as a soldier, intelligence leader and diplomat—his service to the nation, and his legacy. Throughout his service, his gift for language, his fluency in foreign tongues, would contribute to his rise and accomplishments. For many both here and abroad Dick Walters is best remembered as interpreter for

Presidents—Truman, Ike, Nixon, Ford, Bush and Reagan among them. And here, I was to witness his talents at first hand.

On April 5, 1974 General Walters and I were aboard Air Force One flying to Paris with President Nixon for the funeral of President Georges Pompidou. Walters, who was then Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, would serve as interpreter for the President in his meeting with the interim President of France, Alain Poher, and at the formal diplomatic reception for visiting foreign leaders—the kings, queens, presidents and prime ministers coming to pay their last respects. With Walters at his side, President Nixon knew that he would be able to converse comfortably with these world leaders whatever the language—French, German, Spanish, Russian, Portuguese, Italian. At the end of his mission on the flight back across the Atlantic, General Walters and I were in adjoining seats on the President's aircraft. He had a carry-on satchel of books. He would fish into it, read for several minutes then dip in and fish out another. He had my admiration, relaxing as he was honing his skills reading foreign dictionaries.

There are some splendid photographs of Dick Walters as Major, Lt. Colonel, Colonel and General interpreting for Presidents. These and other photos documenting his amazing career are on display in the Walters Room here in the Defense Intelligence Analysis Center in the Joint Military Intelligence College. It is now my distinct pleasure to introduce the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, Vice Admiral Lowell E. Jacoby, United States Navy.

## BIOGRAPHY

### A. Denis Clift

#### *President, Joint Military Intelligence College*

A. Denis Clift was appointed President of the Joint Military Intelligence College in 1994. The College, in the Department of Defense, is the nation's only accredited academic institution awarding the Master of Science of Strategic Intelligence degree and the Bachelor of Science in Intelligence degree. In 1999, in his role as president of the College, Mr. Clift was elected to serve as a Commissioner on the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools for the term 2000-2002. In 2002, he was re-elected for the term 2003-2005. Since 1992, he has also served as a U.S. Commissioner on the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on Prisoners of War/Missing in Action, a commission created by Presidents Bush and Yeltsin with the humanitarian goal of accounting for servicemen still missing from past conflicts.

Mr. Clift was born in New York City, New York. He was educated at Friends Seminary, Phillips Exeter Academy (1954), Stanford University (B.A. 1958), and The London School of Economics and Political Science, University of London (M.Sc. 1967). He began a career of public service as a naval officer in the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations and has served in military and civilian capacities in ten administrations, including 13 successive years in the Executive Office of the President and The White House. From 1971 to 1976, he served on the National Security Council staff. From 1974 to 1976, he was head of President Ford's National Security Council staff for the Soviet Union and Eastern and Western Europe. From 1977 to 1981 he was Assistant for National Security Affairs to the Vice President of the United States. From 1991 to 1994, he was Chief of Staff, Defense Intelligence Agency, following service as an Assistant Deputy Director and Deputy Director for External Relations of the Agency. He is a veteran of two Antarctic expeditions, including the 1961 Bellingshausen Sea Expedition. From 1963 to 1966, he was Editor, United States Naval Institute *Proceedings*.

His awards and decorations include the President's Rank of Distinguished Executive, awarded by President George W. Bush in 2001, the President's Rank of Meritorious Executive, awarded by President Ronald Reagan in 1986, the Department of Defense Medal for Distinguished Public Service, the Department of Defense Distinguished Civilian Service Medal, the Secretary of Defense's Meritorious Civilian Service Medal, the Secretary of the Navy's Commendation for Achievement, the Oceanographer of the Navy's Superior Achievement Award, and the Director of Central Intelligence's Sherman Kent Award and Helene L. Boatner Award. He directed the production of the film "Portrait of Antarctica" screened at the Venice Film Festival. His published fiction and nonfiction include the novel *A Death in Geneva* (Ballantine Books of Random House), *Our World in Antarctica* (Rand McNally), *With Presidents to the Summit* (George Mason University Press), and *Clift Notes: Intelligence and the Nation's Security* (JMIC Writing Center Press).



# OPENING ADDRESS

## **Vice Admiral Lowell E. Jacoby, U.S. Navy** *Director, Defense Intelligence Agency*

It gives me great pleasure to welcome this assemblage of scholars and practitioners to today's study of the remarkable career and enduring legacy of Lieutenant General Vernon A. "Dick" Walters—one of the most important, towering figures in the entire history of U.S. intelligence.

My sincere thanks to Mr. Adams and the Walters family on behalf of the entire Defense Intelligence Agency for your gift of the General's documents, photographs and historic artifacts. They contribute uniquely to education and research at the Joint Military Intelligence College. They set an example and a standard of excellence for the men and women meeting the intelligence challenges of the 21st century.

One of my most important responsibilities and privileges as DIA Director is to oversee the manning, the operations, and the value-added of the Department of Defense's Defense Attaché System. General Dick Walters is a member of the Attaché Hall of Fame. Today, we have more than 1,000 attaches—Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard-serving at 135 overseas locations, accredited to 182 nations. Our attaches represent the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Combatant Commanders, the Service Secretaries and Chiefs, and the Defense Intelligence Agency.

As accredited attaches, they become expert on their host countries, studying and reporting on:

- political/military intentions,
- current developments,
- important personalities, and
- the operational status and capabilities of the host nation's armed services.

They serve as the U.S. Ambassador's military officer and planning assistant, as the Ambassador's advisor on U.S. and allied forces, and on the forces of the host nation and its military establishment.

The Defense Attaché System is a critical component of U.S. military intelligence and the broader defense establishment. When the officers and noncommissioned officers entering the attaché system train at the Joint Military Attaché School, on the third deck here at the DIAC, they learn from the extraordinary example of General Dick Walters.

As captured in today's program, Walters' half-century career included his years as military attaché, as Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, and as U.S. Ambassador in three ambassadorial postings. Walters' gift for foreign languages—at least eight—gave him a breadth, a depth and an understanding that made his contributions all the more valuable—contributions captured in the citation accompanying his award of the Medal of Freedom, which reads in part:

This extraordinary adventurer and intellectual has offered his diplomatic, linguistic, and tactical skills to the cause of world peace and individual liberty. America honors this steadfast defender of our interests and ideals, this true champion of freedom.

Last Saturday, the Nation dedicated the National World War Two Memorial. Dick Walters began his career in World War II, served with General Mark Clark, and accompanied General Clark to the Victory Parade in Rio de Janeiro at the end of the war, and was then assigned Assistant Military Attaché to Rio.

Dick Walters would serve with General Eisenhower during Eisenhower's years as Supreme Allied Commander Europe, and Eisenhower as President would appoint him Military Attaché to Rome. In 1967, Walters would receive orders as Military Attaché to Paris.

When President Eisenhower was preparing to leave office, he wrote Dick Walters a letter of thanks and appreciation, in which he said in part: "The Service you rendered me over a long period of time was invaluable—not only because you are so expert in the various languages at your command, but also because of your intelligent grasp of the problems and background of the various countries we together visited."

These words capture part of the standard that Dick Walters set. They capture part of his remarkable legacy. They are words that we should set on the high horizon for each of the officers entering our attaché system today—words to aspire to.

In closing, I commend the Joint Military Intelligence College for its initiative in hosting today's conference. I look forward to reading the proceedings of the conference. I know that the College sees this as the first step in a program of research by students, faculty and other scholars that will shed further light and offer greater insights on the life and work of Lieutenant General Dick Walters.



**Vice Admiral Lowell E. Jacoby**

## **BIOGRAPHY**

### **Vice Admiral Lowell E. Jacoby, U.S. Navy**

Vice Admiral Lowell E. Jacoby assumed the duties of the Director, Defense Intelligence Agency, on 17 October 2002.

He was commissioned in May 1969 from Aviation Officer Candidate School. He is a graduate of the University of Maryland and holds a Masters Degree in National Security Affairs from the Naval Postgraduate School, completing all requirements for a subspecialty in Strategic Planning.

His first sea duty tour was as Intelligence Officer with Fighter Squadron TWENTY-FOUR, flying F-8Js off USS HANCOCK (CV-19).

Following a combat deployment, he served with the Seventh Fleet Detachment in Saigon, Republic of Vietnam. A series of shore and sea duty assignments followed his return from Vietnam.

Vice Admiral Jacoby has served as the command's senior intelligence officer in each assignment he has held dating back to October 1985. This included Carrier Group Eight, Second Fleet/JTF, Naval Military Personnel Command, and U.S. Pacific Fleet. He was the second Commander, Joint Intelligence Center Pacific, and Director for Intelligence, U.S. Pacific Command. He served as Commander, Office of Naval Intelligence, 57th Director of Naval Intelligence, and Joint Staff J-2 before assuming his present duties.

Vice Admiral Jacoby's personal decorations include two awards of the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Navy Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, two awards of the Legion of Merit, and other personal, service and campaign awards. He has received the National Intelligence Medal of Achievement from the Director of Central Intelligence and the Australian Chief of Defense Force Commendation.



## KEYNOTE ADDRESS

*(Introduction by Jon Wiant, State Department Chair, JMIC Faculty)*

“Hello, Hugh Montgomery.” So read the headline of the Italian left-wing *La Repubblica* that greeted Hugh Montgomery in 1976 as he arrived as Chief of Station Rome. Outrageous exposé? Yes. But perversely our enemies also recognized one of the true giants of our profession. Hugh Montgomery’s life is the life of our profession.

A combat veteran of World War II, Hugh transferred to the OSS where he continued his war behind the lines. He was recently honored by the OSS Society with its Distinguished Service Award. After the war, he returned to academic pursuits, combining scholarship with derring-do. He earned a doctorate in Russian studies at Harvard University and then entered the Central Intelligence Agency where over the next 50 years he would make his mark in the critical operations of the Cold War—The Berlin Tunnel, Penkovsky, Moscow, Vienna, Rome—his life is an encyclopedia of Cold War espionage.

In 1982, Secretary of State Haig chose Hugh to be Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research where he distinguished himself both for rigorous oversight of intelligence activities and for his steadfast defense of the independence of intelligence analysis.

Leaving INR in 1985, Hugh chaired the DCI’s Senior Review Panel but shortly was called by Dick Walters to serve as his deputy at the United Nations where they made an extraordinary diplomatic team.

In 1992, as the Cold War ended, DCI Bob Gates asked Hugh to be his Special Assistant to sort out the hundreds of foreign intelligence liaison relationships that had grown entangled during that long struggle. And this he has done over the last 12 years, establishing under four DCIs a clear writ for the ways we engage our foreign intelligence partners, from the expansion of NATO to the global war on terrorism.

In short, Ambassador Montgomery is an awesome professional. Let us all echo *La Repubblica*. Hello, Hugh Montgomery.

— Jon Wiant

## **Ambassador Hugh Montgomery**

Good morning. Admiral Jacoby, President Clift and Jon Wiant, thank you for the opportunity to participate in the commemoration of this great American patriot and hero. It is a measure of the high regard in which General Vernon A. Walters is held to note the number of friends and admirers who have come from far and near to show their admiration and respect for him. His good friend Dr. Eduardo Rivero has come all the way from Caracas, Venezuela to be with us today. Brazilian representatives are here as well to emphasize the close ties to their country General Walters established in Italy where he was the official American military liaison officer to the Brazilian Expeditionary Force in World War II as well as Attaché subsequently in Brazil.

Who is this American hero whom we celebrate here today? For those who did not have the privilege of knowing this wonderful man it is worth the effort to review briefly his life and singular accomplishments.

He was born in New York City on the 3rd of January 1917, the son of a successful insurance broker and a charming lady of Irish descent from the British Caribbean Islands, which explains in part, I suspect, why he had such a marvelous sense of humor. By the way, as President Clift has noted, every friend of the great statesman knew him as Dick to such an extent that he once observed to me that any letter addressed to him with a salutation “Dear Vernon” was immediately recognizable as a solicitation of one sort or another.

If I refer to him in the present tense it is only because he is still very much a living member of my family and we can often sense his presence among us as we reminisce about the many wonderful times we spent together. Back to our hero: He spent some ten years from age six to sixteen in European schools soaking up foreign languages like a sponge and acquiring a facility for new ones, which astounded his peers. I think Denis has referred to some eight—that’s a slight understatement, he also had remarkable ability in others as well. His Dutch was remarkable; his Polish commendable. And, even on one occasion, which you may have heard of, he was invited to address the graduating class of the Japanese Military Academy and he asked that his speech be prepared phonetically in English from the Japanese and presented the entire address in Japanese to the assembled multitude to loud cheers and acclaim.

Dick left school and returned to New York to join his father’s firm as a claims adjuster and investigator, for which his command of foreign languages was a decisive asset, especially in New York City. Then fate intervened. As Dick remarked later, Adolph Hitler did at least one good deed in his life even though it was involuntary. He got Dick out of the insurance business by starting a war. In fact, on 2 May 1941 Dick enlisted in the Army at Flushing Armory in New York City and was sent to Camp Upton. Shortly thereafter he was assigned to the 187th Field Artillery Regiment at Fort Ethan Allen. It was there long ago that he began his first exposure to the intelligence world. As head of the Military Ski Club he was approached very discreetly by the FBI with a request that he keep an eye on a group of German sympathizers who skied in the same area as his club. He did so, arduously reporting his observations to his FBI handlers. He never learned if his sightings

were of any value, yet his cooperation did result in an effusive letter of appreciation from a senior FBI official to Dick's military supervisors who were greatly impressed by it. Dick believed that this letter played a role subsequently in securing his onward assignment to OCS at Fort Benning in Georgia. His gift for languages, and perhaps that FBI commendation, had come to the attention of the Army, which surprisingly recognized his competence and sent him off to Camp Ritchie in Maryland for training as a prisoner of war interrogator. His tent-mate there was none other than Archie Roosevelt, grandson of President Theodore Roosevelt, who was later to have a distinguished career in the CIA.

Archie never mastered the fine art of reading maps. In those problems where a team of two was dropped off at night in a remote spot with only a disguised map to hint at how to reach the rendezvous, Archie glommed onto Dick, thereby enviably being among the very first teams to reach the assigned destination.

On to the 9th Army Division, and the landing at Safi in French Morocco on 8 November 1942. It was Dick's native command of the French language that was instrumental in bringing the French garrison over to our side, as well as convincing the French Vichy Regime Regent Admiral Francois Darlan to switch loyalties. Dick loved to tell the story of being in charge of an ever-expanding collection of French prisoners of war whom he went to inspect in the building where they were held. As luck would have it, as he was screening them to select candidates for more detailed interrogation, the lights suddenly went out. When they came back on, Dick was aghast to note that his pistol was missing. He proceeded to inform the prisoners at that point that he would turn out the lights yet again, briefly, and if his pistol did not appear when the lights came back on dire treatment would be meted out to the prisoners one by one until his weapon was restored to him. The lights were duly extinguished. And when they were restored shortly thereafter not only was his pistol in plain sight but five additional handguns as well.

It was in Morocco that Dick, for the first time, met the Crown Prince who later became King Hassan II and his lifelong friend. Indeed, Dick was one of the rare foreigners elected to full membership in the Moroccan Academy, which he attended regularly and where, as he loved to recall, he was once asked to deliver a speech in French on the importance of water in the African Sahel. He was soon summoned back to the U.S. to escort a group of very senior Brazilian officers inspecting American military facilities and equipment in preparation for the impending deployment of the Brazilian Expeditionary Force participating in the Italian campaign as part of the U.S. 5th Army. Again Dick soaked up Portuguese in record time and formed lifelong friendships with many of these officers whom he was to meet again in Italy and later as Assistant Military Attaché to Brazil. Several of them, by the way, became Marshals in the Brazilian Army, Ministers of War, and at least two of his close friends became Presidents of Brazil.

Back in Italy, Dick became Aide to General Mark Clark, Commander of the 5th US Army, in what turned out to be one of his most demanding assignments. At one point he felt that he was not adequately performing his duties as Aide to the Commanding General and, screwing up his courage, he suggested that perhaps it was time for a change of assignment. General Clark fixed him with a beady eye and snarled, "Walters, I decide



**Ambassador Hugh Montgomery**

when my Aide is ready for a new assignment and you may rest assured that at such time you will be the first to know.” Not surprisingly Dick became General Clark’s official liaison officer to the Brazilian Expeditionary Force and ultimately assumed the responsibility on a full-time basis. Dick is, by the way, one of only two foreign officers ever to receive the Brazilian Military Cross for bravery in the face of the enemy. Subsequently, after the end of the war in Italy, Major Walters was assigned to Brazil as Assistant Military Attaché, where his career as Presidential Aide, Interpreter and masterful trouble-shooter began. This assignment led to service in these capacities with every President from Harry Truman to Ronald Reagan excepting only JFK.

Dick was exceptionally close to President Eisenhower, about whom he always enjoyed telling stories. One story

involved a Presidential visit to a small country with Dick again scheduled to serve as interpreter. When a member of the party pointed out to President Eisenhower that Colonel Walters did not speak the local language, Ike responded, “That’s all right, give him a grammar book and by the time we land he’ll be fluent.”

As many of you already know, Dick went on to an enormously successful tour as a Military Attaché in Rome and Paris, where he conducted a highly successful series of negotiations with the North Vietnamese, which led ultimately to the conclusion of the Vietnam War. He was also directly involved in the secret arrivals and departures of then-National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger who was conducting preliminary talks with the Chinese to arrange President Nixon’s subsequent secret visit to Beijing. On one occasion Dr. Kissinger complained to Dick about the complex arrangements for changing cars in the dead of night and other evasive actions to conceal from the public eye the presence of Kissinger in Paris, although a very narrow group of French officials obviously were aware of these trips because they helped in making the arrangements. Upon hearing this complaint from his friend Henry Kissinger, Dick responded in this fashion, “Dr. Kissinger, will you please continue to run the world in your own fashion, but let me handle the clandestine infiltrations and exfiltrations?” Kissinger laughed and never again complained about the discomforts or inconveniences. And not a single one of his many visits to Paris became public knowledge until long after the fact, thanks to Dick Walters.

After Paris, Dick returned to Washington to become Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, during which time he performed an invaluable if sometimes overlooked

service by refusing to commit CIA resources to the Watergate cover-up, an action which would have inflicted grievous harm on the Agency.

After a glorious military career, Dick served President Reagan as Ambassador-at-Large to the United Nations where his formidable talents, quick wit and gift for repartee were all put to excellent use. Finally, he was Bush-41's Ambassador to Germany, where his crowning achievement was to foresee the reunification of that country some six months before it actually took place.

His good friend Chancellor Helmut Kohl, awarding him Germany's highest decoration, observed that Dick was the only person, German or foreign, who had predicted that incredible turn of events for which some senior American officials suggested that Dick might be showing the effects of his advancing years. Dick immediately offered his resignation to the President, who rejected it out of hand, assuring Dick of his full confidence and insisting that he remain in Bonn until the reunification of Germany had been consummated. It will surprise you not one bit to learn that he took regular German lessons every single day of his assignment to Germany and frequently delivered his addresses to German audiences in their native tongue.

You will hear more in the panel discussions which follow about details of Dick's multiple achievements in so many fields—military intelligence officer, diplomat and presidential emissary, interpreter and troubleshooter. You will understand, however, that many of his most spectacular successes still remain highly classified and are likely to remain so for a long time to come. Still, today's presentations will certainly give you a better appreciation for the remarkable and invaluable services this outstanding patriot made to the security of our nation over a span of some sixty years. Today is just the beginning.

Through the efforts of Dr. Perry Pickert, another old friend and partner in high crimes and misdemeanors, now of the Joint Military Intelligence College, we can all hope that this day will be followed by a series of monographs or publications on Dick's career, hopefully leading ultimately to a comprehensive biography of this towering figure of 20th century American history.

Let me conclude on a personal note. Dick was and is very much a part of our family who is still with us even if we are temporarily separated. He remains an inspiration, a wise counsel, a generous colleague and above all a devoted friend. I am also sure that we shall meet again in a better place. Perhaps one of the finest compliments, incidentally, that he would enjoy among the blizzard of accolades he received through the years was the comment once made by T.S. Eliot, "A man who loves cats can't be all bad." Dick would most assuredly not want to end this summary observation on a splendid life of achievement in a sad or lugubrious manner. I can clearly hear him saying in his unmistakably optimistic voice, *auf Wiedersehen, au revoir, arrivederci*.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

### **Ambassador Hugh Montgomery**

Ambassador Hugh Montgomery was born on 29 November 1923 in Massachusetts. He was educated at Harvard College and Harvard University, where he received a B.A. (1947), an M.A. (1948), and a Ph.D. (1952). He was elected to Phi Beta Kappa as an undergraduate.

Ambassador Montgomery in 1942 enlisted in the U.S. Army and served in the European theater of operations with the Office of Strategic Services until 1946. He received a direct commission in the field and retired from the military as a colonel in the Intelligence Branch.

In 1952 he joined the CIA, after completing his education and teaching modern languages at Harvard. He served in a variety of East and West European posts until his retirement in 1981. He then joined the Department of State as Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, where he remained until 1985, when he joined the Senior Review Panel at the CIA. Later that year, he was appointed the Alternative U.S. Representative to the United Nations for Special Political Affairs, with the rank of Ambassador.

Ambassador Montgomery in February 1989 returned to the CIA as a member of the Senior Review Panel. In December 1991, he was appointed the Special Assistant for Foreign Intelligence Relationships by the Director of Central Intelligence.

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## ***General Walters on the Defense Attaché System***

**(Recorded at the Defense Intelligence Agency, 21 September 1983)**

One of the interesting things that has developed over the years that I covered, and I covered a long time, has been the increase of professional competence in the Attaché System. When I first came into the Attaché System it was right after World War II and frankly they were looking to the Attaché System as a place to put senior officers that they wanted to not lose their rank or something and the Attaché System was largely a recipient of officers who might have been very competent in other fields but really had no specific qualifications to be Attachés. But it was somewhat deleterious to the Attaché System and people in the embassies and so forth didn't take them terribly seriously. They thought the Attaché job was some kind of a reward and really not a job to be done.

Over the years I have watched the selection of officers who have some specific qualification, whether it be linguistic or personal contact with people in that country, or some other reason why they are there. And furthermore when I first came into the Attaché System—[for] most Attachés it was absolutely their last job and they didn't go anywhere from there. Now, I understand, there is quite a different situation and many of the Attachés go on to very senior and important jobs. If the host country believes that the Attaché is on his last assignment, they really aren't going to spend much time with him.

So, I think the question of going on and promotion for an Attaché is a terribly important one to ensure not just the morale but the effectiveness of the Attaché System.

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## **PANEL ON LTG WALTERS' MILITARY INTELLIGENCE YEARS**

**Colonel John Prout, USA (Ret.), Moderator**

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, in this session the panel will explore several aspects of the General's career as a Military Intelligence officer. I think it is fitting that we begin with his career as a Military Intelligence Officer for that is how he began his career of government service more than sixty years ago.

General Walters had a rare gift as a Military Intelligence Officer to be in the right place at the right time. Further, I believe his inherent skill as an intelligence officer enabled him to do the right thing at the right time at the right place. His skill as a linguist, which is legend, was more than the ability to speak the language. He understood deep nuances, which is far more important than being merely a good linguist. This skill cannot be taught and perhaps cannot even be measured, and I fear that we do not pay enough attention to it in our highly technical world today. The speakers today will illustrate how General Walters used all of his talents to best advantage, not for his personal benefit, but rather for the benefit of the nation. In an address (see text box above) at the end of his career, he revealed his hopes for the continued professionalism of attaché officers.

## PANEL MEMBER

### **Brigadier General Clarke M. Brintnall, USA (Ret.)**

Ever popular with the ladies, Vernon Walters avoided entanglements despite everyone's introducing him to their sister, their wife's best friend, lovely widows, and others. He rarely drank but was always the life of the party. He loved good food, but when served something not to his liking, he could cut, mash, and move the food around to make it appear to his host that he had eaten heartily.

He had a soft spot for his many cats that adjusted happily to life wherever he was. He was deeply religious, but never tried to press his beliefs on anyone else. He set very high standards for his personal conduct but was forgiving of the faults and inadequacies of others. He often said that he was wed to his country's flag. His patriotism was so intense that for many years he refused to invest in stocks or real estate saying "my country needs my modest savings so I put them in savings bonds." His language was invariably correct, and I never heard him swear, but he was not a prude. He was very close to his family, and his mother was living with him before she died in Rio in 1964.

I'd like to take a few minutes to talk about Vernon Walters the man. He was known as Dick to his friends, but given our age and rank differences, I always addressed him by his title. It was my good fortune to know him for more than 42 years, beginning when I reported to the Army Attaché Office in our Embassy in Rio de Janeiro in July 1964 as a Foreign Area Specialist and ending with a lunch with him and his nephew Peter not long before he died. It was a friendship my family and I will always treasure.

Soon after my arrival in Rio in July 1964, I began to realize how fortunate I was to serve under him. A tour with Vernon Walters in Mozambique would have been a great assignment. The fact that we were in Brazil was just frosting on the cake.

One thing became apparent immediately—besides, of course, his intimate knowledge of Brazil and Brazilians—and that was that no one he met was beneath him. One-on-one, he could be as attentive to one of his drivers as he was to a chief of state. Young captain Foreign Area Specialists had no status in the Embassy, but he made sure that we were all brought into the full activities of the Army Attaché Office, soon thereafter the Defense Attaché Office, and that all of us received the benefit of his experience. Soon after I arrived he called one night asking if I had met the President, Castelo Branco. When I told him I hadn't, he said, "Pete, come over to my apartment, he's here now."

He made very clear that as Foreign Area Specialists we had to do more than just learn the language and about our host's armed forces; we also needed to learn the country's history, culture, economy and politics along with the language and things military.

He was fascinated by transportation projects, especially subways, and I believe that he had traveled on every metro in the world. He also loved to travel, especially by road. In January 1965 Colonel Walters, Major Jack Gardner and I set out from Brasilia in a U.S. Army 3/4-ton truck, with winch, over a very tenuous road with destination Belem do Para



at the mouth of the Amazon. Our Brazilian friends were bemused by the idea of such a trip. Why would anyone wish to travel a road that was, for much of its length, just a raw cut in the jungle and called “The Road of the Jaguars”? But that was the whole point. Colonel Walters wanted to do it before the road became a paved highway, and while it was still an adventure. An adventure it was, and a very bumpy one at that. The driver had the steering wheel to hang on to and the outside passenger could grip the door. The one in the middle, however, was without luck. Colonel Walters established the driving protocol. Every 45 minutes we would change positions and he would take his time in the middle seat just like the rest of us. On the return leg we encountered some very difficult terrain crossing the state of Maranhão in Brazil’s Northeast. It was hot and we had not bathed or shaved for two days when we came to an inviting stream. The three of us went into the water with our soap and razors to enjoy the feeling of being clean again. We noticed a man sitting on the opposite shore watching us intently but thought little of it. Only when we were out and dressed did Colonel Walters hail him and ask why he was staring at us. I don’t remember the precise reply, but it was something like, “Well, there are piranhas in the stream and I just wanted to see what would happen.” Needless to say, we were all very happy that none of us had cut himself while shaving. On reaching Salvador, Bahia, Colonel Walters received the good news that his promotion number had come up and that he would be pinning on his stars the following month.

It seemed that he could speak on almost any topic, and he tended to dominate the conversation. But at the same time he listened intently. His antennae were always up. He could make you feel you were the center of the universe while at the same time taking in everything around him.

He always worked hard to prepare himself. He often said that everyone gets lucky breaks, but the successful are those who are prepared to take advantage of them. His two books are replete with examples of his thorough preparation for meetings with foreign leaders, to include even memorizing a poem about the Palestinian longing to return to the slopes of Mt. Carmel. This attention to detail was evident in mundane matters. He said that he spent some time at the Air Defense Artillery School at Ft. Bliss prior to accompanying a group of Brazilian officers there because if he was to be their interpreter, he needed to understand the subject and the terminology.

He had a deep fondness for Brazil. He often said that he learned Portuguese with his heart, and he learned other foreign languages with his head. His ties to Brazil were permanently cemented with his assignment as Fifth Army Combat Liaison Officer to the Brazilian Expeditionary Force in Italy during World War II. He said that this was also one of the happiest times of his life. He was young; it was the only time in his military career that he felt that he was a real soldier, taking part in the battles of Monte Castelo and Monte Cassino; and he was serving with the Brazilians, many of whom would be close friends for the rest of his life. He was on a visit to Brazil days before his death.

His thorough preparation and prodigious memory were evident at the Watergate hearings. As I watched on television, I saw him alone at the witness table, with no counsel, no staff backup and no notes. He came through with flying colors and was proud



**Brigadier General Clarke M. Brintnall, USA (Ret.)**

of a statement by a Senator from Missouri who said after his testimony, “The American people will sleep better tonight because of people such as yourself.”

None of the Foreign Area Specialists was an intelligence officer, and he took the time to instruct us in the fundamentals of intelligence collection and reporting. Taking notes for road reports became second nature to us, no matter where we were traveling, as did recording biographic information. He would also use vignettes to instruct us. He did not like homogenized intelligence and used a simple example of order of battle to make his point. We had visited an army company where he made an estimate of the strength by counting those having their noon meal in the mess. Everyone in the unit took their noon meal there. He said that if one of us returned the following month the count would probably be different. Now there were two reports with differing numbers.

The analyst might ask, “Which one is correct” or “Please reconcile the differences.” His response to that was, “Both were correct when they were collected. Determining what figure to use is the analyst’s responsibility.” He knew how to make the most of limited resources. During the politically turbulent days of 1963 and early 1964 in Rio de Janeiro he was bombarded with a steady stream of rumors. He maximized his limited resources in separating fact from fiction. For example, when a source informed him that the Army was in a high state of alert and that a coup was in the making, he would dispatch his faithful Brazilian driver, Licinio, for a drive past the 1st Tank Battalion. If the M-4s were parked under their sheds with no unusual activity around them, he knew that the high alert allegation was a rumor.

Was he always correct in his judgments? Of course not, but he had the courage of his convictions. He would change his mind if you could make your case, but you had better have all the facts at hand. He was totally unbending in verbal confrontations with representatives of unfriendly countries. On those occasions he relished engaging in one-upmanship and used his mastery of languages, memory, cultural depth and instant recall to prevail, steadfast in his own sense of right and wrong. He also knew that when serving in the senior ranks of government, one occasionally had to swallow hard and press on. I once asked him why a senior appointee had not resigned in protest over an action by an administration. Frankly, I’ve forgotten the circumstances, but not his answer. He said, “You can only resign once. When you do, you lose your ability to influence events and the grass begins to grow at your doorstep.”

General Walters got along with just about everyone whom he met, but obviously he had his differences with some over the years. Did he carry a grudge? Only to a point. He often talked about the book he was going to write and more than once said that it was going to include an incident in WW II when an American colonel denied him a place to rest when he showed up late one night at the colonel's installation. He said that he was going to name the officer in his book. Well, the book was published and there was brief reference to the incident, but no name. When I asked him about it, he said, "Well, I was going to expose him, but you know he's an old man now, what good would it do?" So much for getting even.

We've all heard the definition of a gentleman, one who never offends unintentionally. General Walters was always the gentleman. Did he ever offend? Yes, but when he did, it was always considered and carried out with great skill, leaving no doubt that what he had done was intentional.

He was scrupulously correct in his dealings with others. Although he had served as a colleague in Europe with Ambassador Lincoln Gordon, when he reported to him on his arrival in Brazil, he said, "Mr. Ambassador, I am Colonel Walters, your Army Attaché. When I introduced him to a deputy assistant secretary of defense, very much his junior, he addressed him as Mr. Secretary.

He always kept in touch with friends and those with whom he had worked. A brief note with each promotion, blessed event, marriage in the family. All who served with him were devoted to him and, as a result, his influence grew wider with each passing year. He was also very generous with his time and his possessions. Countless guests stayed at his apartment in Paris, his U.S. Ambassador's quarters at the Waldorf Towers, and his other homes both when he was present and when he wasn't. When he encountered someone engaged in a humanitarian effort who needed money or material resources, he would often quietly dig deeply into his own pocket to help out.

General Walters was an authentic American and patriot. I hope that these brief remarks will help you to understand his human qualities better.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

### **Brigadier General Clarke M. Brintnall, USA (Ret.)**

Clarke “Pete” Brintnall is Executive Vice President of Partners in Healthcare, a non-profit corporation established to develop and manage the effective transfer of the best available medical and other healthcare knowledge between the U.S. and international healthcare professionals through the Internet. His last active-duty assignment was in the Office of the Secretary of Defense where he was Director of the Inter-American Region and Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Inter-American Affairs. He served as National Security Council Director of Latin American Affairs after retiring from the Army in 1988 with thirty years of service.

Other assignments included Assistant Deputy Director for Attaches and Operations, Defense Intelligence Agency, and three tours in Brazil as a Foreign Area Specialist, Assistant Army Attaché, and Defense and Army Attaché. He was an intelligence staff officer with the U.S. Army Southern Command in the Canal Zone. In his early assignments he was a signal company executive officer in Germany, led a communications training team to Iran, and was a section leader in the Communications Support Element, U.S. Strike Command. In Vietnam, he commanded the military intelligence company of the 1st Air Cavalry Division.

Since leaving government service, he has served as a consultant to Brazilian and American organizations in the areas of healthcare, investment and technology transfer. He has served on the boards of various businesses, as well as educational and charitable organizations.

General Brintnall is a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy and the Army War College. He holds an MBA in International Business from American University and an MA in Latin American Studies from the University of Arizona. He also attended the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

## PANEL MEMBER

### Colonel John F. Prout, USA (Ret.)

I had the good fortune to meet General Walters several times during my military career and the last time we met was ten years ago almost to the day. Several thousand World War II Veterans who had participated in the Italian Campaign had assembled in Rome for the dedication of a monument, a plaque actually, to commemorate the liberation of the city in June of 1944. Senator Dole, who had been severely wounded in the Italian Campaign, was there; Senator Inouye, who had lost his arm, was there; Senator Hollings was there, as were three hundred and forty-seven other members of Congress.

Following the ceremony the City of Rome threw a huge party for all of the veterans who attended and for their families. I had just arrived a day earlier as the Attaché Designate in Rome. But because I had not as yet been accredited by the Foreign Ministry, I was not able to wear the *aiguillette*, which is the badge of office of an attaché. So, I was wandering around the Capitoline Hill—the hill from which the City of Rome has been governed for thousands of years, trying to answer the questions of the Veterans, trying to assist those I could. General Walters walked up to me. I of course recognized him immediately, and he was walking with the aid of a walking stick at the time and said in that characteristic voice, “Colonel, who are you?” I said “Well General, I’m the designated Army Attaché and I arrived here yesterday.” He looked me up and down and said, “Colonel, there’s hope for you.” I had no idea what he was talking about but there was a large crowd of generals surrounding us at this point including the then-Army Chief of Staff General Gordon Sullivan. And I said, “General, what do you mean?” He said, “Colonel, I had your job thirty years ago and it didn’t hurt me a bit.” That was certainly true of his job as Attaché to Rome and can probably be said about most of the jobs he had when he was in the Army.

General Walters had the very good fortune in my opinion to be educated by Jesuits very early in his life. Living and attending school in Europe, he managed to speak four languages by the time he was eighteen. Back in the United States, as we heard earlier, he was working in his father’s insurance company as an insurance adjuster and said that the principal thing that World War II did was to get him out of the insurance business. When he enlisted he noted that he spoke four languages and that he was familiar with several others, and he believed certainly that the Army would take a look at this and immediately put him into the intelligence corps. Not only that, but he assumed that since he spoke more than one language, he would be made a senior officer right off. Considering his skills and demonstrated talents, the Army put him where he could do the most good—he was sent to be a truck driver at Fort Ethan Allen in Vermont.

Soon, after a rather illustrious career as truck driver, the Army did notice his leadership qualities and sent him to Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning. At the time young Lt. Walters was commissioned, he lacked the requirements to be inducted into the Military Intelligence Corps, a fledgling organization which had been put together quickly at the start of World War II. The Military Intelligence Corps of 1942 required that one have a

college degree, that one speak at least one foreign language, and that one had lived for some time overseas. Although he passed two of those tests with flying colors, he lacked the college degree. So, rather than being commissioned as a Military Intelligence Officer, he was commissioned as an Infantry Officer, 2nd Lieutenant, and sent to the 338th Infantry of the 85th Infantry Division at beautiful Camp Shelby, Mississippi. He was assigned as platoon leader, but when the battalion needed an S2 he was assigned to that position. The only proviso was that he had to do both jobs.

In August 1942 he was ordered to the newly established Military Intelligence Training Center, which had been set up at Camp Ritchie, Maryland, in the beautiful Catoctin Mountains. There, the eight-week core course taught the students the basics of military intelligence operations. They spent time on map reading and terrain appreciation. They also spent time on staff procedures, counterintelligence, enemy order of battle, and as part of signal communications training they learned the uses of pigeons. In physical training they were taught judo and unarmed combat. Following general instruction, the class was broken down into smaller groups for two more weeks of intensive training, either as interrogators, photo interpreters, interpreter/translators, or counterintelligence officers. Within the interpreter/translator and interrogator fields, they were further broken down into smaller groups based on language.

Lieutenant Walters was placed in a French language group, where many of the other students were either originally French or French Canadians, and spoke French as a first language. Unbeknownst to Lt. Walters and his fellow students, there were informants who were also assigned to the school. In each group of students there were two to five Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) agents who were posing as students. In reality they were observing the other students and reporting on signs of disloyalty, disaffection or the possibility that they were enemy agents who had infiltrated the Military Intelligence Training Center.

The Army doctrine at the time called for teams of interrogators and interpreter/translators to be trained at Camp Ritchie and then to be held there until they were needed. Following graduation, the students would continue to practice their language with each other and they would form a cadre which would train the incoming students. The plan called for Camp Ritchie to eventually assemble thirty teams of interrogators and thirty teams of interpreter/translators. Each team was to consist of two officers and between four and ten enlisted men. Before class number two had reached graduation day, students—Walters among them—received secret orders sending them to Fort Bragg. In this era virtually everything to do with military intelligence personnel—their travel, their training, any identification at all, was all covered in classified orders, which made things difficult.

Walters and his fellow students were told that their training would be curtailed and they would leave immediately. Married men were told they couldn't tell their wives that they were leaving and Walters was faced with the fact that he had to leave his car at Camp Ritchie. At Newport News he embarked on the *USS Lyons*, which was to be his home for the next few weeks. Troops did not know where they were going. However, the ship sailed up the Chesapeake, and they participated in an amphibious operation on Solomon's Island, so they all had a pretty good idea they were going to invade something.

After they were at sea for about two weeks they were given word that they were going to assault North Africa in November of 1942. In the assault, Walters' team was supposed to support the 3rd Battalion of 47th Infantry. His orders called for him and his team to debark at H+10, but on the night before the assault the battalion commander explained to Walters that he needed a French linguist with him in the first wave and asked Walters if he would volunteer along with his team to go ashore. Walters agreed, and this was certainly a feather in his cap because it showed to the combat commander that this intelligence officer was willing to put his life on the line with the troops. In *Silent Missions*, however, Walters notes that the battalion commander had asked other interrogation teams and they had demurred and stuck to their orders of arriving at H+10. Walters said he volunteered because he lacked the temerity to say no to a major.

Once ashore, Walters was in command of a small group of interrogators supporting the Allied landings at Safi in Morocco. He set up his interrogation shop in an abandoned warehouse and began his efforts at gaining useful information. The efforts of his interrogators proved to be virtually the only intelligence available to the commanders—first to the battalion commander, then to the regimental commander, and then to the division commander—all of whom were hanging around his interrogation cell. Walters was able to provide information he had obtained directly to the commander who then immediately acted upon it.

Beyond what he had learned at the Military Intelligence Training Center about “search, segregate and silence,” he also developed a kind of triage to determine very quickly that there were basically three categories of prisoners who were being brought to him. Those who knew something, and who could be convinced to share it; those who knew something and would not share it; and those who knew nothing. He used this model to separate prisoners and to obtain as much information as possible from the first category before evacuating them to the rear for higher echelon interrogators. At one point in his operation his small team of six had over 300 prisoners in its custody. For his efforts, the division commander did recognize the contribution that Walters and his interrogation unit had made and recommended him for the Legion of Merit. The citation reads in part:

That no other information was received during the operations at Safi save for that which was provided by the interrogations of prisoners of war by Walters' team and that their efforts allowed the ground commander to head off French reinforcements before they could get close enough to Safi and become a threat to the invasion.

As the invasion progressed Walters and his team were moved to other units in contact to interrogate prisoners of war, and his team was virtually the only source of information for the troops on the line.

By the middle of December Walters had the distinction of having conducted interrogations in three different languages—French, German and Italian—and this experience would be most valuable for the development of training back at Camp Ritchie. Before the year was out he was ordered back to Camp Ritchie and in a convoluted trip to the United States, which involved stopping at Gibraltar and Britain, he rode in an airplane

with the French general who would eventually become the head of the French Military Mission in Washington and who would later figure into Walters' career advancement. He arrived back at Camp Ritchie on New Year's Eve 1942 and was promoted to 1st Lieutenant. He was put in charge of the Italian section of the interrogators at Camp Ritchie.

In April of 1943 his language ability was brought to the attention of the Army Foreign Liaison Office. The Government of Portugal had sent a large contingent of Army, Navy and Air Force officers to the United States to observe military training and to get a firsthand look at U.S. military equipment. Portugal was at this time a neutral nation but the United States wanted its cooperation to allow us to use the Azores as a place where we could refuel submarines to better combat German submarines. The U.S. Army and the Navy had assigned officers to the delegation but there was no Army Air Corps representative. This duty fell to Walters. He did not know Portuguese, so he immediately started scrounging up every Portuguese magazine and piece of reading material he could find at Camp Ritchie in an effort to learn the language, and he found that he could understand the written word generally as it was very similar to Spanish and Italian but he was confounded by the spoken language. To his great relief the officers on the trip all spoke French very well and in the course of the trip while he was traveling with them he was indeed able to develop his skill in Portuguese.

About ten days into the trip Walters received a telegram that he had been given a temporary promotion to captain. Once the mission was all over he would revert to his original grade. At a reception in Washington Walters was speaking with his boss, General Béthouart, who was the French Military Mission leader whom he had met in the airplane flying out of North Africa, and with the head of the Portuguese Air Force entourage. General Béthouart asked in French how Walters had done in Portuguese. The Portuguese general answered in French that Walters spoke Portuguese like a Portuguese. The French general added that Walters speaks French like a Frenchman. And Walters noted in a letter home that such accolades were certainly not wasted on his boss. At the completion of this mission he had to remove the captain's bars and put on 1st lieutenant bars. He also had to develop a canned speech to explain that no, he hadn't screwed up in the midst of this escort duty. It was just that he had only been promoted temporarily: "Oh yes, yes, sure, sure. What did you do wrong?" Well, eventually the Army corrected itself and in June it rescinded the portion of the order that rescinded the promotion and backdated his promotion to April 20, 1943. Now you may not have been paying attention to the passage of time, but that means he went from private to captain in less than a year—a pretty meteoric rise.

Later in 1942 he was again called upon to escort other groups of Portuguese-speaking officers. In these escort missions, Walters showed his ability to understand not only the language but also to fathom the people with whom he was dealing. It is also interesting to note that, among those he had been chosen to escort over this period of time, two later became Presidents of Brazil and Portugal, Ministers of Defense, Commanding Generals of the Army and Commander of the Air Force. It is clear from his later dealings with them that they all recall this trip and the splendid manner in which he had handled the job of escort officer.



When Brazil entered World War II, he was again selected to be an escort officer, this time to go with Brazilian officers to the European Theater of Operations. The hope was that the Brazilians would provide three divisions to combat the Axis, but this was not to be so. However, they did offer the Brazilian Expeditionary Force. In late 1943 Walters was sent to the Embassy to start coordinating the movement of that force. Later he was made liaison officer to the Brazilian Expeditionary Force, where he served in combat in the Italian campaign.

What I have recounted in the past few minutes is part of a rather extensive history and a rather significant career. It is interesting that all of this happened to one man in the space of less than 24 months. To review, a young lieutenant who happened to be gifted with languages attended only the second Military Intelligence Training Course that the Army ever taught. He was ordered to accompany troops launching an assault on North Africa and in the course of his three weeks on the ground he personally interrogated hundreds of prisoners of war in Italian, French and German, and provided actionable information for a field commander. This same lieutenant, through force of character and his ability to understand the language, convinced a French colonel to surrender his entire command, thus eliminating an enemy force that U.S. troops would have had to face. Ordered back to the United States, he happens to ride in a plane with the French general who would eventually become Chief of the Military Mission in Washington and who would remember him. On his return to Camp Ritchie, he is told to escort and serve as interpreter for groups of high-ranking officers in a language he does not speak. He performs splendidly and the people he meets on the trip are to be future national leaders of Portugal. He repeats the same feat with a group of Brazilian officers, some of whom become heads of state and significant military leaders. Thus, in less than two years on active duty, this young officer had already set the stage for his future career of extraordinary service to his country.

## BIOGRAPHY

### Colonel John F. Prout, USA (Ret.)

In his thirty-year career, John Prout served in a wide variety of intelligence and counterintelligence assignments in CONUS and overseas.

He has commanded counterintelligence and collection units and has served as an intelligence staff officer at all levels of command. In his last

assignment on active duty, he held the Wilson Chair of Intelligence Operations at the Joint Military Intelligence College. Colonel Prout also served as the U.S. Army Attaché to Italy. Colonel Prout is currently an adjunct professor at the Joint Military Intelligence College, Defense Intelligence Agency, where he teaches a graduate course on Counterintelligence.

His is presently exploring the history of the U.S. Military Attaché Program for an eventual book on the subject. His articles have appeared in *Studies in Intelligence* and the *American Intelligence Journal*.



**Panel Members John Prout and Brian Shellum**

## PANEL MEMBER

### Brian G. Shellum

I had the honor and privilege of serving under Ambassador Walters when I was an Assistant Army Attaché at the Embassy in Bonn in the late 1980s. I was in Bonn from 1985 to 1989 and Ambassador Walters was there from 1989 to 1991. Of course this was a pivotal time in German history and it was also the beginning of the end of the Cold War. I'd like to talk to you about Vernon Walters as a Military Attaché and try to answer the question, "What made Vernon Walters the perfect Military Attaché?"

To begin with, you've heard a lot about his assignments, so let me give you a summary of his Attaché assignments. I've done extensive research into the history of Military Attaches and I know of no one officer who had as many assignments and who served as many tours as a Military Attaché for as long as Vernon Walters. He served first as Assistant Military Attaché to Brazil from 1945 to 1948; he then served as Military Attaché-at-Large in Paris from 1948 to 1950. He served as the Army Attaché to Italy from 1960 to 1962, the Army Attaché to Brazil from 1962 to 1965, and then continued on as the Defense Attaché to Brazil from 1965 to 1967. Finally, he was Defense Attaché to France from 1967 to 1971. That's a total of 16 years in a 34-year career in the Army or about half of his career.

Now, one could say he should have been the perfect Military Attaché since he had more practice than anyone else, but there's more to his success than that. General Walters always got along with his boss, the Ambassador. Now, this may have been more difficult for Vernon Walters than for most, at least initially. Ambassadors were normally asked beforehand if the Military Attaché nominee was acceptable and sometimes Ambassadors actually put in by-name requests for Military Attachés. Vernon Walters could thank U.S. Presidents for some of his assignments. So the Ambassadors really had no choice but to take him. But the Ambassadors always quickly grew to rely heavily on Walters once he arrived in country and showed his ability. As to his ability to report information, Walters was clearly without peer. A Military Attaché's most important job is to use his military expertise and to report on military developments in the host country. The Ambassador needs this and the Military Attaché Service and DIA require it. Walters was helped in this by his exceptional ability in languages. His official military file lists that he could interpret, translate, read and write French, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, and German. His biography also notes that he could speak Dutch and Russian, and there are probably another half-dozen languages that he could speak or get by with. This unique ability to master languages certainly was his passport to success.

A 1947 issue of the *Army Information Digest* stressed the importance of language ability for military attaché: "It is useless to attempt to meet and talk with people—especially the man on the street—unless one has a working knowledge of the native language. In many countries, to be sure, many of the nationals speak English, especially in diplomatic and military circles. But it is still necessary to know the language, for it is the average man who generally determines the true direction and degree of progress or

regression in a country.” Vernon Walters would have agreed wholeheartedly with this assessment but would have extended the use of a native language to diplomatic and military circles. He noted an example of this in his book, *The Wall Falls*. He recounted a visit to Germany in the 1970s (when he was DDCI) to brief Chancellor Helmut Schmidt on the location and composition of a Soviet military unit in Berlin. The Chancellor opened the meeting in English and instructed Walters that he could conduct the briefing in English. Walters replied in German, “*Herr Bundeskanzler*, I know that your English is far better than my German but we are in Germany. You are the Federal Chancellor and since my German is adequate, I think it would be more courteous for the other gentleman present if I proceeded in German.” He did so, though the Chancellor was slightly taken aback, and Walters managed to convince Schmidt of the presence of a Soviet motorized rifle division in Berlin.

Now, language alone was not sufficient to enable an effective attaché. Walters was proficient in his profession and was a meticulous writer and reporter. You have only to sit down with one of his books or diaries to know that he wrote down everything. His diaries, some of which we have here at DIA, are fascinating reading and it’s very interesting to compare what he wrote in his diaries to what he wrote in some of his published works. In *Silent Missions* he wondered how one talked to the enemy. Did one shake hands with them? He did of course shake hands with the North Vietnamese on 4 August 1969 when he opened the secret discussions with them. But in his diary he wrote, “I was wrong to be shaking hands with the bastards.” Clearly Walters was proficient in representing his service, and later, DIA. (Attaches belonged to the services—Army, Navy, Air Force—before the establishment of DIA in 1961 and the creation of the Defense Attaché System in 1965.)

During Walters’ first three tours, his boss was the Army Chief of Staff for Intelligence. For his last two tours, he reported to DIA and the Deputy Director responsible for Attaché Operations. He was highly regarded in both circles. This is not to say he didn’t ruffle feathers along the way. Prior to his assignment in Rome, Walters traveled extensively with President Eisenhower. Eisenhower recognized and respected Walters’ talents and was responsible for his appointment as the Army Attaché in Rome in 1960. General Andrew Goodpaster informed Walters of the fact—much to the dismay of the Army Chief of Staff of Intelligence, who had picked another candidate for the job. Of course Walters won out on his qualifications as well as his connections. But his service boss was not happy.

There are some other attributes that separate the adequate military attaché from the superior. These traits run across all of the abilities I mentioned earlier, to keep the Ambassador happy. These same traits prevent one’s service from sacking you, and stave off an early departure courtesy of the host country. Walters had all of these in spades. The first of these abilities is telling long, entertaining stories that have some message or meaning and we’ve already heard a number of those. Of course, Vernon Walters was an absolute master at this. If you remember anything from your last meeting with Vernon Walters, if you were fortunate to have met him, you probably remember the tale he told you.

Vernon Walters was adept at earning the respect of host-nation officials and officers, as also recounted in his book *Silent Missions*. Shortly after his arrival in Rome, he paid a courtesy call on the Italian Chief of Intelligence whom he had first met during World War II. Shortly thereafter he made an official visit to an Italian Army Unit. He drove himself and stopped at a well-known restaurant in Florence, certain that he had not been followed along the way. After a fine meal in the restaurant he was approached by an Italian member of the carabinieri, who informed him that his itinerary for the visit to the Army base had changed and that his meal had been paid for. This was at once a compliment to General Walters but also a lesson from the Italian Chief of Intelligence that he was being watched.

He never forgot that lesson. It was fairly easy to cooperate with Allied colleagues as a Military Attaché abroad, but sometimes difficult to earn the respect of enemies and adversaries. Walters learned this lesson also. He found it easy to maintain friendly relations with his Soviet Military Attaché counterpart, made easier because of his ability to speak Russian. He was always kind and considerate of his Soviet counterpart even while others were cold and abrasive. Walters made it a point to congratulate the Soviet officer the day Yuri Gagarin went into orbit and the Soviet officer visited Walters before departing Rome and thanked him for his kindness, consideration, and his professionalism. But this ability to respect the other side went both ways. When speaking of his experiences facilitating two sets of secret talks in Paris, he said: "Going to see the Chinese was always stimulating and challenging; going to see the North Vietnamese was like going to the dentist."

As we've already discussed, General Walters was born in New York City in 1917 and he grew up in Europe attending schools in London and Paris, finally going to Stonyhurst College in England until 1933, although he never graduated. I think he was always a little embarrassed by this fact. After Walters' five-year stint in the insurance business, World War II began and he enlisted as a private in 1941 and attended Officer Candidate School in 1942 and the rest is history. I think a lifetime of learning and accomplishments probably counts or merits credit for an equivalent to graduation from Stonyhurst. There is one other caution in the 1947 *Army Information Digest*, and that is, it is not intended that the Military Attaché duty be a career. The tours of duty are not permanent. Once an officer loses contact with American troop organizations and with his basic arm he loses much of his effectiveness as a military observer.

Toward the end of his career General Walters essentially became a professional Military Attaché and he had to fight to maintain professional competence in his expertise. Of course he succeeded in this. General Walters claimed in his book *Silent Missions* that in addition to the other abilities already mentioned, a successful attaché must possess some sort of special quality or gimmick. He claims that speaking the local language might serve for a while but after one stayed in a country long enough that might be taken for granted. He mentioned Brazil and again we've already talked about this, that he used to travel all over distant parts of the country in a 3/4 ton, 4-wheel-drive truck. When he went to France, he believed he would need more than the French language. He arranged a two-month orientation visit to Vietnam, after departing his station in Brazil and before reporting to France. He believed he needed to see and

experience Vietnam in order to be an effective representative of the U.S. in Paris. This was in part to achieve that professional competence mentioned earlier. But he also believed deeply in what the U.S. was doing in Vietnam.

If we add a few other necessary characteristics like sure-footedness, discretion and an appealing personality, you have Vernon Walters. One author described him as honest and unpretentious, loyal to his religion and to his country, steadfast in his faith in free societies, proud of his achievements, respectful and admiring of greatness in men he has known. These qualities made him the absolute Attaché, one who described himself as a pragmatist tinged with idealism. And that says it all.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

### **Brian G. Shellum**

Brian Shellum served in the U.S. Army as an armor officer and West European Foreign Area Specialist before retiring in 1994. His career highlights include various armor troop assignments, a tour as an Army Attaché in Bonn, Germany; Gulf War service on the staff of the 2nd Brigade, 1st Armored Division; and work as a senior intelligence analyst at the Defense Intelligence Agency. He lived and studied for eleven years in Germany and speaks fluent German. He graduated from the U.S. Military Academy, holds an M.S. degree from Campbell University, and studied at the University of Bonn. His military decorations include the Bronze Star, two Defense Meritorious Service Medals, the Meritorious Service Medal, two Army Commendation Medals, the Joint Service Achievement Medal, and the Order of St. George.

Mr. Shellum has been the Deputy DIA Historian since 1994. His publications at DIA include *Defense Intelligence Support in the Gulf War: A Chronology* (1997); *At the Creation, 1961-1965: Origination Documents of the Defense Intelligence Agency* (2002); and *Development of Defense Human Intelligence* (2003), a classified study. He has authored a book on Colonel Charles Young, the third black graduate of West Point, the first black U.S. military attaché, and highest-ranking African-American Regular Army officer prior to World War I. The book, titled *Black Cadet in a White Bastion: Charles Young at West Point*, will be published in the spring of 2005 by the Nebraska University Press.

## PANEL MEMBER

### Captain Philip S. Siff, USAF

I will give you a sense of what General Walters participated in during the negotiations with the Vietnamese during his years as Defense Attaché in Paris (1967-1972). As we just noted, he came to Paris after a brief tour of duty in Vietnam. He records that he intended to go to Paris to “fix the relationship with France.” France had just pulled out of the military structure of NATO and asked all foreign governments to remove their troops based there. Things were definitely not going well between the U.S. and France. It was also a time in which Communism seemed to be on the rise around the world. There was a sense in the U.S. that Communism was one bloc, that it was set against the Free World and that there was no difference between the Chinese or the Russians or anyone else. It was becoming more and more challenging to create a positive, coherent strategy within the U.S. Government.

President Johnson, in an effort to jumpstart negotiations, had limited the military actions that could take place in Vietnam, stopping the shelling, the artillery, and the bombardment of North Vietnam especially. During this time—from 1965 to 1968—the State Department counted 69 public attempts to try to negotiate a settlement in Vietnam. But the Communist Vietnamese were not inclined to do that. They did not want to negotiate a settlement while they thought they could get an end to the war favorable to them through military means.

This was the world that existed as Vernon Walters was there as the Defense Attaché in Paris and as President Nixon assumed office. He had a very close relationship with President Nixon. General Walters had accompanied him on his trip to the Latin American countries where then-Vice President Nixon had been the target of very violent demonstrations. Years later, President Nixon would recall, “Everyone who has been associated with you, General Walters, has had the wonderful gift of knowing you. They have shared the good life together as an Attaché. But you and I, we shared the fear of death together.”

After Nixon’s election, General Walters was asked by the newly appointed National Security Advisor, Dr. Kissinger, to provide four papers on what he thought of current issues. Those were Vietnam, NATO, France and Brazil—areas about which they wanted to know what he thought. As a result of these papers, and the strong bond between General Walters and President Nixon, Walters was chosen to head up the secret negotiations between the U.S. and the Vietnamese. During this time General Walters arranged the secret comings and goings of Dr. Kissinger.

Dr. Kissinger in his book, *The White House Years*, recounts how they would go in and out of the country, the different disguises they would use, and how they would conduct midnight rendezvous and the like. General Walters was also the conduit, so he would go and meet individually with the North Vietnamese whenever they wanted to pass a message back and forth. In addition to serving as the translator and interpreter at the meetings with

Dr. Kissinger, he would also write all the memoranda of conversations from memory. He never took notes.

This brings us to consider the value of his skills. General Walters was a linguist first: He had to understand his target's capability, he had to understand how to communicate with them; but he always viewed that as a way, a tool, to apply his real skill, which was to be an intelligence officer. President Eisenhower loved this about General Walters, that he was a student of history and politics and of prominent individuals. Vice President Nixon even used that phrase in a letter of commendation after the violent protest in Caracas, noting that this was the key that made General Walters so useful. It wasn't just that he was a linguist; it was that he had skill and knowledge that he could use to inform others about the ongoing proceedings. Both President Eisenhower and President Nixon, and I believe Dr. Kissinger, valued his opinion.

Another of his skills was to bring continuity to the implementation of foreign policy, because he was a translator for seven Presidents, and for Averell Harriman. He was with all these people throughout decisive events in history. He knew the other side of the table as well as he knew the U.S. side. When he went to a meeting with the French or the Algerians or whoever it might be, he knew them ahead of time so he could advise and comment like no one else. As a keen judge of character, a skill that cannot be taught, he was able to zero in on key points to advise Presidents and other officials.

He had a photographic memory. He could go to three or four meetings, then go back to his room and write them all out. And the public officials didn't have to worry about whether they were getting his opinion; they got what was said. They knew that and they could trust in that. He certainly offered his opinion, but he was very intent on being nonpartisan. He did this in the negotiations as well. He would put the facts down—what had happened—and he would send them forward in good faith. General Walters was completely dedicated to serving the President regardless of his own opinion. He was determined to do his duty. In that way, General Walters was important. It was not that his assessments were laced with opinion, as all assessments are in some way, but they reflected his ability to link current events with the history of the people involved.

General Walters engaged in "all-source intelligence" before the profession recognized the term. He exploited libraries, he was visiting with people, and he was going to public facilities and getting public information as well as working the cocktail circuit. He was working his friends; he was working all the contacts that he maintained and he was putting that together. He did this constantly and he did it well. He did not work from 9 to 5. When he went home, he went on the rounds of the cocktail parties and some nights he might be invited to three or four. He would make contact and get information. All at the same time, he defended and refined his own views.

General Walters knew how to make information relevant to issues—to get beyond the facts. Today we hear that the conflict in Iraq bears similarities to Vietnam. I often have thought over the last few months about what General Walters would have thought? I think he would say that the conflict in Iraq is related to Vietnam in the sense that a central issue is the use of the media to influence foreign policy through public opinion. He really



detested the Communist Vietnamese, and the way in which they influenced public opinion through the press. He wrote about that in his diaries as well as in his memoirs.

He is a wonderful example of what we can accomplish as intelligence officers. I have been privileged to study him. We can take away from this that he was a dynamic, articulate man who was very dedicated to the United States, to the President and to those around him.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

### **Captain Philip S. Siff, USAF**

Captain Siff holds the Master of Science of Strategic Intelligence degree from JMIC. He was born in Lafayette, Indiana, on 31 October 1968 and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Winthrop University of South Carolina. He worked for a Fortune 500 company for four years before he enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1995. He served five years as a military intelligence analyst, then attended Air Force Officer Training School and was commissioned in May 2000.

He has participated in Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM, performing a variety of intelligence and operations duties in Afghanistan and Kuwait. He is the recipient of the Bronze Star, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, and the National Defense Service Medal. He also was recognized as the 1998 Ft. Meade Multi-Service Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year, and has earned numerous other academic and leadership awards.



**Panel Members Capt Philip Siff and Michael Richter**

## PANEL MEMBER

**Michael Richter**

*JMIC Intelligence Community Scholar*

I will address the role of Vernon Walters at the Paris Summit of 1960, which was sabotaged by the Soviets, as it occurred shortly after Francis Gary Powers' U-2 reconnaissance aircraft was downed over the Soviet Union. Throughout this presentation, my goal is to share some themes with you about General Walters, the kind of man he was, and for those who knew him, I hope these themes resonate with some of you. I think we have already spoken about some of them already.

Initially the intentions for the Paris Summit were to have some small, restricted meetings of the leaders of the world: Prime Minister Macmillan of Great Britain, Premier Khrushchev of the Soviet Union, General de Gaulle of France and, of course, President Eisenhower. What made Walters' role unique at this time was that he was able to take part and witness these very historic important meetings and be an eyewitness to them for us.

Declassified State Department papers that I was able to find at the Eisenhower Library told me, in the most general sense, about what the United States was hoping to gain there. They wanted to build upon Khrushchev's policy of peaceful coexistence; they wanted to show the world that the United States was not going to accept the status quo in Eastern Europe; they wanted to ease travel restrictions, to get Americans and Soviet citizens back and forth; increase cultural exchange so that they could create a cadre of professionals who could hopefully ease tensions. This was all aimed at lessening the prospect for nuclear war, which at this time was a distinct possibility. But these intentions quickly changed and complicated the meeting for President Eisenhower and of course for Colonel Walters.

Powers was shot down over the Soviet Union in May 1960. Khrushchev took this opportunity to use this event for propaganda purposes. He demanded an apology from President Eisenhower, which the President never granted. During this time the support that Eisenhower got from General de Gaulle was crucial. And, due to Walters' linguistic skills, having grown up in France, his cultural understanding was a real facilitator in helping Eisenhower get this support. Walters would later comment in his memoirs about how tense the atmosphere was around this Paris Summit.

By May 1960, when this Summit occurred, Walters had already worked for President Eisenhower for some time. And as a result they developed quite a rapport—they shared a level of trust. These two factors—trust between Eisenhower and Walters, and his fantastic language capabilities—allowed him to excel.

Two anecdotes illustrate both of these points. The first one, about trust, was related to me by John Eisenhower, the son of President Eisenhower. First of all, Mr. Eisenhower noted to me that "Dick Walters was a part of Dad's little family, and that the President always felt most comfortable with military people." Coming to a state dinner, Vernon Walters had forgotten his bow tie, a necessary part of the apparel at such a formal affair.

The President gave him one of his bow ties but Walters' neck was thicker than Ike's so the President took out a knife and cut it and they were able to fit it around. Eisenhower told me that it is very unlikely that his father would have done that for anybody else. This illustrates the level of trust that existed between these two gentlemen.

The other factor—language capability—is well known to many of you who served with, and were friends of General Walters. To say that he had a fantastic capacity for foreign languages certainly is an understatement. General Goodpaster, a former Aide to President Eisenhower and a long-time friend of General Walters, told me this story: When the President had landed at Orly Field in Paris for the May 1960 Summit, he gave some opening remarks that were translated by Vernon Walters. A French officer sitting next to General Goodpaster said, “Who is that French officer in an American uniform translating for the President of the United States of America?” His language was really that good.

On May 15, 1960, General de Gaulle, Prime Minister Macmillan and President Eisenhower met to discuss how they would respond to Khrushchev's demand for an apology for the U-2 incident. They realized that intelligence was vital for any policymaker, especially when dealing with the Soviet Union, since it was such a closed society. The hostile atmosphere caused a great deal of trouble for the President and for the President's advisors, including Vernon Walters. At the end of this meeting President de Gaulle of France grabbed Eisenhower's arm and said, “I want you to know that whatever happens, we're with you all the way.” This stirring comment was translated by Vernon Walters and witnessed by General Goodpaster. It's hard to overlook the strategic importance of that statement. Here we are in a conference, and it has become very hostile. There is real concern about a nuclear exchange, and France was clearly saying that that country would back the U.S. I'll note to you that each time I spoke with somebody about General Walters and his time at the conference, this was the first comment that came up—that he was the man who imparted this information to President Eisenhower from General Charles de Gaulle.

I think what we can see is that Walters, even at this earlier stage in his career, was much more than a translator. He was an advisor to the President; he was a confidant to the President; and he was a military officer—an intelligence officer, and a friend.

These themes that characterize Walters were not unique to his relationship with Eisenhower. If you look through his memoirs you will notice that it is in fact quite common. One anecdote that he mentioned in his memoirs, which I thought was quite good, involved President Truman's going to Wake Island to visit General MacArthur. Walters was with him. During that time Walters noticed that as the President got off the plane, General MacArthur was sitting in his jeep and did not stand at attention. Walters remembered this and thought it was wrong—that the General should have stood for the President. He looked at Truman to see if there was any outward indication that he had noticed this or was upset by it and he noticed none. Years later, after the President had retired to Independence, Walters, still thinking about this, still curious about it, went to Independence to visit him. He asked, “Sir, do you remember...” and before he could even

get to the heart of the question, President Truman interrupted him and very colorfully explained that in fact he did remember and that and he didn't like it very much.

These themes that we've seen associated with the life of Vernon Walters today—trust, loyalty, understanding of foreign cultures, fantastic linguistic capabilities, and of course others—are very illuminating for a young intelligence officer like me. These are the same sort of things we are learning at the JMIC, the same sorts of things that I think young intelligence officers need to be successful, and to continue to work on.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

### **Michael Richter**

Mr. Richter holds the Master of Science of Strategic Intelligence degree from JMIC, as well as a bachelor's degree in Political Science and Russian/East European Area Studies from the University of Pennsylvania. In addition to his studies at Penn, Michael studied Russian intensively in St. Petersburg, and spent a semester at the School of Slavonic and East European Area Studies at the University College of London. He also participated in the US.-Russian Student Democratic Leadership Conference held annually at Stanford University.

He has participated in two internships in Washington, DC. One was with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, the other with the American Enterprise Institute. He was president of the Skydiving Club at Penn, and serves on the secondary school committee for that university by interviewing applicants for entrance into the university.

## LUNCHEON ADDRESS

**General Alexander M. Haig, Jr., USA (Ret.)**  
*Former U. S. Secretary of State*

*(Introduction by A. Denis Clift, President of the  
Joint Military Intelligence College)*

The proudest pages of U.S. history display the records of those citizens who have served both in uniform and in the highest offices in the land—leaders in the era in which they have served, and shapers of the future of the nation. With greatest pleasure, I welcome our speaker of honor, General Alexander M. Haig, Jr., soldier, statesman and educator, a distinguished American who has led and who has had a most important role in shaping the course of America for the past half century.

General Haig graduated from West Point in 1947, and served on the staff of General Douglas MacArthur in Tokyo. His onward, distinguished service as an Army officer ranged from his years as a battalion and brigade commander in Vietnam to his service as Vice Chief of Staff of the Army and his years as Supreme Allied Commander in Europe from 1974 to 1979.

His extraordinary and distinguished service to the nation has ranged from his years in service as Deputy National Security Advisor to the President, and as the White House Chief of Staff for Presidents Nixon and Ford, to his years as President Reagan's first Secretary of State of the United States of America, the 59th Secretary of State. General Haig has lectured and taught at many of our leading universities. He is the host of his own television program, "World Business Review."

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome General Alexander Haig.

— **A. Denis Clift, President, Joint Military Intelligence College**

Thank you, Denis, for that generous introduction. Pat and I are delighted to be at the college for this well-deserved recognition of my old friend Vernon "Dick" Walters. We are especially pleased that we could share the occasion with the Montgomery family.

Pat and I have known Hugh Montgomery and his family for almost as many years as we knew our mutual friend General Walters. When Hugh headed INR at State in the early 1980s, he epitomized, as before and since, the essential characteristics of a truly superb intelligence officer who always told his boss the unvarnished facts rather than what he thought I might want to hear.

Denis, the years have flown by since we both signed on to Henry Kissinger's National Security Council Staff under President Nixon. Your span of public service with five Presidents testifies to your staying power. But since 1994 your demonstrated leadership and skill as President of the Joint Military Intelligence College provides irrefutable testimony of your remarkable talent and professionalism. Your vision and your passion for

developing the College as a center of excellence in educating America's intelligence professionals places you in the company of your nation's very best intelligence practitioners.

Throughout my own career I have said repeatedly that our intelligence professionals constitute indispensable assets to our nation and it is increasingly so during this global struggle with international terrorism. Unfortunately, beginning as early as the 1960s we began to downgrade the role of human intelligence as many senior leaders came to believe a fact was not a fact unless confirmed by modern technology such as satellite photographic evidence or electronic intercepts.

This began the downgrading of human analysis and human collection. We have seen this trend run rampant in recent years. Of course, high-tech systems are precious assets, but they cannot substitute for the human brain in the intelligence field or on the battlefield. More about this later.

On this occasion, I would be remiss not to say a word about Dick Walters. Few public servants have borne comparable responsibilities in their lifetimes. Fewer still have built a comparable track record in strategic wisdom and clarity of thought. None in my memory has made greater contributions to the intelligence field or demonstrated more integrity and courage in the process.

Were Dick here today he would admonish me not to center my remarks on him, but to address current concerns about today's international challenges which may indeed be the most significant we have faced since the Revolution and the Civil War. As a substitute for more on Dick, with the text of my remarks today I am enclosing copies of my personal reflections on General Walters which I presented at his funeral service at Fort Myer on March 5, 2002.

Although our nation faces multiple security challenges around the world, including on the Korean Peninsula, our relationship with Putin's Russia, and the Arab-Israeli dispute, no issue is more critical than how we cope with the military, intelligence and political challenges of the war on terrorism. In this struggle we face a severe military challenge.

We understand that the initial U.S.-led coalition campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq achieved rapid victory with few casualties. Coordinated air, ground and sea power reached into the most remote battlefields, quickly destroying enemy formations with skill and precision. Some before and after these campaigns have taken this to mean a new type of warfare that substitutes guided stand-off firepower for manpower, airpower for infantry, and technology for physical presence on the battlefield. And to a degree, it does.

But is this still-evolving style of warfare to become the model for our long-term force structure? I do not believe the answers are in yet. We should not allow initial successes to blind us to the limits of technology. Our military victory in Iraq depended heavily on a highly skilled, coalition military force that included infantry and armor able to improvise and modify plans in the midst of battle. No technological innovations or machines can replace this age-old human dimension of warfare. We will continue to need "boots on the



**General Alexander M. Haig, Jr., USA (Ret.)**

ground,” and in this regard I was pleased to hear President Bush say at the Army War College that if our military commanders determine that more troops are needed in Iraq, “we’ll get more troops.” Frankly, in my view more troops and heavy armor were required from day one of this war. Recently this has been proven by the skilled use of armored infantry and tanks in the recent urban fighting against Cleric Al Sadr.

Most importantly, success in war means more than winning the first encounters. We need coordination between the campaign and the post-war plans if victory is to be secured. Not only must the forces on hand be up to that task, so must their civilian leaders. In this regard, a most sensitive issue is our intelligence and our intelligence capabilities.

The war against Saddam was justified by his defiance of UN resolutions for over a decade. He nullified the cease-fire that ended the 1991 war. This was a fundamental challenge to international order and the UN itself, far more fundamental than the size of his stockpile. Even more significantly, it was a challenge to already-squandered American credibility in the region. Washington had organized the Gulf War to defeat Saddam in Kuwait. Washington had held the sanctions in place against increasing international criticism. But Washington had failed to resolve the problem of a terrorist with the intention and means to acquire weapons of mass destruction, and to use them. And two American presidents, President Bush and President Clinton, had passed the problem along.

Our Intelligence Community and those of other states all agreed that Saddam had the intentions and would have the means to accumulate a new arsenal of weapons of mass destruction once the sanctions were lifted. And no one—no one—expected those sanctions to last much longer. Indeed, they were already being violated wholesale. Let us also not forget that the no-fly zones protecting the Kurds and, less effectively, the Shiites from Saddam’s vengeance were being contested almost daily by Iraqi anti-aircraft fire. Those were our pilots, and British pilots, that they hoped to bring down. Finally, I for one believe that the last chapter has not been written on the de facto or de jure relationship between Saddam and al Qaeda and global terrorism.

Clearly, Saddam was an urgent crisis long overdue for resolution. He had shown that he could pursue aggression and terrorism, and despite American and international opposition, he could live to fight another day. Beyond any doubt, the Bush Administration would have had to face this crisis sooner or later. 9/11 made it sooner. Any war on state-sponsored terrorism would have Saddam at the top of the list.

So the intelligence was right on the big issues of intention and preparation. The debate is whether we should have known the real state of the stockpiles. A fallible intelligence service is not necessarily inept. But when I read that the CIA is still critically short of operatives on the ground, it reminds me of 1979 when I barely survived an assassination attempt in Belgium. The then-Director of CIA told me it was the work of a splinter group of Belgium nihilists. Apparently they were so nihilistic no one had ever heard of them. Nor could they be found. So I asked the West Germans what they knew. Within three months they reported it was the Baader-Meinhof gang, directed by the KGB. Later, when the Wall fell and the East German part of the gang was rounded up, its leader confessed to the accuracy of the charge.

It's not only a matter of money or recruiting. If we're ever going to get this straight, the Congress of the United States will also have to look at itself instead of proliferating commissions. The CIA was seduced by technology because the Executive Branch drove it that way and because the Congress put it out of the covert business. Our Presidents, Senators and Representatives did not like the sort of people employed by the CIA to gather information on the ground. They weren't the kind that you would want your mother to meet. Worst of all, they wouldn't look good testifying to Congress. The CIA's troubles in this respect are all homemade. We'll have to risk some dirt if we're going to be serious about the intelligence business.

Finally, one more challenge must be surmounted.

To fight the war on terrorism, we need a transatlantic forum or institution able to concert the diplomacy, unify the strategy, facilitate intelligence exchange and military reform. In short, we need NATO. Or to be more precise, we need to re-energize NATO. NATO can be the forum to reconcile differences and take joint action. It can bring about the inculcation of new military forces and doctrine. And the alliance enjoys a unique public legitimacy on both sides of the Atlantic.

After a very bad start, I think we are beginning to move in that direction. It will be easier to do so, however, once we engage in a little intellectual hygiene. A few bad ideas need to be washed away. For example, the notion that the United States can remake the world in its own image, on its own, as a reaction to violence from abroad, dates from Woodrow Wilson's time. It's an old populist con detached from reality; calling its champions "neocons" doesn't make it any better. Does anyone believe that the United States can turn Afghanistan and Iraq into thriving democracies; reconcile India and Pakistan; transform the Middle East and do it all with a 10-division army and a \$500 billion deficit? Thank goodness the President has come to realize this when he said at the Army War College that he "sent American troops to Iraq to make its people free, not to make them American." Frankly, we're lousy imperialists. We have neither the civil service



nor the patience. Further we lack the ambition. As Secretary of State Powell told the Archbishop of Canterbury, the only territory we've ever asked for is enough ground to bury our dead.

There is another bad idea that needs to be washed away. Some of our European critics hide a visceral anti-Americanism under the banner of multilateralism. They play upon people's resentment of an America that does not always speak softly or tactfully. But when you peel back the veneer, you find something we have seen before. These critics are the lineal descendants to those who opposed American leadership in the Cold War. Then they argued that NATO's effort to sustain a credible deterrence was the real threat to peace, not Soviet military power. Now they argue that America, not the terrorists, threatens the peace. They were wrong then. They are wrong now. During the ongoing "quadrennial silly season" perhaps our greatest risk would come from concluding that doing the right thing in Iraq in a flawed way means we shouldn't have done it at all. This would be a dangerous misreading of reality.

President Bush warned that if multilateralism becomes a slogan for inaction, it will simply turn the UN into a League of Nations. I agree. But the proven basis for a working multilateralism remains the Atlantic Alliance. If we cannot put together a coalition of the West before we go to the U.N., then forget about doing it once we get there.

I recognize that there are risks, big risks, in this approach. NATO has a lot of unfinished business in Europe. We may overload it by adding to its burdens the coordinated campaign of the war against terrorism. Then allies may not agree. Things can get worse. They usually do before they get better. Yet, there is little choice but to take the risks. When all is said and done, terrorists threaten the international order every bit as much as the dictators of old. Everything we have built up, the entire web of international relationships, our great cities, our global communications, will be lost if terrorism becomes the way to succeed in achieving political objectives.

Some have called this a war of civilizations. I disagree. It is more accurately a war for civilization. Not theirs, for the terrorists have none, but *ours*. The war against terror is thus a war *for* the West and all those who share, or wish to share, our values.

In this grouping of the West, I also include many Muslim people. The Turks, good members of NATO, are evolving a synthesis that combines a Muslim faith, a democratic government, and a modern economy they hope will become part of the European Union. President Bush has noted that more than half the world's Muslims already live under democratically instituted governments. In Indonesia, Pakistan, and even Saudi Arabia, a violent struggle has commenced between those anxious to join modern civilization and those who hope to destroy it. This, too, is a war for the West.

It is a war we must win.



**General Haig receives honorary degree from JMIC President Clift**

Churchill once said that when nations have had the power they have not always done right, and when they wished to do right they no longer had the power. The Atlantic Alliance, working with other nations including a growing China, certainly has the power. There is a West. And by putting NATO to work for it, we can assure not only the peace of the 21st Century but also the future of our civilization.

As you pursue your study of the thoughts, work and accomplishments of the late LTG Dick Walters, I am confident that you will reaffirm the basic tenets of a strong NATO and an ever-strengthened intelligence cap-ability. This was the focus of much of his energies and these precepts merit our frequent review and their incorporation in our strategic vision if we are to structure a more secure world for generations to come.

## BIOGRAPHY

### General Alexander M. Haig, Jr., USA (Ret.)

Upon graduating from the U.S. Military Academy in 1947, Alexander M. Haig was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Army, serving in Japan with the 1st Cavalry Division and on the staff of General Douglas MacArthur, in the Korean War with the X Corps and as aide to Lieutenant General Edward M. (Ned) Almond, in Europe. He served in the Pentagon from 1962 to 1965 and in Vietnam in 1966-1967 as battalion and brigade commander, receiving the Distinguished Service Cross for heroism. Among his many other military decorations are the Defense Distinguished Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Silver Star with Oak Leaf cluster, and Distinguished Flying Cross with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Purple Heart, and decorations from Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, Morocco, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Portugal.

In January 1969, he became the Senior Military Advisor to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, Dr. Henry Kissinger, and later became Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. In 1972, he was promoted to full General. During his four years in the White House, he served as the personal emissary of the President to negotiate the Vietnam ceasefire and the return of U.S. prisoners of war. He also coordinated President Nixon's historic visit to China. General Haig was serving as Vice Chief of Staff of the Army when President Nixon named him White House Chief of Staff, at which point he retired after twenty-six years in the Army.

In October 1974, at his request, President Ford recalled him to active duty as Commander in Chief, U.S. European Command. Two months later he was also appointed Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, responsible for the integrated military forces of NATO. In 1979, he resigned his post and retired from the Army. He was elected president and Chief Operating Officer of United Technologies Corporation, also serving on its board of directors. In January 1981, he was sworn in as the 59th U.S. Secretary of State.

General Haig is currently chairman of his own advisory firm, Worldwide Associates, Inc., assisting corporations around the world in providing strategic advice on global political, economic, commercial and security matters. He is host of the weekly television program, "World Business Review," and is a member of the board of directors of Metro-Goldwyn Mayer, Inc., MGM Mirage, Inc., and Executive Chairman of the Board of DOR BioPharma, Inc. He was a founding Director of America Online, Inc.

General Haig is the author of two books: *Caveat: Realism, Reagan and Foreign Policy* (1984), and his autobiography, *Inner Circles: How America Changed the World-A Memoir* (1992).



**Friends and Family of Lieutenant General Walters**



**JMIC Classroom honoring Lieutenant General Walters**

## PANEL ON LIEUTENANT GENERAL WALTERS' CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY YEARS

### ***Vernon A. Walters, Renaissance Man***

Introduction of Transcript of Lieutenant General Walters' Watergate Testimony

In contrast to most of his predecessors, Lt. General Vernon A. "Dick" Walters, a career U.S. Army officer and military intelligence expert, was a relatively high-profile figure as the CIA's tenth Deputy Director of Central Intelligence (DDCI). He served as DDCI for 50 months (2 May 1972 to 2 July 1976)—longer than all but one of his predecessors (Air Force General Charles Cabell, DDCI from 1953 to 1962).

General Walters was a highly gifted linguist, much in demand by presidents and other leaders who particularly valued his skills as a simultaneous translator. He was fluent in six major European languages and competent in at least several others including Russian. His language skills were complemented by his ebullient, upbeat personality, and his unblemished record for integrity, and his public nonpartisanship. He repeatedly showed that he could excel in handling a wide range of other responsibilities. After World War Two, for example, he handled substantive assignments involving new institutions and undertakings—the Marshall Plan, NATO, and SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers Europe). He also worked on post-war challenges in the Pacific region, including unsuccessful efforts to broker a reconciliation between President Truman and an insubordinate General Douglas MacArthur, commander of UN forces in Korea.

In 1972, General Walters was dragged into the Watergate fiasco. Senior White House aides pressed him to cooperate with schemes aimed at shifting the blame for the crisis away from the White House and onto the shoulders of the CIA. DDCI Walters adamantly refused, calling the proposals "nonsense," "stupid," and, if carried out, likely to totally discredit the agency. He made it clear that if these demands persisted, he would resign as DDCI in a manner that would ensure maximum embarrassment to President Nixon and his administration. The White House backed off.

In the words of a senior U.S. diplomat who was a friend and colleague of General Walters, the General, "despite numerous importunings from on high...averted a national catastrophe" when he "flatly refused to involve the Agency" in attempts by the White House to... "cast a cloak of national security over the guilty parties."

DDCI Walters later received the Career Intelligence Medal for having resisted intense pressures and preventing severe damage to the CIA and the nation. In presenting the award, the DCI, Dr. James Schlesinger, said that General Walters had not made a single "misstep" in handling this multifaceted crisis. If the General had made even one mistake or misjudgment, Dr. Schlesinger noted, it could have destroyed the CIA.

— **Henry Applebaum, former CIA analyst**

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**Testimony of Lieutenant General Vernon Walters  
Before the Senate Select Committee on  
Presidential Campaign Activities, 14 May 1973**

**Senator Sam Ervin (Chairman):** General Walters, will you please stand up and raise your right hand? Do you swear that the evidence that you shall give today about Presidential campaign activities shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

**General Walters:** I do.

**Samuel Dash (Chief Counsel):** General, would you please give us your full name and address for purposes of the record?

**Walters:** My name is Vernon A. Walters; I am the Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. I am, at the present time, the acting Director until Mr. Colby is sworn in by the Senate. I am a Lieutenant General in the United States Army.

**Walters:** On Monday morning, the 26th of June [1972] I received a phone call from a man who identified himself as John Dean, and he said that he wished to speak with me about the matters that Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Ehrlichman had discussed with me on Friday. I did not know Mr. Dean, and I expressed something to the effect of "I don't know who you are," and he said, "Well, you can call Mr. Ehrlichman to see if it's all right to talk to me or not."

**Dash:** Did you call Mr. Ehrlichman?

**Walters:** I called Mr. Ehrlichman and after some difficulty I finally reached him and said, "A Mr. John Dean wants to talk to me to discuss the matters that I discussed with you and Mr. Haldeman on the preceding Friday. [Ehrlichman] said "Yes, it's all right to talk with him. He is in charge of the whole matter."

**Dash:** Did you then meet with Mr. Dean on that day, the 26th?

**Walters:** I then called Mr. Dean and he asked me to come down and see him, I believe at 11:30 or 11:45. I believe it's indicated on the memorandum I wrote.

**Dash:** Would you please recount for the committee the conversation that you had with Mr. Dean on June 26th, 1972?

**Walters:** Mr. Dean said that he was handling this whole matter of the Watergate, that it was causing a lot of trouble, that it was very embarrassing. The FBI was investigating it, the leads had led to some important people and it might lead to more important people. The FBI was proceeding with three hypotheses; namely, that this break-in had been organized by the Republican National Committee, by the CIA, or by someone else. Whereupon I said that I don't know who else might have organized it, but I do know that the Central Intelligence Agency did not organize it. I said furthermore—I related to Mr. Dean my conversation with Mr. Haldeman and Mr. Ehrlichman of the previous Friday—and told him that I had checked with the Agency and found that there was nothing in the ongoing FBI investigations that could jeopardize CIA activities or sources or compromise them in any way in Mexico. He then said, "Well, couldn't this have happened without your knowledge?" I said, "Originally, perhaps, but I've talked with Mr. Helms and I am sure that we had no part in this operation against the Democratic National Committee."

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**(Continued)**

Well, he kept pressing this. "There must have been [a connection because] all these people used to work for the CIA." I said, "Well, maybe they used to, but they weren't when they did it." He pressed and pressed on this and asked if there wasn't some way that I could help. It seemed to me that he was exploring the option of trying to see if he could put some of the blame on us. It wasn't anything specific that he said, but the general tenor was in this way. I said to him—I did not have the opportunity to consult with anybody—I simply said, "Mr. Dean, any attempt to involve the Agency in the stifling of this affair would be a disaster. It would destroy the credibility of the Agency with the Congress and with the nation. It would be a grave disservice to the President. I will not be a party to it and I am quite prepared to resign before I will do anything to implicate the Agency in this matter." This seemed to shock him somewhat. I said that that anything that would involve any of these government agencies like the CIA or the FBI in anything improper in this way would be a disaster for the nation. Somewhat reluctantly, he seemed to accept this line of argument.

I have not spent the whole of my adult life in the Central Intelligence Agency. I joined it for the first time in May of 1972. But I am convinced that an effective CIA is essential if the United States is to survive as a free and democratic society in the rough world in which we live, and I was determined that I would not see it destroyed or implicated as might be desired...in this business. I further told Mr. Dean that when we expended covert funds within the United States, that we were required to report this to our Congressional Oversight Committees, and this seemed to cool his enthusiasm considerably.

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## **Remarks by Lieutenant General Walters on the Dedication of the New Central Intelligence Agency Headquarters Building at Langley, Virginia, February 1985**

It is 1985, and DCI Casey has come in. He is very close to the President, and he brought a lot of money to the Agency. I think he doubled our budget and tripled our staff and he built this building and really put us to work again. It is a completely different period in the Agency's history. General Walters reflects on a couple of interesting things. And if you listen very carefully, you will hear him predict the demise of the Soviet Union. At this time, LTG Walters was U.S. Representative to the United Nations.

— **Benjamin Fischer, CIA Historian**

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Mr. Director, Mr. Deputy Director, and friends. It is eight and a half years since I last spoke in this auditorium and all of the faces I recognize have not aged at all in that time. Obviously, life at Langley is youth-inducing!

This is a very emotional moment for me to come back here to talk with you people with whom I spent four years—four of the roughest years that many of us who lived through those times can remember. They were very turbulent times, and I am very happy to see that they are less turbulent now.

It is hard to get public recognition when you belong to the oldest profession in the world. Now, many of you may think that another profession is the oldest, but I would simply point out that before that one could operate, people had to know where it was and what the rates were, and that's intelligence!

In our time, intelligence has for the first time become a weapon for peace. In the past, we have always thought of intelligence as a weapon for war, for struggle, or conflict. But no President could possibly sign an arms control agreement if he did not have the means to verify that there was no cheating, and that he was not, by signing that agreement, jeopardizing the security of the American people.

Intelligence is not about predicting this coup or that coup. Intelligence is educating decisionmakers so that no event of this kind takes them by surprise. And when they are called upon to make a decision in an extraordinarily short period of time, they have accumulated from the intelligence to which they have been exposed the kind of knowledge that allows them to make the right decision in a very short time, because there are no more three-year time limits. It is much much shorter than that.

You know, we've always had an ambivalent attitude toward intelligence. When we're frightened, we are outraged that we don't have more. When we're not frightened, we wonder if it's really American and upright. But you all know that collection is vital, timeliness is vital; it's not timely, it's history, it's not intelligence. Analysis, understanding...the toughest thing of all, in my experience, is feedback from the decisionmakers.

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I am greatly encouraged. I think that we've got the Soviets worried. They don't know what we've got, but they think that we've got something. And when you've got the Soviets worried, you're halfway to peace. Also, they will never negotiate with you unless they think you're doing something that they want to stop. I think sometimes when we're talking about dealing with the Soviets, we focus too much attention on personalities. The Soviet government is, in my opinion, a consensus. If you're not part of that consensus, you don't move from candidate member to full member. Maybe I'm wrong, but that's my belief about what's going on there.

As I look forward, I am filled with confidence. I see a tremendous change in the attitude of the American people toward intelligence and toward what it can do for our country. As more people realize that, there will be a greater appreciation for those who serve on the silent battlefield. In a time when we have almost no time of advance warning, you are the watchers on the battlements, and as long as you are there, the chances of them coming to surprise us are very small. And if we're patient, the medieval tyranny that rules the Soviet Union today will not escape the inexorable laws of history. Their time is over, and they just don't realize it. It is the last colonial empire in the world and it continues to exist only because it is contiguous.

I don't read everything that you do, but I read a good deal of it. It fills me with admiration. I'm sure that in my new job the information that you provide will be enormously helpful. And if we can change one vote, that's worth it; if we can change two votes, that's even better. I have no illusions about how difficult it is. I know what goes on in the United Nations. In fact, last night Mrs. Thatcher presented me with her condolences—I am a perpetual optimist. I will not give up as long as I know that our country is served by people like you with the technical qualities that you have demonstrated over as long a period as I can remember. I feel confident that for us it is not sunset. It is dawn. The American dream has just begun.

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**Benjamin Fischer, CIA Historian**

# PANEL ON LIEUTENANT GENERAL WALTERS’ CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY YEARS

**Benjamin B. Fischer**

**Author’s note:** The author chaired this panel, which featured presentations by Henry Appelbaum, a retired CIA officer and former editor with CIA’s Center for the Study of Intelligence; Dr. Douglas Garthoff, a contract historian and former senior CIA officer; and Dr. David Robarge, CIA historian. This panel covers LTG Walters’ tenure as Deputy Director of Central Intelligence (1972-1976). The following is based on the panelists’ presentations and an unpublished oral history.

## INTRODUCTION

Soldier, statesman, attaché, intelligence official, special envoy, confidant to presidents and dictators, gifted linguist, and raconteur: Lieutenant General Vernon A. (“Dick”) Walters, U.S. Army, was all of these and more. Thanks to his many talents and native intelligence and despite a lack of higher education, he served every Cold War president save one (Jimmy Carter) on military, diplomatic, and intelligence assignments and always as a globetrotting, polyglot international man of intrigue. Yet, whether he was in uniform or a business suit, he was never far from intelligence, and it was no accident that he rose to become the second most important intelligence official in the United States. Walters served as the deputy director of central intelligence from May 1972 to July 1976 under no less than two presidents (Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford) and four directors of central intelligence (including Richard Helms, James Schlesinger, William Colby, and George H. W. Bush). His tenure—he was the second-longest serving DDCI—coincided with a tumultuous period when the CIA’s very existence was at stake. In the wake of the Vietnam war and the Watergate scandal, revelations of past Agency operations, including domestic spying and assassination plots against foreign leaders, resulted in calls to curtail executive power and punish CIA for various Cold War transgressions. Walters himself testified at more than 20 sessions of various investigative hearings and courtroom proceedings.

General Walters was a larger-than-life figure even though he worked in the shadows of world events, and some of his greatest accomplishments may never be known. He had an incredible knack for meeting some of the most powerful and influential people of his day—from presidents to popes to bloodthirsty dictators—and finding himself in the very places where history was being made. He was “present at the creation” of the Cold War in the late 1940s and was still on duty when it ended—this time as an observer and as a participant.<sup>1</sup> He witnessed CIA’s first “intelligence failure” in April 1948, when he accompanied Secretary of State George C. Marshall to Bogotá, Colombia, for the international convocation that led to the formation of the Organization of American States.

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<sup>1</sup> The expression is taken from Dean Acheson’s memoir *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (New York: Norton, 1969).

Communist-inspired riots and demonstrations erupted and threatened the success of the conference (one of the demonstrators was a 22-year-old Cuban activist named Fidel Castro), and the fledgling CIA was blamed for not having provided Washington with appropriate warning.<sup>2</sup> Walters' last assignment was ambassador to West Germany in 1989. He was there when the Berlin Wall fell and East Germany collapsed and stayed long enough to become the first U.S. envoy to a reunited German nation.

Walters was tough-minded, discreet, and blessed with a legendary memory. But what commended him most to presidents and generals were his linguistic gifts. During a state visit to France, President Charles de Gaulle told Richard Nixon that the president's speech was "magnificent," but "your interpreter was eloquent." This was not Walters' first encounter with the French president. He had served as President Dwight Eisenhower's interpreter during a 1959 summit meeting in Paris, where the press for the first time noticed his presence. His recollections from a half-century are also eloquent and make for fascinating reading.<sup>3</sup> We also are fortunate to be able to draw on an oral history he granted CIA.<sup>4</sup>

## EARLY LIFE

Walters was born in New York on 3 January 1917. His British immigrant father, an insurance executive, took the family to Europe in 1923, where they lived from his son's sixth to his sixteenth year. The young man's early education was at a lycée in Paris and at Stonyhurst College, a 400-year-old Jesuit secondary school in Lancashire, England. That was the end of his formal education and the beginning of his mastering of several languages by the time he returned to America in 1934. The Depression hit the family business hard; Walters' father took a job as a claims adjuster and he joined him. He hated the work, and years later remarked that the one good thing Adolf Hitler had done was to liberate him from the insurance business by starting World War II.

*Yes, when we went to Europe, when I was a child, my parents put me immediately in a French school, then an Italian school, and a Spanish school. By the time I was 10, I was quadrilingual. And I don't mean I spoke four languages. I mean you couldn't tell me from a native. Once you got that kind of a background, even when you moved to a different group, like Germanic or Slavic, it never goes back to the same difficulty as the first one.*

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<sup>2</sup> Peter Grose argues that this event helped ensure that CIA would be tasked with providing worldwide intelligence coverage and bases his argument in part on an internal history of CIA's early covert action office that has not been declassified. See *Gentleman Spy: The Life of Allen Dulles* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1994), 286.

<sup>3</sup> See Vernon A. Walters, *Silent Missions* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1978) and *The Mighty and the Meek: Dispatches from the Front Line of Diplomacy* (London: St Ermin's Press, 2001).

<sup>4</sup> General Vernon A. Walters, interview by Ed Dietel, West Palm Beach, Florida, 18 June 1999. All passages in italics, whether in textboxes or in the main text, are taken from the oral history of Lieutenant General Vernon A. Walters, interview by Ed Dietel, West Palm Beach, Florida, 18 June 1999.

He joined the U.S. Army in 1941 as a private, won a commission during World War II, and retired 35 years later as a three-star general. The U.S. Army had the good sense not only to commission Walters but also to assign him to an intelligence unit. He saw battle first during the Allied invasion of North Africa when he landed at Safi, Morocco. Walters put his intelligence and his fluency in French to good use by going ashore and rounding up the local crane operators so that they could unload U.S. cargo ships.

## A BIG BREAK

Walters made two of his most important contacts in 1943 during the Italian campaign. One was a lieutenant general and the other was 13-year-old boy. The general was Mark W. Clark, commander of the U.S. 5th Army in Italy, and the boy was the future King Hassan II of Morocco. Clark made Walters his aide-de-camp (his command of Italian no doubt commended him), and the future king remembered that Walters had given him a ride on a tank—the start of a lifelong connection to king and country. For two years Walters served as Clark's liaison with the Brazilian Expeditionary Force in Italy, adding another language to his repertoire and making more contacts that proved useful years later when he was assigned as military attaché in the U.S. Embassy in Rio de Janeiro.

*Do I speak Portuguese? I was the only American in the middle of 19,000 Brazilians in Italy for a year and a half. That was about as total immersion as you can get.*

After the war, Clark recommended Walters to Secretary of State George Marshall. Marshall took his aide/interpreter to Paris for negotiations on the European Recovery Plan (ERP), better known as the Marshall Plan, which provided \$13 billion worth of aid and credits to war-ravaged West European countries. For a while Walters served as an aide to Averell Harriman, the European administrator of the Marshall Plan (1948-1950), former ambassador to the Soviet Union, and troubleshooter for Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman, at the ERP headquarters in Paris and then returned home for a stateside assignment—but not for long. In 1951, he returned to Paris with Gen. Dwight Eisenhower on a mission to 12 NATO countries that led to the organization of Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers in Europe.

Gen. Clark also recommended Walters to President Harry S. Truman, who tapped him to serve as interpreter at several postwar summit meetings. Walters was the president's notetaker at his famous 1950 confrontation on Wake Island with Gen. Douglas MacArthur during the Korean War.

In 1951, Eisenhower loaned Walters to Harriman for a sensitive two-month mission to Iran for talks with Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh. The radical nationalist leader had seized properties belonging to the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and cancelled the British oil concession that dated back to 1911. Harriman hoped to act as an honest broker between Teheran and London. The mission was a failure for Harriman but a success for Walters, who received a glowing commendation not only for his language skills but also for the way he handled Iranian negotiators. After Eisenhower was elected president in 1952, Walters accompanied him to many NATO summits and other high-level visits abroad.

Following a stint as military attaché in Rome from 1958 to 1960, Walters was a staff assistant to President Eisenhower. In 1958, he accompanied Vice President Nixon to Caracas, Venezuela, on a goodwill tour when demonstrators attacked their car and almost managed to grab them. Every year thereafter, Walters and Nixon would try to meet and celebrate their survival on the 13th of every May. Walters developed great admiration for Nixon because he had acted bravely in the face of death. The association would take him to the pinnacle of the intelligence profession and then the depths of despair as he tried to determine why Nixon behaved so badly during the Watergate scandal.

In 1964, Walters was assigned as military attaché to Brazil. A military coup occurred on his watch, and the leader, Gen. Castelo Branco, had been a friend of Walters' since World War II. Walters predicted the takeover right down to the very day it occurred, giving rise to rumors that he was somehow involved in its planning.

## **CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS**

President Kennedy tapped Walters to make a diplomatic tour of Europe to brief key allies on the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. Walters took overhead imagery of Soviet missile sites under construction to boost his credibility. While briefing de Gaulle, the French president asked what Kennedy intended to do about the Soviet incursion only 90 miles from American shores. Walters told him that JFK didn't want a confrontation or to run the risk of war. He would blockade Cuba and ask Premier Khrushchev to remove the missiles. De Gaulle was incredulous, and Walters believed that his decision to withdraw French forces from NATO and develop an independent nuclear deterrent stemmed from his disillusionment with Kennedy. If JFK were not willing to fight an enemy so close to America, de Gaulle told Walters, then he certainly would not risk war to protect France.

Two decades later Walters found himself back in Paris on a high-level mission, this time to President Francois Mitterand. The Reagan administration was planning to bomb Libya in retaliation for Qaddafi's role in international terrorism and the bombing of a West Berlin disco frequented by American GIs. Like de Gaulle, Mitterand had reservations about U.S. plans. He told Walters that if Washington were committed to removing Qaddafi, he would assist with three divisions of French paratroopers. But if the plan were to bomb and run, then he wanted no part of it. France subsequently refused a U.S. request to fly bombers through French airspace.

## **THE CIA YEARS**

Gen. Walters served as deputy director of central intelligence from May 1972 until July 1976 and was acting DCI from July 1973 to September 1973. When an interviewer asked Walters how he got the job, his reply was characteristically candid:

I think it came about mostly through President Nixon, whom I had known for a long time, I'd been with him in Caracas when the car was stoned, I'd been with him in Lima when the students had attacked. I'd been with him a great deal. I had been, since he was elected, smuggling Henry Kissinger in to Paris secretly to meet with the Chinese and the Vietnamese.

DCI Richard Helms was less than thrilled by the White House's choice. Walters certainly wasn't the deputy Richard Helms wanted. As the general noted years later:

*It was very clear to me that Helms wanted very much to be in control of the Agency. He viewed my appointment with a little bit of suspicion. In fact, we had a very crusty engagement. He wanted Tom Karamessines [then deputy director for plans and a Helms favorite].*

*There was a little bit of a feeling I was a spy being sent in by Nixon, to make sure the Agency didn't get overly liberal or something like that," Walters noted years later. He may have been Nixon's choice as his eyes and ears inside Langley, but when the chips were down, the president would have reason to regret his decision.*

Helms asked Walters if he knew anything about intelligence. "I know you speak a lot of foreign languages, but what is your experience in intelligence?" the DCI asked. Walters replied: "I've been negotiating with the Chinese and Vietnamese in Paris without you or anybody in this Agency knowing anything about it."

## WATERGATE

The most famous of the Nixon tapes—the 204 hours of conversation recorded in the Oval Office during the Nixon presidency—is known as the “smoking gun” because it confirmed beyond any reasonable doubt that Richard Nixon knew about the Watergate break-in and planned the subsequent cover-up. On the morning of 23 June 1972, Nixon and his chief of staff H. R. (“Bob”) Haldeman hatched a plan to use the CIA to cover up the attempted break-in of the Democratic National Committee office in the Watergate Hotel.

Haldeman: *That the way for us to handle this now [the cover-up] is for us to have Walters call [acting FBI Director] Pat Gray and just say, “Stay the hell out of this ... this is ah, business here we don't want you to go any further on it.” That's not an unusual development ....*

Nixon: *Um huh. ...*

Nixon [later, same tape]: *You call them [DCI Richard Helms, DDCI Vernon Walters] in ... Play it tough. ... Say: “Look, the problem is that this will open the whole, the whole Bay of Pigs thing ... and that they should call the FBI in and say that we wish for the country, don't go any further into this case”-period!*<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Transcript of Recording of a Meeting between the president and H.R. Haldeman in the Oval Office, 23 June 1972, 10:04 to 11:39 am. Text available at [http://watergate.info/tapes/72-06-23\\_smoking-gun.shtml](http://watergate.info/tapes/72-06-23_smoking-gun.shtml) (58037).

Nixon's attorney general, John Mitchell, knew that the FBI and CIA had a long-standing agreement to consult if one agency stumbled onto an operation being conducted by the other. If the White House could get the Agency to tell the FBI that it was interfering with intelligence operations in Mexico City, then the Bureau would back off. The trail from the Watergate break-in back to the White House would run cold.

Haldeman arranged for John Ehrlichman, Nixon's domestic affairs advisor and the third member of the so-called Berlin Wall that included Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, to summon Helms and Walters to the White House the very same afternoon. The summons was highly unusual for two reasons. First, it came from Ehrlichman, not Kissinger, Helms' normal contact. Second, Helms was instructed—for the first and only time during his tenure—to bring his deputy along on a White House visit. Helms' recently published memoir leaves no doubt that he did not fully trust Walters and suspected something untoward was up.<sup>6</sup> So the DCI insisted that his number two—who had been his deputy for only two months—join him for lunch and then make their way—together—to the White House. Helms claimed that he did not want to leave Walters to the tender mercies of the “heavy hitters” Haldeman and Ehrlichman, but it is just as likely that he wanted to be certain that Walters was at his side, if not on his side, rather than across the table with the “heavy hitters” when they arrived. (Walters, for his part, was aware of Helms' suspicion of him as a Nixon loyalist.)

When Helms and Walters arrived at the White House, it was quite clear that Haldeman, not Ehrlichman, was in charge. As he had rehearsed with Nixon, he told Walters to call acting FBI Director Gray and tell him that the Bureau's ongoing investigation of the Watergate break-in threatened CIA equities in Mexico. Helms said he had already told Gray that there was no CIA involvement with the Watergate suspects and no risk involving CIA agents or operations. Haldeman lost his cool and suddenly interjected the idea that if things got out of hand, it could lead all the way back to the 1961 Bay of Pigs operation. If that was intended as some kind of a threat to Helms, it was an idle one, since Helms had carefully remained aloof from the planning and execution of what he had anticipated would be a disastrous and career-wrecking covert action.

On orders from the White House and from Helms, Walters went to see Gray. After the session with Haldeman and Ehrlichman, Helms wrote, he “mentioned” to Walters that the CIA and FBI had an agreement about intelligence work abroad and that if the two agencies crossed paths with one another, one would inform the other immediately. Two pages later, Helms states with some ambiguity that “Walters delivered the message [to the FBI] and for a while we thought the matter had been put to rest.”<sup>7</sup> But which message? The one from Haldeman that implicated CIA or the one from Helms that exculpated the Agency? Even though they seemed to be mutually exclusive, Walters in fact delivered both messages, telling Gray that while the investigation had not touched on CIA operations in Mexico, it might yet do so if it continued.

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<sup>6</sup> Richard Helms, *A Look Over My Shoulder: A Life in the Central Intelligence Agency* (New York: Random House, 2003), 8.

<sup>7</sup> Helms, 10.

Was Walters talking out of both sides of his mouth and trying to serve two masters at the same time? A former CIA historian concludes that Helms and Walters, at least initially, were ready to do Haldeman's bidding and help with the White House cover-up, although their participation was "reluctant and presumably soul-wrenching."<sup>8</sup> In his oral history interview, however, Walters tells a different story and explains his stance with Gray. First, he noted that one reason the White House summoned him and not Helms was that Helms did not have good relations with the FBI. Sending him as emissary might be waving a red flag:

*What I was [hinting at as] the reason why they weren't talking to Helms, was that there was bad feelings between Helms and the FBI.*

*And, therefore, they didn't want to use people that had been previously associated with those feelings. Pat Gray was new, I was new. We didn't have that background and animosity.*

Walters freely acknowledged that he carried both messages—Haldeman's and Helms'—to Gray. Did he take seriously the possibility that the FBI might stumble on and then compromise a covert operation in Mexico? As he explained later, he knew from the time when he was smuggling Henry Kissinger in and out of Paris 15 times without CIA's knowledge that the White House occasionally runs super-secret operations that were not coordinated with the national security apparatus or that CIA might be involved in a sensitive operation that he, as the DDCI, was not privy to. Maybe this was the case with the operation Haldeman was concerned about. I leave it up to the reader to decide whether Walters actually believed this or used it as a rationalization to justify carrying Haldeman's "back off" warning to Gray:

*I went to Pat Gray. My instructions were, Tell him to be careful in Mexico, we have something going there. Now they hinted to me that they had something going in Mexico, like they had going with me in Paris. So I found this not implausible, because they didn't ask me to cover it up anywhere else, just Mexico. So, I conveyed this to him.*

Convinced perhaps that Walters was in for a penny and in for a pound, White House counsel John Dean ordered Walters to provide bail and bribe money from CIA's unvouchered funds for the Watergate burglars, who included three former CIA officers and some Cuban veterans of the Bay of Pigs. In fact, Dean did so on three separate occasions, 26, 27, and 28 June. Walters refused, telling Dean he would resign if necessary and hinting that he would expose Dean:

*I had two more visits with Mr. Dean. The third time I said, "Mr. Dean, if you ask me to do this again, I'm going to resign. And I'm going to go and ask to see the President and tell him why I'm resigning." He did not ask me again.*

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<sup>8</sup> Thomas M. Troy, Jr., review of Helms' memoir in *Studies in Intelligence* 48:1 (2004), 77.



In his memoir, Richard Helms takes credit for stiffening Walters' backbone by telling him that only the DCI was authorized to expend unvouchered funds, and, if forced to do so, he would inform the Senate and House Appropriations Committees as required by law.<sup>9</sup> There is a hint—but no more than a hint—that Walters was a little wobbly in the knees before he told Dean no for the third and last time. (Walters' account of Watergate is rather favorable to Helms; the reverse is not the case.) At that point, Helms left on an extended but routine TDY to visit overseas stations.

Walters' real claim to fame—the time when he gave exceptional service to his country and the Agency—derives from the period between 23 and 26 June and the first two weeks of July 1972. It was in the third week of June, between his White House meeting with Helms present and his first contact with Dean, that he decided that there was no White House operation in Mexico that needed protecting. It was a ruse to stop the FBI investigation and obstruct justice. From the last days of June through the first two weeks of July, Walters and Gray began sorting out the Watergate business and cooperating to protect their agencies' respective interests. Helms was out of town, and Walters found himself shouldering a burden that, as the DDCI, probably should not have come to rest on his shoulders. But he and Gray, both acting directors, hit it off with each other, coming to the same conclusion about the politics of the situation and finally steering the runaway train called Watergate away from the CIA and the FBI. They apparently liked and trusted one another. They even discussed the possibility of resigning if necessary.

## WALTERS MEETS THE PLO

In 1973, terrorists from the Palestinian Liberation Organization murdered two U.S. diplomats in Sudan. President Nixon and Kissinger asked Walters to arrange a meeting with the PLO and put it on notice that attacks on Americans would not be tolerated:

*But I had outside things to do, you see, which the President would ask me to do, but not necessarily connected to intelligence. Kissinger called me in one day and said, "I want you to go and see the Palestinians and tell them to stop killing Americans." I said, "Dr. Kissinger, I'm the Deputy Director of CIA. I must be number six or seven on their hit list." He said, "I'm number one, that's why you're going." And I went. I said, "What do you want me to do?" He said, "I want you to tell them to stop killing Americans." And I said, "What if they say, 'So what if we don't?'" He said, "Well, I don't know. Tell them something appropriate but nothing illegal."*

Walters used the good offices of his longtime friend, King Hassan of Morocco, to arrange a meeting with the PLO. Walters described his encounter with the terrorists:

*When we went in, the King took me in, and there were three of them, and I was alone. And he indicated he would take me in, introduce me, and then leave. I said, "Your Majesty, I'm going in alone and unarmed. I hope this is true of the*

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<sup>9</sup> Helms, *A Look Over My Shoulder*, 12-13.

*other side also.” “Oh,” he said, “we have the building completely surrounded by my troops.” I said, “Your Majesty, I’m not terribly interested in being avenged.”*

The mission succeeded, at least for a while:

*They stopped killing Americans pretty much at that time. I said to them, I said, “Something dreadful will happen if you do not stop. I cannot go into the details of it, but you may expect the direst of reprisals.” I figured that was as far as I could go legally.*

## WALTERS AND COLBY

The transition from Helms to Schlesinger was rapid, if not dignified.<sup>10</sup> Schlesinger did not stay long, and then the White House nominated William Colby, like Helms an OSS veteran and CIA careerist, to replace him. Colby was nominated in May 1973 and confirmed by the Senate in August but was not sworn in until September. Walters was in the uncomfortable position of having the future DCI as a subordinate:

*Finally, I flew to San Clemente and said to the President, “Mr. President, I’m in an impossible situation. My designated boss is now my subordinate. We’re working together in the same building. He’s been confirmed by the Senate. The only thing is, he hasn’t been sworn in, and I’ve been placed in an impossible position.”*

Despite the awkwardness of the situation, Walters and Colby got along quite well, and later Colby expressed his admiration for his deputy, saying “When he worked for me, he was fearless in expressing his views and totally loyal once a decision was made. I used him as a total alter ego.”<sup>11</sup>

## MORE SILENT MISSIONS<sup>12</sup>

Gen. Walters left CIA in 1976 as Jimmy Carter was entering office and installing his own team. He then retired from the Army. Five years later, however, President Ronald Reagan offered Walters the post of ambassador-at-large. At first he was reluctant to accept it:

*Yes, but it was Reagan who called me back. Reagan, Al Haig. It was Al Haig specifically, who rode up to my house in Palm Beach one day on a bicycle with his wife, three children and three Secret Service officers, and asked me to become ambassador at large. I said, “Al, I’ve seen too many people walking the halls at the State Department as ambassador at large, looking for a place to sit down, or*

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<sup>10</sup> The White House had agreed to let Helms remain in office until his 60th birthday, but the deal was forgotten. Helms was surprised, if not embarrassed, when Schlesinger appeared prior to the agreed upon date for his departure.

<sup>11</sup> “Vernon A. Walters, Lieutenant General, United States Army,” <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/vawalters.htm>, accessed 1 August 2004.

<sup>12</sup> See note 3, above.

*someone to type a letter for them.” He said, “Oh, no, you won’t have that, you’ll have this, that, and the other.”*

As he had done unofficially in the past, Walters now continued officially carrying out sensitive diplomatic missions all over the world for the White House. President Reagan was preoccupied with the rise of international terrorism and especially the kidnapping of American citizens by radical Middle Eastern groups. For the CIA, the greatest tragedy was the 1985 kidnapping, torture, and murder of Beirut station chief William Buckley. Few people know that Walters succeeded in rescuing two other CIA officers who might otherwise have shared Buckley’s fate. In one case, as Walters recounted:

*[The officer] was an Agency employee who was kidnapped in [an African country] by the [local security] service. We knew, through a penetration with [a liaison service] they had him. They claimed they didn’t have him. Bush called me in and said, “Go get him. I said, “With what, Mr. President?” He said, “Charm. You can spend whatever is necessary.” So, [the Africa] dictator ... wouldn’t see me in [the capital city]. I had to go to [another city] where he was fighting the rebels. Before I went, I found out that he [the African dictator] had been at the Army Signal Corps School at Fort Monmouth. I had spent the day with his sponsor before I went. ... We talked for five hours and, finally, I said—nothing I said was translated, but he only spoke in [his native language]—”Mr. President, I have a feeling I’m beginning to waste your time and mine in repeating myself. If you want to be considered a civilized chief of state, give me this man and let me fly him out of [the country] this afternoon.” This was the first time he spoke in English, saying “You may have him if you wish.”*

Walters and his aide, a U.S. Navy commander, left with the man they had come for. The trip home was uneventful but there was more than a little concern. The CIA officer was in bad shape and remorseful over his capture and interrogation. Anything could have happened, but Walters kept a watchful eye on things. More missions followed:

*I got to [another African country] and turned him [the CIA officer] over to the station chief, came back. A week later, I got a call from Reagan, who asked me to come over, sit down,[take] a lot of time, and tell him how I did it.*

“Somewhere along the way I received the following unclassified telegram from Secretary of State Shultz: ‘Dear Dick. We are all astonished how you seem to pull off one miracle after the other .... You have performed a humanitarian act of real magnificence .... You did all of this for your president and your government with true and Christian modesty. You have our deep gratitude’.”<sup>13</sup>

Walters won high praise from others in the Reagan administration who knew about his efforts to secure the release of Americans:

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<sup>13</sup> Walters, *The Mighty and the Meek*, 208.

*Even [Secretary of State George] Shultz, who didn't like me, said when I got [the CIA officer] home, "Walters, I have kept that telegram [about the release]." I have that telegram. It's one of the few pieces of paper I took home. Now, I have no papers that I took home from the Agency.*

On another assignment, Walters flew to still another African capital to see its president. The local security service had arrested the CIA chief of station as a result of a recruitment effort gone wrong. Walters warned the president of the consequences of a trial:

*Mr. President, East Germans were deep into your intelligence. We were in there to save you. That's why we were there, and if this man is tried, you will lose that safeguard ....*

Once again, Walters left with the CIA officer he had come to rescue.

## **IRAN-CONTRA**

Iran-Contra was the biggest political scandal since Watergate. It rocked the Reagan administration and almost led to a constitutional crisis. In a nutshell, members of the National Security Council Staff arranged to sell arms to Iran in exchange for assistance in releasing American hostages in the Middle East and then siphoned off some of the profits to fund anti-Marxist insurgents, the Contras, in Nicaragua during a congressional ban on such funding. Both acts were illegal under existing American law.

Walters had nothing to do with the erupting political volcano. In fact, since 1985 he had been serving as the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. Arthur Liman, chief counsel of the Senate select committee created to investigate Iran-Contra, flew to New York to interrogate Walters. Walters was a diarist and began keeping a record of his daily activities while still a teenager. In this instance, the habit proved especially useful:

*Once during the Irangate, I was Ambassador to the UN. This fellow, Arthur Liman, the only man I ever saw with teased hair, he said he had to see me. So he came up on a Sunday, and said, "What did you know about Irangate?" I said, "Nothing." He said, "Well, we have confirmed information there was a meeting at the White House on the 16th of October 1986, in which this matter was discussed and you were present." I said, "Come with me, Mr. Liman," and I took him into my bedroom. And there were these 40 years of diary, the other 20 are in Palm Beach. I said, "Take out 1986 and open it to the page that interests you." He opened it and looked at it and said, "My God, you were in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Thank you very much, goodbye."*

## **OUR MAN IN BONN AND THE PRICE OF BEING RIGHT**

Gen. Walters' last official assignment was as ambassador to West Germany, a post he assumed in April 1989 after President George H. W. Bush appointed him. There he would prove once again that he was one of the most prescient intelligence "analysts" in the U.S.

government, though his perspicacity did not win him friends in the State Department and may have cost him his job.

Walters was already 72 years old. Most people his age were enjoying their sunset years in retirement. As the general related to a conference organized by the Center for the Study of Intelligence and held in Berlin in 1999, at that age one assumes that the most interesting things in one's life lie in the past, not in the future. In Walters' case, however, life had one more big surprise and one more opportunity to witness—and indeed take part in—history.

The new assignment was not intended as a promotion. The UN post carried cabinet rank; the new one did not. James Baker, Bush's secretary of state, wanted to keep Walters as far from Washington and as far from White House decision making as possible. Walters' well-known conservative views had kept him out of the Carter administration, and now he was being sidelined in the Bush government. But Walters welcomed a chance to get close to "where the action was," and he believed that West Germany was just such a place. "I had been greatly interested in events in the Soviet Union ever since my four-year tour as deputy director of central intelligence in the 1970s, the last six months of which I served under Mr. Bush."<sup>14</sup>

In an informal talk to a CIA audience in 1985, Walters anticipated the collapse of the Soviet Union. He did not specify a date or a chain of events leading up to that momentous event, but he noted that the Soviet empire's days were numbered and that a reinvigorated CIA and the Reagan's administration's hard-line foreign policy were making things harder for the Kremlin.

Once settled in Bonn, Walters began ruminating on the early possibility of German reunification as the Soviet empire, as he had anticipated, began to disintegrate. Ten days before the Berlin Wall fell, he shared his assessment with his Soviet counterpart. The Soviet envoy mocked Walters, telling him that the Wall would be around 100 years from now. "If you really believe that," Walters retorted, "then you have lost touch with reality."

Secretary Baker did not share Walters' assessment and was not happy about the ambassador's expressing it at his first press conference in May 1989. Soon thereafter Baker prohibited all U.S. envoys from speaking publicly. He kept Walters' cables away from the president, blocked his access to the White House, and sent his own spokesman on secret trips to Bonn to conduct diplomacy behind Walters' back. Years later, Walters revealed that he twice threatened to resign and finally did so in late 1991.

What was Baker's motive? Baker believed that the Bush administration, which had tied its Soviet policy to Gorbachev, needed to help its Soviet partner in his struggle with conservatives and the military high command that opposed German unification. But Baker and the State Department professionals were not the only ones who opposed Walters. West German politicians, like Baker, wrote his prediction off as the fantasy of an old Cold Warrior—until Walters proved right and everyone else proved wrong. In retirement,

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<sup>14</sup> Vernon A. Walters, "The Fall of the Wall—Ten Years Later: What I Saw at the Revolution," *The Wall Street Journal*, November 5, 1999. CIRAS version, accessed 2 August 2004.

Walters wrote a book about his German experience. Entitled *Reunification Was Foreseeable*, it was published in a united Germany in 1994.<sup>15</sup> It has yet to be published in English. Some people, perhaps, will never forgive him for being right when everyone else was wrong.

Did Walters just make a lucky guess or did he base his prognostication on a reading of the evidence, as any good analyst would? As he wrote years later:

The Soviet Union was changing. Its leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, was opening new doors. Eastern Europe was seething. Poland would hold free elections in June, which brought a Solidarity-led government to power. Most important, the Soviet Union had announced that it was leaving Afghanistan and that to me was a clear indicator that the Soviet government was no longer inclined to use violence to repress dissidence in Central Europe.<sup>16</sup>

Eduard Shevardnadze, Gorbachev's foreign minister, said almost the same thing, asserting that the Soviet withdrawal was a sign to the East European countries, as well as to the national republics of the USSR, that Moscow would not make use of military force to hold its empire together.

*Well, to me, the hardest thing was ensuring the survival, doing what I could, for its [the Agency's] survival ....*

*I just hope the Agency won't face that kind of challenge that it faced in my time. You know, its very existence was at stake, whether it should go on.*

General Walters will be most remembered for the "silent missions" he carried out for presidents and generals during the Cold War. CIA should remember him for still another reason. During a critical period in the Agency's history, he alone shouldered the burden of protecting the CIA and keeping at bay those who would have drawn it into the Watergate scandal. The Agency's future may well have hinged on his reputation for honesty and integrity and his solitary resolve to place the national interest above the friendship of a president he had known and admired for many years.

Vernon A. Walters died 10 February 2002 in West Palm Beach, Florida, at age 85. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

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<sup>15</sup> Tom Heneghan, "Germany: Envoy says Baker froze him out over Germany unity," Reuter, 24 February 1994. Internet version, <http://mapage.noos.fr/heneghan/book/walters.htm>, accessed 30 July 2004.

<sup>16</sup> Heneghan.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

### **Benjamin B. Fischer** *CIA Historian*

Ben Fischer is a native of Muskogee, Oklahoma. He holds degrees from Cornell University (B.A.) and Columbia University (M.A., MPhil). He entered duty with the Central Intelligence Agency in 1974 and has served in the Directorates of Intelligence and Operations at CIA headquarters and overseas. In 1996, Fischer joined the History Staff of the Agency's Center for the Study of Intelligence. The White House Millennium Council selected his monograph *At Cold War's End: U.S. Intelligence on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, 1989-1991* (1999) for inclusion in a time capsule at the National Archives that will be reopened in 2100. In 2002, Fischer was a visiting research fellow at the Norwegian Nobel Institute (Oslo).

## **PANEL ON LIEUTENANT GENERAL WALTERS’ AMBASSADORIAL YEARS**

**Jon Wiant, State Department Chair, JMIC Faculty,  
*Moderator***

General Walters was a diplomat all his life—the skills that he used with the Brazilian troops in the 1940s are the ones that came back to help him time and time again. His exercise of diplomatic skill and an extraordinary adroitness in dealing with people always advanced his government’s business. These traits come out as the very defining attributes of General Walters. In the last Panel today we turn to a period where we marry up all the skill for diplomacy with the formal responsibilities for diplomacy as we look at the Ambassadorial Years—which cover about a dozen years of service.



**Jon Wiant, State Department Chair, JMIC  
Faculty**



## BIOGRAPHY

### Jon Wiant

Mr. Wiant, a member of the Department of State's Senior Executive Service since 1987, recently joined the faculty of the Joint Military Intelligence College as Department of State Chair and Visiting Professor. He previously served as the State Department's Assistant Inspector General for Security and Intelligence Oversight from 1996 to 2001. SIO conducted an integrated audit and inspection program to evaluate security and intelligence policies, standards and programs at our diplomatic establishments around the world.

Mr. Wiant's other senior assignments include Chairman of the Director of Central Intelligence's National HUMINT Requirements Tasking Center in CIA's Directorate of Operations (1993-95); Senior Advisor for Policy to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (C3I) (1991-92); Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) (1987-88), (1989-90); and Director for Intelligence Policy, National Security Council Staff at the White House (1988-89). He was a member of the 33rd Class of the Department of State's Senior Seminar (1990-91). Mr. Wiant entered the Department of State in 1975 as an INR analyst on Southeast Asian affairs. In 1979, he formed INR's Global Issues Staff that focused on international narcotics trafficking and terrorism. In January 1981, the DCI selected Mr. Wiant as the State Department's first recipient of the Exceptional Intelligence Analyst award. Mr. Wiant was assigned to INR's Directorate for Intelligence Coordination in 1982, where he was the Special Assistant for Special Activities, Deputy Director for Intelligence Liaison, and Director for Intelligence Coordination. In February 1985, Mr. Wiant was awarded the National Intelligence Medal for his work in intelligence policy coordination. He is also the recipient of the Defense Intelligence Agency Director's Award, the CIA's Seal Medallion, and Department of State Meritorious Honor Awards as well as numerous Senior Executive Service performance awards.

Mr. Wiant was born in 1943. He graduated from Otero Junior College in La Junta, Colorado, and received a Bachelor of Arts with honors from the University of Colorado. He was a Danforth Fellow at Cornell University where he did his graduate work on Burmese politics. He is on the Board of Directors of the Society for Values in Higher Education, a member of the Editorial Board of *Studies in Intelligence*, on the board of the Senior Seminar Alumni Association and a member of the National Eagle Scout Association. Mr. Wiant also serves as one of the national career development advisors for Presidential Management Interns. He has written extensively on Burmese politics as well as on intelligence and national security issues.

During 1962-68, Mr. Wiant served in military intelligence positions both in the U.S. and overseas. He was in Vietnam in 1966-67, where he was decorated with the Bronze Star, the Army Commendation Medal, and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry.

## PANEL MEMBER

### Ambassador (Ret.) George F. Ward, Jr.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this conference. Preparing for the occasion gave me the opportunity to think again about a truly wonderful man.

It is almost impossible to begin any account involving Dick Walters without quoting from the man, and I am not going to resist the temptation. “What’s the difference between the diplomat and the military man?” he was fond of asking. “The answer is ... they both do nothing, but the military get up very early in the morning to do it with great discipline, while the diplomats do it late in the afternoon, in utter confusion.” In fact, as in so many things, Walters was the exception to the rule. As a soldier, I do not suspect that he got up especially early, and as a diplomat he was confused about absolutely nothing. He brought that clarity of mind to his assignment as Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany. That was not only his last assignment chronologically; it was also the capstone of a career spent defending freedom at the front line.

From the moment of his nomination, Walters was absolutely clear about Germany’s future and his role in it. On April 7, 1989, he asked me to be his deputy and invited me to his office for a discussion about Germany. For me, becoming deputy chief of mission in Germany was the fulfillment of a dream, so I remember the moment as if it were yesterday. As soon as we sat down, Walters said to me: “George, we are going to be in Germany at an exciting time, because the Berlin Wall is going to come down.”

I have to confess that my first thought on hearing this statement was something like, “Well, the stories are true, your age really has gotten the better of you.” My second thought was, “How are we ever going to deal with a guy like this as ambassador?” Although I did not consider myself a German expert, I had been assigned there twice, and I basically accepted the conventional Foreign Service wisdom on Germany, which looked forward to German unity only as the end result of a long process of East-West negotiations. The near-term possibility of a Germany united and free was simply not part of our thinking at the State Department or, I believe, in any of the national security elements of our government. The collapse of the Soviet Union seemed to be on no one’s radar screen. Luckily, President Bush shared Walters’ gut feeling that great changes were afoot.

In my brief remarks, I want to address three questions:

- First, how did Walters know?
- Second, what difference did it make?
- Third, are there any lessons here for American statecraft?

First, I believe that Walters understood what was happening in Europe because he read books rather than newspapers, and because he focused on what people felt and did rather than on what politicians said. He consumed biographies and first-person accounts with relish. Thus, his first encounter with things German as a teenager was with Kaiser

Wilhelm's autobiography—in German, set in *fraktur* type. His best source on Russia was the Marquis de Custine, a nineteenth century French traveler, sort of a Russian de Tocqueville. His judgments on Germany came more often from long conversations with those who had lived through the entire post-war saga rather than from the politicians of the day. (Helmut Kohl, whom the ambassador revered, was an exception.) Walters was a keen observer of events, and he thought their implications through to their logical ends. He watched Gorbachev withdraw Russian forces from Afghanistan and understood that this action meant the end of the Brezhnev Doctrine. He knew that it portended more for the future of Germany than all of the discussions in the various arms control negotiations that were ongoing at the time. He also understood immediately that Gorbachev's refusal to contemplate the use of the Red Army to break up the civil disobedience movement in East Germany was a logical next step that sounded the death knell for the communist regime in Berlin.

Second, what difference did it make? Walters' conviction that the Wall would fall was the organizing principle of his work as ambassador. It earned him the undying gratitude of the German people and the antagonism of some key figures in Washington. Within the embassy, one of the things that surprised me about Ambassador Walters was his respect for the Foreign Service. Although he disagreed with much of the analysis coming from the "German hands" in the political and economic sections, he refused to force his views on anyone. He edited cables with a light touch, if at all, asking only that the embassy's reporting acknowledge that rapid political change was an option, a possibility.

One vignette illustrates his relationship with staff. East Germany held its first and only free elections in March 1990. Many in West Germany, in the embassy in East Berlin, and in our own political section, made much of the pre-World War II socialist leanings of the eastern *Landerer* and of the alleged residual fondness of many in the East for some of the institutions of the old order. The elections, they predicted, would be a triumph of the Social Democratic Party and might destabilize the Kohl government in Bonn. Walters, from the beginning, took the opposite point of view. East Germans, he said, had already demonstrated that they had had enough socialism, and would vote against any party that identified with that ideology. In the inevitable embassy betting pool on the outcome of the elections, Walters was initially the outlier, predicting a clear Christian Democratic majority. Such was his respect for the career service, however, that he allowed himself to be swayed by arguments from the political section. He changed his wager, moving just enough to the left for a young officer newly assigned to the embassy to eke out the win.

The sort of friendship and collegiality that Ambassador Walters demonstrated meant that in Embassy Bonn, as I suspect everywhere the ambassador served, he had only friends. In operational terms, his clarity of vision helped us stay ahead of the curve on many issues. We did not wait, for example, for the vote of the *Bundestag* to begin planning for the move of the embassy to Berlin and the reshaping of our consular representation. A study that he commissioned in 1990, called *Mission 2000*, became the blueprint for our diplomatic representation to a united Germany. His early and clear expressions of support for a united Germany earned him the friendships that counted—with the German

chancellor and the German people, gave him unparalleled access, and facilitated the complex negotiations leading to German unity. Germans may have, quite rightly, doubted whether Maggie Thatcher or Francois Mitterand favored German unity. They never doubted America, and Dick Walters was a large part of the reason.

Washington was a different story. At the outset, Walters had to contend with the fact that senior German experts in Washington believed that German unity was not even, in the words of one such official, “on the Germans’ agenda.” As a result, the Secretary of State reacted negatively when in August 1989 Walters simply acknowledged to a German reporter in a radio interview that German unity within five years was a possibility. James Baker, as far as I know, never personally contacted Walters on this subject. But the word did go out that the Ambassador was seriously off the reservation and in trouble. I received calls from senior colleagues in Washington with the implicit message, “Why can’t you control him?” As if I either wanted to or could.

Luckily, just as he was on the point of resigning, Walters received a hand-written note of support from President Bush. Ever the loyal soldier, he resolved to stay on until the unification process had run its course. It pained him to have his advice disregarded, as when the Secretary of State chose to hold a highly publicized meeting with the East German prime minister. Walters joked that in ten years no one would remember the prime minister’s name. Do we remember Hans Modrow? Some may, but probably not many.

If there was a gap in Walters’ understanding of the history that we were living in those days, it related more to the management of great power diplomacy than to inner-German dynamics. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, we have tended to forget how large a role the bipolar U.S.-Soviet relationship played in American statecraft. Although Walters, the historian and observer of people, discounted the possibility of hostile Soviet reactions, officials in Washington, who were responsible for managing the international aspects of the unification process, had to reason on the basis of Soviet capabilities. They also had the task of keeping our British and French allies on our side as the process moved forward.

I suspect that Dick Walters regarded the Secretary of State’s closest advisors as secretive acolytes. The latter made clear in a variety of ways that they saw Walters as a substantive lightweight. In addition, there was a clash of styles in which Walters’ flamboyance contrasted with the lawyerly approach of the State Department. Fortunately for all, the forces of history that Walters understood and the skillful and detailed diplomacy of Secretary Baker’s team reinforced each other at a unique moment. German unification was the result.

Are there lessons in the experience of Vernon Walters as a diplomat? I think there are. First, successful diplomacy requires a wide variety of talents and approaches. Managers dominate today’s Foreign Service. Planning, programming, and budgeting take up more time than studying cultures and building relationships. In today’s complex world, this trend is probably inevitable. What we risk losing in the process, unfortunately, are those who think in non-linear fashion, who delight in people rather than in numbers, and who

are willing to spend decades understanding foreign cultures. Second, to the extent that we recruit our diplomats (both civilian and military) largely on the basis of academic qualifications, we may be missing the next generation of Dick Walters. Not many Army privates will ever rise to become advisors to Generals, advisors to Presidents, and Ambassadors. I hope for the sake of our country that some will, that there is room at the top for another Dick Walters. We should think about whether we are doing enough to preserve that possibility.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

### **Ambassador George F. Ward, Jr. (Ret.)**

George F. Ward, Jr. directs the Professional Training Program of the United States Institute of Peace. His areas of specialization include Africa; conflict prevention, management, and resolution; training, European security, international organizations, peace and stability operations, post-conflict reconstruction, diplomacy and foreign policy. He joined the institute in 1999 after a 30-year career in the Foreign Service, which concluded with his appointment as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Namibia in 1996-1999.

He has since returned to government service twice for temporary assignments. In October 2000, he chaired the U.S. Delegation to the Conference on the Human Dimension of the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe. From February to June 2003, he served as Coordinator for Humanitarian Assistance for Iraq. As Ambassador in Namibia, he managed a successful humanitarian de-mining program and initiated a campaign against gender violence. From 1992 to 1996 he was Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, helping formulate U.S. policy on peace operations and managing the policy process on UN political questions. As Deputy Chief of Mission in Germany in 1989-1992, Ward played a senior role in the negotiations that led to German unification. He received the State Department's Distinguished Honor Award for his service in Germany. During earlier Foreign Service assignments in Germany, Italy, and Washington, he worked extensively on European security questions.

Prior to his Foreign Service career, Ward was an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps, serving in the U.S. and Vietnam. He holds a B.A. in History from the University of Rochester and an M.P.A. with a concentration in Systems Analysis from Harvard University.

## PANEL MEMBER

### **Ambassador (Ret.) Joseph Carlton Petrone**

I was in General Patton's 3rd Army in World War II. Halfway through my Army career, I attended the British Staff College, and shortly afterward I applied for the Attaché System. I never thought I would be so lucky as to end up in Paris with the legendary General Vernon A. Walters.

Three of the most rewarding, educational, interesting and pleasant years of my military career were spent as the Assistant Military Attaché under the Defense Attaché at the Paris Embassy (1967-1970). Those years were wonderful and very memorable, largely because of one man: General Vernon A. Walters.

I first heard about this legendary Army officer when I was a military aide at the White House. President Eisenhower was chatting informally with a couple of us after a White House reception. The talk led to the President's upcoming trip to South America. One of my colleagues asked the President who would do the interpreting on the trip. "Oh, Major Walters," was the President's confident reply. "But does he know the languages that you'll encounter on the trip?" my friend asked. "Well if he doesn't he'll learn them on the way down." I thought, "Wow, who is this Major Walters?"

It wasn't until a dozen years later that I personally encountered this linguistic legend, when he gave a lively and insightful briefing to a Military Attaché class at DIA. I remember his mentioning a number of strategies that could be effective when you were seeking information from someone who could give it....my favorite was "to discreetly change the subject to not appear too anxious."

Walters had no equal as a story-teller. We could listen to him for hours at a time. My wife and I have always regretted not having had the opportunity of taking a cruise ship on which he lectured in his later years.

My favorite illustration of the General's extraordinary ability with languages took place during our first year at the Paris Embassy. We were at the French Ministry of Defense when the Defense Minister Pierre Mesmer politely requested that the American Defense Attaché speak to him in English, so he could be certain that he really was an American.

There were countless wonderful stories of the General in Paris. For example, how he happened upon the whole Russian Senior Staff clicking their heels and saluting their chief, who happened to be the Embassy Chauffeur, as the train pulled out of the Gare de Lyon.

The General had a photographic mind. His ability in languages, in my opinion, was the least of his talents. He was blessed, very blessed, with a tremendous mind. This helped him record serious negotiations almost verbatim following his translations with foreigners and heads of state. You can imagine how valuable the General was to conferees when they could go back and get a verbatim transcript of what took place and what was said. Several Presidents benefited from this remarkable ability.

He went alone into China's Paris Embassy, to initiate negotiations that led to Henry Kissinger's opening to China under President Nixon. As Ambassador-at-Large under President Reagan, he gained the release of Americans who had been imprisoned on various continents. He possessed a deep knowledge of history, and actually lived much of the history of his era. He once translated for Generals Eisenhower and de Gaulle at Rambouillet—the two great leaders, now Presidents, were in slippers and bathrobes. He never forgot a lesson de Gaulle had taught him years before, in England, during WWII. Walters had been the interpreter for the two great generals during some heavy negotiations. Walters had suggested to Ike, in English, that he might “push him a little and I think we can get this.” On the way out of the room General de Gaulle suggested, in perfect English: “Walters, next time just stick to your translations.”

He once had a meeting with Fidel Castro, when on a “silent mission” for President Reagan. When Castro pointed out that they had both been raised by the Jesuits, Walters responded: “Yes, but I remained *fidel*.”

General Walters went on to become Deputy to CIA Director George H.W. Bush and later, President Reagan's peripatetic troubleshooter as his Ambassador-at-Large. Reagan made him UN Ambassador. President George H.W. Bush made him his Ambassador to West Germany. We crossed paths fairly often during these years.

General Walters was unquestionably a brilliant statesman and dedicated to his country. He was well known in military and government circles overseas. He was also a kind man. He found time between the myriad social commitments of a Defense Attaché in Paris to visit an elderly lady, a friend of his mother, who was in a nursing home out in the suburbs of Paris.

He was also the kind of man who took the time to phone a subordinate who was down with an illness. He called me nearly every week to see how I was doing, in between travels and lecture-cruises. But that wasn't good enough for General Walters. He came to see me in New Hampshire, accompanied by his nephew, Peter Adams, when he was confined to a wheel chair. It's a gesture I can never forget.

As we have traveled the road of life, my wife and I are eternally grateful and privileged that we had the good fortune and opportunity to know Dick Walters. He was a wonderful American—a man of complete integrity, who embodied the ideas of duty, honor and country. He was an inspiration to all who knew him, and yes, he was a national treasure. I cannot tell you how much we really do miss him.



**Panel Members Jon Wiant, Ambassadors George Ward and Joseph Petrone, and Dr. Bowman Miller**

## **BIOGRAPHY**

### **Ambassador Joseph Carlton Petrone (Ret.)**

Ambassador Petrone was the U.S. Permanent Representative to the European Office of the UN and Other International Organizations in Geneva from 1987 to 1989. Enlisting in the 168th Infantry of the Iowa National Guard in January 1938, he served in all noncommissioned officer grades until 1940. He was a regular Army officer during a military career spanning three wars (WWII, Korea and Vietnam). He served as an aide to President Eisenhower in the White House from 1954 to 1956. From 1967 to 1970, he was Assistant Military Attaché at the American Embassy in Paris. He retired with the rank of Colonel in 1970.

He was a member of the U.S. Delegation to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in Paris in 1983 and of the Presidential Delegation to the 25th Anniversary of Independence of Madagascar in 1985. He is the recipient of numerous awards and decorations (Departments of Army, Defense and State; Poland and France) as well as three battle stars from General Patton's 3rd Army.

He is a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and the British Staff College at Camberley, England.



## PANEL MEMBER

### Bowman H. Miller

My first encounter with General Walters was seeing his name and rank—Major General—on DIA Attaché reporting coming out of Paris when I was a brown-bar Lieutenant in 1969, assigned to Special Investigations in the Air Force. I thought to myself, how does an intelligence officer get to be a two-star general and to be an Attaché? Are there in fact flag-rank possibilities for those in the Military Intelligence business? Well, I watched that for a while and then in 1972 I was assigned to Germany and spent an interesting time there chasing spies, doing the business of the Air Force Office of Special Investigations. In 1975 I had a long period of overlap with my successor and was told by my boss go to Paris and to one or two other places and inspect them to see how they are doing. So they sent me to Paris in August of 1975 to our little resident-agent office where we had a Frenchman whom you may recall was named Rene Pickard. I forced him to open all of his safes, which he didn't want to do; he was more French than American, but he was an OSI Agent. Finally he got one safe open after I had been telling him for hours, "You've got to open all your safes, sir, or this inspection will not be complete." In one drawer were all of his own security violations, which were numerous. But in the most interesting drawer there were two documents, in one of which—this is an E8, mind you, but of course we were non-ranked in OSI, we wore plain clothes—he had as an E8 a Legion of Merit. I said, what is this? He said, well, I did some work with General Walters. He was one of the people who went out and made sure that the French did what they were supposed to do when those airplanes were coming in for the Vietnam peace talks. He also had the most heavily used, unlimited ration card in the entire Embassy. I think he took care of more booze and more cigarettes for the French than any one person living at the time.

My next real contact with General Walters was when he went to Bonn in 1989. I must say I was one of the people who were among the doubters that Germany would reunify. People say, "You've worked on Germany for the last 35 years; how could you not think that?" I said one of the flaws of being an alleged expert on a country is that it becomes harder for you to break out of your frame of mind. He didn't have that frame of mind when he went to Germany. He had a much wider frame of mind than most of the rest of us did. And it wasn't until June of 1989 when I personally heard from a member of the Politburo—as part of a study group when I was in Berlin—his own thoughts about their ability to withstand the pressures of *perestroika* and *glasnost*, that I finally thought maybe the Ambassador was onto something in forecasting the reunification. I worked on the Washington end advising our Chief Negotiator, while trying to work full days and writing analyses all day long and then going up in the evenings and answering the questions he would have. I want to add a footnote on what the Ambassador did, that I don't think is recognized as fully as it should be. And that is that many of his skills, his talents, as well as his character, are built around his worldwide relationships. All the languages are no good unless you actually can build relationships. He had relationships with so many people of such power and influence it is just amazing to imagine, let alone recount. And it was those kinds of abilities to build relationships quickly, in fact, that accounted for the fact that one

of the things that he did while he was Ambassador, while we were trying to negotiate German unity, was that he kept the Soviets quiet and calm in Berlin.

Berlin was a black box of quadripartite, mixed influences, post-war arrangements and so forth. The Russians were not worried about being called upon to go in and quell the rebellion in East Germany—it had been made clear to the East German leadership by the Russians as early as October that they were on their own. The Russians would not be coming to help. They were worried that the East German revolution would take place and it would affect the Soviet troop presence and then they would become the victims of that and then would have to defend themselves. That was the part that had the Russians all upset. And then how would they get out of the post-war arrangements. And I think the Ambassador, to his great credit, kept them calm in the process of working out some of this process, which went a lot faster than most people anticipated, including the German Chancellor.

I want to leave you with one other thought, and that is, there was a question asked this morning which I thought was kind of interesting what about character flaws General Walters may have had. I asked myself this morning again, If this man had not come to be involved in the military at the time and in the way he did, what other thing might he have done? I don't think he would have stayed in insurance. And while we note that he rose from private to lieutenant general from 1941 to 1972, I think we could have also witnessed his rise from altar boy to cardinal. He was a man of great, deep faith. He had a pastoral quality about him which accounted for the fact he could deal with the E1's and the secretaries and the drivers in the same way that he dealt with Mobutu. I will leave you with one little anecdote, which I think is true. It has been told to me several times.

When he was nominated and approved to be Ambassador to Germany, the President asked him if he would, on his way overseas, go calm down Mobutu one more time. And he said certainly, he would do that, anything the President asked him to do. But would it be possible perhaps to use a Presidential aircraft to fly to Zaire? And the President said sure, fine and then take it on to Germany. So you have this arrival on an afternoon or evening at Cologne-Bonn Airport of a Presidential aircraft coming out of Zaire, and the Chief of Protocol is out there to greet the new Ambassador—the plane opens and out walks one man who apparently has a really sound basis and relationship with the President of the United States, arriving on his own airplane. And I think that was the good way to start the relationship with the Germans, who have a certain respect for that kind of rank and stature. I'll leave you with that.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

### **Bowman H. Miller**

Dr. Bowman Miller, the Director of the Office of Analysis for Europe in the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) since May 1987, served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Analysis from December 2000 until June 2001 before resuming his duties in charge of analysis of Europe. Dr. Miller joined INR in 1980 as the analyst for then-West Germany. His current European responsibilities include guiding and stimulating analysis of European developments and trends for approximately 35 countries on the part of 20 staff members. In addition to producing foreign affairs analyses for the Secretary of State, his senior policy advisors, and the broader U.S. government foreign affairs community, Dr. Miller and his office advise and closely support the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs and other elements of the Department of State concerning intelligence, foreign and security policy, European domestic and multilateral developments, and conflict management.

Dr. Miller was educated at the University of Iowa, Cornell University, Eberhard Karls Universitaet in Tuebingen, Germany, and at Georgetown University, where he received his doctorate in German in 1983. His areas of research interest have included German language and politics, trans-Atlantic issues and tensions, European integration and security issues, international terrorism, and the role of the public in U.S. foreign policy formation. His special area of interest is language in politics and ethnic conflict. He previously served as chief of the Department of State's Threat Analysis Group in the Office of Security and, prior to that, served for ten years as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Air Force in the Office of Special Investigations.

# CLOSING REMARKS

## Dr. Perry Pickert

First of all I'd like to thank President Clift and Admiral Jacoby for having us all here today. I'd like to thank the guests for coming because you've made a great contribution to the day by both your presence and questions and some laughter too, because we always need to have a little laughter when we talk about General Walters.

The accomplishment of this conference is to begin a process. Today, we have tried to capture a sense of Walters—his personality, his human qualities and his character. We have provided an overview of his career accomplishments as a military officer and diplomat. What is left to us, the intelligence professionals in the audience and throughout the Community, is to go back and find the secret component of his work as an intelligence officer. His memoirs and speeches do not reveal what he did behind the scenes with great care and precision as an intelligence officer. He took little credit for himself and was discreet even in personal diaries. He scrupulously protected the sources and methods of his profession and confidences of his colleagues and friends.

Vernon Walters was an intelligence officer who educated himself. He always looked forward with a sense of strategic anticipation and prepared himself to be of service to the United States. He began even before he enlisted in the Army to fight the Axis Alliance in World War II. I have one short anecdote from my research which reveals his foresight and dedicated quest for knowledge. I was intrigued when I read in his diaries that as Ambassador to the United Nations on a trip to Tokyo, he had given a speech in Japanese to a group of military officers and visited a former teacher at the Christian Missionary School outside of Tokyo. His skill with European languages is well known as he became familiar with French, Spanish, Italian and German while growing up in Europe, but he never claimed Japanese. Yet seven months before Pearl Harbor, as a teenager with a full-time job as an insurance claims adjuster, he began on his own to study Japanese at a school that prepared missionaries in New York City for service in Asia. In nine months of part-time study he learned pronunciation, the two phonetic alphabets and about 1,000 Chinese characters. Forty years later, to his own amazement, he was able to get around Tokyo on his own, read road signs and memorize a complete speech in the language, then deliver it at the Japanese Defense Agency.

Over the next few years the Joint Military Intelligence College will make the intelligence aspects of Vernon Walters career a part of our research agenda and we invite participation by academic and intelligence professionals in our effort. Intelligence is about the business of keeping secrets, but in order to capture the essence of Vernon Walters' career and contribution to the profession, we will attempt to document the classified intelligence component from the historical record. In today's conference we have seen, time and time again, that Vernon Walters was the right man, in the right place, at the right time, providing intelligence of strategic importance to U.S. decisionmakers. Those were not accidents. He made his own luck. Behind each of the success stories were years of self-educated preparation and his personal initiative to move the intelligence process and to deliver the goods. As we collect the historical record to document the behind-the-scenes role of intelligence, we will need the help of his old friends. So I hope you will be seeing

our JMIC students soon as they conduct interviews as part of their research on the intelligence career of a remarkable American.

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## STRATEGY FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Walters' place at the center of many of the significant military and diplomatic events in the American history of the Cold War means a comprehensive biography of Vernon Walters will require placing him within the broad context of the foreign relations of the United States. As an intelligence officer, Walters worked behind the scenes, and much of the primary-source documentation surrounding his career will remain protected information long past the standard declassification time. Many of his achievements as an intelligence officer and public servant will remain beyond the reach of standard historical research for a long time.

In order to capture the essence of Vernon Walters—the intelligence officer—it will be necessary for intelligence officers and policymakers to engage in a collaborative effort to identify key events and issues, and to build a tentative outline of information that may be obtained from Walters' friends and colleagues. Some items of a perishable nature will need to be obtained in the near future or may be lost because the significance of a particular document may be obscure and without apparent links to key issues, events or personalities.

Since research on the intelligence aspects of Walters' career will be impossible for non-government academic research institutions for decades, the Joint Military Intelligence College is in a unique position to lead the collaborative Intelligence Community effort to capture and document his achievements. They must be properly reviewed to protect sources and methods prior to being made available to the public. The classified component of the research will be targeted to provide lessons for professional intelligence officers and to support the curriculum of Intelligence Community training and educational institutions. The project will focus on the contributions of Vernon Walters to the intelligence profession with respect to:

- The Intelligence Role in American Strategic Decisionmaking
- Tactical Support to Diplomacy
- Intelligence Operations

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Foreknowledge is the essence of intelligence. In his last public speech on 10 September 2001, General Walters called for a rejuvenation of the Intelligence Community and specifically an increase in CIA covert operations capability to counter the expanding global terrorist threat to the United States. But almost 20 years earlier, just as he was assuming his role as Ambassador to the United Nations in February 1985, he came back to CIA to give a lecture on his reflections as a Diplomat-at-Large. He had been dealing with the terrorist problem, and had conducted several secret missions to meet President Assad of Syria to obtain the release of hostages. Eventually at least one, Father Jenko, was released. We will finish here today with one more video clip illustrating General Walters' uncanny ability to anticipate the intelligence issues of the future:

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## LIEUTENANT GENERAL WALTERS ON INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

### At the Central Intelligence Agency, 21 February 1985

**Question from the audience:** Mr. Ambassador, I think it would be very helpful to have your perspective on terrorism in international relations right now as a developing phenomenon, and particularly as an intelligence challenge.

**LTG Walters:** The problem for me with terrorism is, and this is one of my few pessimistic conclusions, that the only way to deal with it effectively is to infiltrate it. They know how we are...and the initiation fee is to commit a crime. Even if it's not an American national, no one, not President Reagan, the Chief Justice, or the Speaker of the House can authorize an American to commit a crime. It's a very effective filter. Other people don't have these same problems. I think that this is something that our friendly services perhaps can do a little better than we can. One of them said to me once, "Because you've never been a monarchy, you don't understand the "reason of state."

What concerns me in terrorism is that I don't believe that it's tightly controlled by Moscow, and I don't believe they are tightly controlled, but I see growing signs of contact and training around them and it's a world-wide phenomenon.

And now, we have a slightly newer phenomenon, the suicide Hezbollah or Pasdaran of the Revolution, who don't mind if they get killed. Preventing a terrorist attempt by someone who doesn't mind if he loses his own life is an extremely difficult thing to do, and the only way that I can see to do it is to get into his organization or get into his communications.

It's a permanent challenge, it's part of the disorder of our time, it's part of the stresses of the world in which we live and it's something in which we should—and I know we are already doing this—work as closely with each other as we can. It's the sort of thing which, in my belief—and I'm not preaching to you, because I have no authority in this area—we will have to deal with some shady characters to get into.

You see, I was a young officer when Franklin D. Roosevelt hired Lucky Luciano to help us land in Sicily. And no one denounced that as a crime. Luciano, who was serving a life sentence in an American jail, was freed and went back to Italy after the war. And quite frankly, with the difficulty of infiltrating them, because of our inability to commit crimes and other difficulties, I think we're going to have to deal with—if we're going to get into it—we'll have to deal with some people that we might not normally deal with just as President Roosevelt found it indispensable to deal with the Mafioso in order to facilitate the landing in Sicily.

Now, a lot of people will dispute that and say no, we must be pure and holy. It's hard for us to be innocent in a world which is not innocent. I don't have an easy answer to your question. It's a question in which perseverance will, I hope, bring us some results as we go down the line.

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## BIOGRAPHY

### Dr. Perry L. Pickert

Perry L. Pickert received a B.A. in Philosophy from Amherst College, an MA, MALD, and PhD from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy and a J.D. from George Mason University School of Law. He has been a faculty member at the Joint Military Intelligence College since 1994. He teaches courses on intelligence in a multilateral context, and Asian studies. In 2000 he was a visiting professor in the Faculty of Law at Doshisha University, Kyoto, Japan.

He retired from the CIA in 1998, having served in the Directorates of Science and Technology, Intelligence and Operations. He was the CIA representative to the Information Operations Directorate of the Joints Chiefs of Staff, and an Intelligence Officer in the Non-Proliferation and Counterintelligence Centers. He retired from the Marine Corps Reserve as a Colonel in 1999.

His publications include: “The Foreign Policy of Japan, Inc.,” *The Japan Quarterly* 79-86 (1974); “Raz’s concept of a Legal System,” *20 American Journal of Jurisprudence* 154-163 (1974); “American Attitudes Toward International Law as Reflected in the Pentagon Papers,” in Richard A. Falk, ed., *4 The Vietnam War and International Law* 49-93, Princeton University Press (1976); “Soviet Presence in the UN Secretariat,” *Report of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence*, U.S. Government Printing Office (1985); *Intelligence for Multilateral Decision and Action*, JMIC (1997); “A Virtual UN Security Council: Educating for Multilateral Strategic Decisionmaking,” in *A Flourishing Craft: Teaching Intelligence Studies*, Occasional Paper Number Five, JMIC (1999); and “The 1775 Large Belt of Intelligence: The First U.S. Multilateral Intelligence Treaty,” *International Intelligence Forum* 2002, 7-36, JMIC, 2003.



Dr. Perry L. Pickert

**EULOGY FOR  
LIEUTENANT GENERAL VERNON A. WALTERS,  
ARLINGTON CEMETERY,  
March 5, 2002**

**by  
General Alexander M. Haig, Jr., USA (Ret.)**

Finding adequate words to describe the life and accomplishments of a cherished friend of over 33 years, Lieutenant General Vernon A. Walters, known to many as Dick, is an awesome task. His was a remarkable life of selfless service to God, country, and fellow man. As a Catholic he was a daily communicant. His many assignments led him gracefully to the highest reaches of international governance where his presence was felt in both large and small ways, but invariably in quest of outcomes that promoted justice and truth while strengthening the security of America. After 1950, our paths crossed again and again in ways that provided ample justification for my chonicalization on this sad occasion. Time requires that I include only a small sample of the lifetime of prolific contributions by this gifted patriot.

First and foremost, Dick Walters was a soldier. He quaffed the thick scent of cordite as well as the thinner air at the highest reaches of government. He joined the United States Army in 1941 during World War II with limited educational credentials, but with a unique store of intellectual, leadership, and linguistic skills. He was understandably and promptly commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant and soon found himself at the side of the 5th Army Commander in Italy, General Mark Clark, where his talents exposed him to the intricacies of high military strategy. Subsequently, in both war and peace, he found himself moving through crisis after crisis, throughout the entire fifty-year span of the Cold War, ultimately arriving at the very threshold of the so-called “New World Order.”

I first became aware of Dick Walters following the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, while serving as a member of General MacArthur’s personal staff in Tokyo. As a young 1st Lieutenant, I helped assemble the papers which General MacArthur brought to his meeting with President Harry Truman in Guam. Dick indeed accompanied the President. Some recently published obituaries have stated that Dick Walters was present at that meeting when President Truman fired General MacArthur for “insubordination.” Perhaps someday young journalists will be required to read history so that they don’t continue to add to biased misinformation. General MacArthur was actually relieved almost a year later, not for insubordination, but for political expediency.

My first *direct* acquaintanceship with Dick Walters came in the mid-1960s when he was the U.S. Military Attaché in Brazil and where he was a key player in the prevention of a communist takeover in that Latin American colossus. Shortly thereafter, then-Colonel Walters to my dismay appeared on the Army’s “also-ran” list for promotion to Brigadier General. Since Dick was not a line officer, his elevation was not to occur.



Notwithstanding, he was promoted as a result of intervention at the highest levels in the Pentagon where there was more sensitivity not only to his past accomplishments but his remarkable potential. Prior to that time, Dick Walters had used his linguistic skills, the product of a photographic memory, together with towering intellectual assets, to impress all with whom he came in contact. Fluent in seven languages and capable of expanding his repertoire in a brief period to working skills in several more (including Mandarin Chinese), he generated a reputation unmatched by most of his contemporaries. In sum, Dick's talents and impressive stature together with his mental acuity, and above all, his sense of duty, brought him to the attention of many of the world's top leaders, including de Gaulle, the then and present King of Morocco, and a score of Latin America's civil and military leaders. Up to that time, he had worked closely with Presidents Truman and Eisenhower, and would soon find himself at the side of Presidents Nixon, Ford, Reagan, and Bush.

Because Dick's memory was indeed photographic, his ability to recall events, facts, and precise conversations was legendary. Some years later, I worked as Henry Kissinger's Deputy with General Walters in the Nixon White House. Henry and the President would often bring him into important meetings with heads of state or government, ostensibly as an interpreter, but actually to ensure the availability of a verbatim record of the event. I can recall, following lengthy meetings of an hour or longer, seating him at my secretary's typewriter, where he would resurrect from infallible memory a verbatim record of the entire exchange, including the often dicey side talk occurring during official breaks.

Dick and I never tired of recounting our recollections of one of Dr. Kissinger's more exciting covert visits to the secret peace negotiations with Le Duc Tho in Paris. On this occasion, Kissinger and his party were en route from Washington in Air Force II, an aging 707. Dick and I arranged most of these numerous visits, mothering their every detail. On this occasion, I received an urgent call from the plane reporting difficulty with navigational equipment which would make landing of the aircraft at the designated French SAC base very dangerous due to the base's limited control equipment. This meant immediate diversion to a large international airfield. I urgently called Dick in Paris, outlining the problem. In an effort to preserve the secrecy of the talks, he suggested that the plane land in Germany where he could arrange to have Kissinger and his party picked up by a smaller French plane provided by President Pompidou. The party would then be delivered to the Villacoublay Airfield outside of Paris. Dick then approached the German government with one of those evil disinformation stories that some of our newspapers have been railing about recently. The Chancellor's office was informed that a high-level French official needed to land at Frankfurt to pick up his lady friend and that both would be transported to France in a smaller official government plane. "This is most awkward," the Chancellor's office responded. "But is it a German girl?" Dick agilely replied, "Of course," and the German responded, "Very well, it is done." When Kissinger landed at an obscure location on the field at Frankfurt Rhein-Main, Dick was on the spot with a large brimmed hat, overcoat, and scarf to camouflage his well-known passenger as the party walked to the French plane. On that occasion, the secrecy of the talks in Paris was preserved due to Dick's contacts and above all to his mental agility. Yes, sometimes disinformation is justified.

In 1972, President Nixon enthusiastically approved Dr. Kissinger's and my recommendation that Dick Walters be promoted to Deputy Director of the CIA. In that role, Dick's lifetime of experience with intelligence matters quickly made him indispensable during three separate directorships. It was during this difficult period that confirmation of Dick Walters' character was once again demonstrated. As the early revelations of the Watergate scandal began to surface, efforts were made by the then-White House staff to have General Walters intervene with the FBI in an effort to terminate an investigation of the scandal on national security grounds. After discussing the matter with then-Director Richard Helms, Dick simply refused to do so. He also rejected subsequent efforts by John Dean to shut down the FBI investigations, finally threatening to resign if those pressures were to continue. If only President Nixon had been surrounded by more people of Dick Walters' character, he and the nation might have been spared the trauma of Watergate.

Dick departed the CIA and retired in 1976 with the rank of Lieutenant General. There followed a five-year period of restlessness and business, writing, and speaking activity. At that point in his life, he was still blessed with a remarkable level of physical stamina and single-minded interest in world affairs. When President Reagan asked me to become his Secretary of State, I immediately traveled to Florida where my wife, two of my children, and a covey of newly appointed security agents, all ensconced on bicycles, converged on Dick's comfortable bungalow in Palm Beach where I asked him to become the new roving Ambassador and troubleshooter for the President. During his term, which outlasted my own, he made some 100 trips, touching most hotspots in the waning days of the Cold War. During my tenure, he was by my side in trips to London and Buenos Aires during the Falklands Crisis and served as a regular emissary to the Vatican, where the invaluable support of His Holiness for U.S. policies was unfailingly garnered. After I left government for the last time in July 1982, Dick Walters was appointed Ambassador to the United Nations and ended his career as Ambassador to Bonn. In 1989, while serving in Bonn, Ambassador Walters accurately predicted that the reunification of Germany and the collapse of the Berlin Wall would occur within the year. This raised the ire of the then-Secretary of State who not only disagreed with this accurate assessment but made this fact all too clear to all. In the wake of this incident, several months later Dick quietly resigned.

Few public servants have borne comparable responsibilities in their lifetime. Fewer still have built a comparable track record, a strategic wisdom, and clarity of thought. None, in my memory, have made a greater contribution to the welfare of the American people. On behalf of all who knew and admire Vernon Walters, let me presume to extend our heartfelt gratitude in this house of worship for his lifetime of achievement. One widely read New York newspaper obituary incorrectly stated Vernon Walters was not a policymaker, but simply an observer of events. As an observer myself of some 50 years of his bountiful life, I can bear witness to the fact that he was indeed a shaper of events and not simply an observer. This, my friends, is the essential characteristic of the true leader that he surely was.



Gravesite of Lieutenant General Vernon A. Walters, Arlington National Cemetery.  
Photo courtesy Sara Swenson.