

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

THE GOOD SPY:
THE LIFE AND DEATH OF CIA LEGEND ROBERT AMES

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. RIEDEL: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the Brookings Institution, welcome in particular to the Brookings Institution Intelligence Project. I'm very glad to host today a conversation with Kai Bird about a truly remarkable man, Robert C. Ames. Robert Ames, Bob Ames, was a CIA officer who served both in the clandestine service overseas and in the Directorate of Intelligence, the analyst part of the CIA in Washington. Bob Ames died in a suicide car bomb explosion at the American Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon in April of 1983. Bob Ames is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. His headstone is the only headstone in Arlington Cemetery that bears the word Central Intelligence Agency. So a truly remarkable man.

He was not just a great case officer working overseas although he probably was one of the great case officers in the history of any division, particularly for his partnership -- and that's the word I will use -- with Ali Hassan Salameh the head of intelligence of the Palestine Liberation Organization. He was also a great analyst. He was the National Intelligence Officer for the Near East and South Asia for several years and the head of the Office of Analysis in the CIA that did analysis for the Middle East and South Asia. As an analyst he didn't get everything right, no analyst ever gets everything right, but he got an awful lot of things right. David Halberstam, the Pulitzer Prize winning author summed up what a good intelligence officer should be in his 2007 book, The Coldest Winter. He said, "Great intelligence officers often have the melancholy job of telling their superiors things they don't want to hear. A great intelligence officer tries to make the unknown at least partially knowable. He tries to think like his enemy and he listens carefully to those with whom he disagrees simply because he knows that he has to change his own value system in order to understand the nature and impulse of the other side." And I think Bob Ames did that perhaps better than anyone else I ever met in

my career. For me Bob Ames was not just a colleague, he was a boss, he was a mentor, and he was a friend.

So I'm very glad today to host Kai Bird, another Pulitzer Prize winner, who has written a truly great book, The Good Spy: The Life and Death of Robert Ames, a biography of the individual.

Um, the sequence today is going to be very simple. We're going to have a conversation together talking about the book for about 40 minutes or so and then I'm going to open it up to you for questions from the audience. When we do go to you, please identify yourself before you ask your question or make your comment. And the last point I will make to everyone is please turn your cell phones off so we don't have any embarrassing interruptions here. Or amusing interruptions as it may be depending upon what's your cell phone answering system.

So let me start, if I could, by welcoming you to Brookings and thanking you for coming, thanking you for writing a terrific book and asking you to start. Where did Bob Ames come from, how did he get into the espionage business and the CIA?

MR. BIRD: Okay. Well, Bruce, I'm really glad to be here. This has been a really fun project. For four years I've been working on this. I interviewed Bruce early on. But Ames was sort of an unlikely spy as such. He grew up in Philadelphia. He was the son of a steel worker, no Ivy League, blue blood connections. He loved basketball. He was the only -- he went to La Salle College in Philadelphia and he was the only member of his family who graduated from college. Then he was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1956 and was sent by chance to Kagnew Station in Asmara in Ethiopia as a lowly private and this sort of signal intelligence station that was a listening post high up in the mountains there. And that's where he was first exposed to Arabic. They spoke Arabic a little bit in the streets of Asmara and he also had a chance on a couple of

weekends to fly over to play basketball in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. And he had a week in Jerusalem, in the holy land. And he -- very impressionable. He fell in love with the Middle East in just this sort of very transitory fashion and he started at Kagnev Station teaching himself Arabic letters and hired a tutor for a brief time. And when he came out of the Army in '58 he wanted to join the Foreign Service or the CIA and he took the Foreign Service exam and failed that. And so then he applied to the CIA and I'm not sure if that's typical or not but -- and I'm not sure if he failed the exam or the oral which would be an interesting --

MR. RIEDEL: Yeah. Most of us are smart enough now not to even try to take the exam.

MR. BIRD: Anyway, he joined the Agency in 1960 and went through -- I describe in the book his experiences and training at "The Farm", this legendary installation in Virginia. And then he, unlike most of his colleagues at the time who were eager here at the height of the Cold War in 1961, they were eager to work on Russia and the Soviet Union and the Eastern Block, Bob volunteered, he wanted to do the Middle East. And so his first posting was in 1962 in Dhahran. And he was my next door neighbor. So I knew the man. My father who is here in the audience in the front row knew him of course very well and knew that he was a CIA officer with the cover of -- as a commercial officer in the small consulate. And but of course I didn't know. I was 11, 12, 13 years old and I just remember seeing this very tall 6'3" handsome, blue eyed, blonde haired, very imposing young man in his late 20s who had a gorgeous wife. I remember her too. She looked like Leigh Volman and still does. And she had two babies, baby girls. And anyway Ames spent four years in Saudi Arabia; that was his first posting. And then he went on to a series of other postings and -- I don't want to go on too long.

MR. RIEDEL: Well, the -- no -- the -- that gets to the next dramatic

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person and that's Ali Hassan Salameh, sometimes called, "The Red Prince", although I never could figure out why he would be "Red Prince", but so he was named. Who was Ali Hassan Salameh and how did the relationship with Ames evolve?

MR. BIRD: Well, Ali Hassan was a guy right out of the movies. He was rather handsome, he was -- I think when Ames met him he was about 28. He wore black; plant pants, black shirt, button down, showing his chest hair, and gold jewelry and black leather jacket. And Ali Hassan loved red wine and fast cars and beautiful women. And he was actually the totally opposite of Bob Ames. Ames by then had been married, had -- by '69 he had four children. He was a devoted family man. He rarely drank, didn't smoke. He didn't like going out with the boys to the bars in Beirut. Anyway, Ali Hassan was the sort of the chief bodyguard early on to Yasser Arafat and then became his virtual intelligence chief as head of what was called 417. And in 1969 Ames met a young Lebanese businessman named Mustafa Zein and Mustafa and he clicked. Mustafa was a very charismatic, outgoing, young Lebanese who had fallen in love with America on an exchange program here. He spent his senior year in high school in a small town in Illinois. He loved all things American but he was never recruited. He worked for Ames, he admired Ames but he never took a dime from the U.S. government. But he acted sort of as a virtual access agent for Ames, and Zein knew everyone. He knew the Princes of Abu Dhabi, whom he had worked for, he had by this time met Gamal Abdel Nasser and he knew Lebanese politicians and he was the perfect access agent. He also was best friends with Ali Hassan Salameh. Now this is at a moment in 1969 when the U.S. government's official policy was that no U.S. diplomat could shake hands or have a drink or meet with anyone connected with the PLO. And Ames heard Mustafa talking about his good friend, Ali Hassan, and he decided this would be a good man to meet and they arranged a clandestine first meeting in a café, at the Strand Café in Rue Hamra in West

Beirut. And it was an elaborate orchestrated meeting in which both sides brought their armed guards. And Mustafa and Ali Hassan were sitting at a café table and the scenario they worked out was that Bob would walk by the table and Mustafa would reach out and put his hand on Ali Hassan's shoulder and Ali Hassan would know that Bob was the man he would later meet. Well, Ali Hassan just stood up and stuck out his hand and pointed to Mustafa and said this is my man. And a few days later they met indeed in a safe house in Beirut and began a relationship. And it was I think an attempt by Ames to target Ali Hassan Salameh for a recruitment. But he quickly decided that "The Red Prince" as such was unrecruitable, that he was not the kind of man who would ever sign a contract or take money and so he instead turned it into a friendship. And this lasted from 1969 over various rocky roads until 1979.

MR. RIEDEL: It's important to of course think back to 1969, early '70s, the American official position was not just that we weren't going to have any contact with the Palestine Liberation Organization or its various subcomponents, it was that their cause was an illegitimate cause, that they had no --

MR. BIRD: The Palestinian people did not exist.

MR. RIEDEL: They did not exist. So for an intelligence organization on one hand it seems relatively simple. You want to recruit people inside a terrorist organization if that's which you thought it was, and it carried out acts of terrorism, so it was a terrorist organization. But to go beyond that to create a friendship or partnership with someone from that was an extraordinary political step. Can you give us some of the flavor of the book as to how this first of all went down inside the CIA and then how it went down over time with the White House in the Nixon, Ford administrations?

MR. BIRD: Well, this first clandestine meeting occurred in December of '69 and I tried to piece together what happened. I think by January Dick Helms, the direct

of the Agency, knew that Ames had made this contact and he encouraged him to pursue it. And it seems that from Helms' papers that Helms had an opportunity to inform Kissinger and Nixon later that spring, not immediately. Now of course if you look at Henry Kissinger's memoirs he sort of dances around this whole question. At the time he was publicly saying we have nothing to do with this terrorist organization, we're not going to talk to them. There was a very explicit promise to the Israelis that we were not going to have any contacts with this terrorist organization. But in his memoirs he does actually acknowledge that there were contacts. He doesn't name Ames.

MR. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. BIRD: But it was happening. And, you know, it's an extraordinary story. And I have to say when I started out I -- when I decided I wanted to do this book I thought all I would be able to do is tell the story of the Beirut Embassy bombing. It would be a fairly narrowly focused book about that horrific first truck bomb attack on a U.S. embassy. I didn't think I could do a full biography. Who's going to talk to me, where am I going to get the biographical details that's necessary about his childhood and marriage? But I found his widow, Yvonne. She almost didn't answer my email. I hadn't been in touch with her since I was 13 but headlined the email "Dhahran Memories" and that sort of -- she remembered my name and my father's name and she answered the email. And I went and visited her in North Carolina and she showed me the family scrapbook and photos. And she then confessed that she thought her memory was that there were some letters maybe in a suitcase in the attic of her daughter's house. And, you know, this is the biographer's best dream and worst nightmare if you don't find the proverbial suitcase in the attic, you know there's something. So I gently suggested that she should track down these letters and it took six months of gently reminding her. It was too hot to go up in the attic in the summer. But she did come through and she found what turned out to

be 150 pages of handwritten letters in Bob Ames' neat handwritten scrawl. And she didn't give them to me because she wanted to read them through and make sure that there was nothing salacious or... But she then annotated them and numbered them and made sure that they were all collated. She copied them and sent them eventually to me. And this allowed me turn the book into a real biography because not only did Ames talk about his love of Yvonne and what we saw of him asking about his children -- they eventually had six children -- but he also talks about his work. Because Yvonne knew about Ali Hassan. Ali Hassan would come to their apartment in Beirut. And so she knew about this connection and so he would sort of allude to Ali Hassan in his letter. And I also found other letters from Mustafa Zein who also saved letters. And so between the two collections of correspondence I was able to sort of describe in detail the ups and downs of Ames' attempts to maintain a relationship with Ali Hassan. For instance in the aftermath of the Munich tragedy in the Munich Olympics in September of 1972 when 11 Israeli athletes were brutally killed, at that point Ames thought that he would never be able to cultivate this contact again, it was too horrific. You see him writing about it and writing to Mustafa Zein what a -- how this had changed everything. And then there was some debate you could see about whether Ali Hassan Salameh was himself personally involved in the Munich events or not. And I go through in the book showing the evidence on both sides. But eventually Ames concluded that Ali Hassan had not been involved directly. He had actually been put on a leave of absence by Arafat for another reason and was not personally involved in it.

In any case the relationship resumed in the spring of '73 and it became very important as the Lebanese civil war started when Ali Hassan then provided with -- under Ames' prodding 417 began to protect the embassy which was located in Fatah territory in the course of this terrible civil war.

MR. RIEDEL: Of course this introduces the other party into the story, the Israelis, who I think you capture in the book see not just an intelligence relationship budding here but their worst nightmare, something more than an intelligence relationship starting to come out. You were able to talk to some of the people on the Israeli side of the story as well. Can you give us some insights into that part of it?

MR. BIRD: Well, it's fascinating. Indeed I went to Tel Aviv and I tracked down four retired Mossad officers who had known Bob. And they had fond memories of him. This is another reason why Ames was the good spy. You know, he was no James Bond. He did occasionally have to carry a pistol, particularly in Aden, one of his assignments there for a few years which was rather -- people being assassinated in the streets. But he hated guns and he had no enemies except perhaps inside the bureaucracy. He had sharp elbows and he was an ambitious young man I described. He made friends and he was very good at making friends in foreign cultures. You know, he was this tall 6'3" guy who wore cowboy boots at times and stood out like a sore thumb with tinted aviator glasses. You know, he was the all-American basketball boy. Just there was nothing -- he walked down the street and he was obviously an American. But Arabs loved him and so did the Israelis. They admired him. They knew though -- my Mossad interview contacts told me that they knew who he was, that he was the guy -- although this was completely clandestine, not in the public realm -- they knew he was the guy who had made this clandestine contact with Ali Hassan Salameh, the man that they called "The Red Prince". That moniker was actually bestowed on Ali Hassan by the Israelis as an attempt to sort of --

MR. RIEDEL: Smear him.

MR. BIRD: Smear him, yeah. And he came from sort of -- you know, his father had actually been a famous guerilla fighter, terrorist, whatever word you want to

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use in the '48 war and was killed at the age of 37 in a battle near Jerusalem. So for that reason Ali Hassan came from -- his father was known as a martyr so he had good political credentials as such inside the Palestinian community. So the Israelis knew who he was and they were of course very disturbed at this contact. And they began in as early as 1973 to try to kill Ali Hassan. They targeted him in the wake of the Munich tragedy, they went after black September operatives and eventually killed -- assassinated 10 Palestinians, some of them associated with Munich, some of them not. And so it's an incredible story at the same moment where when Ali Hassan is being targeted Ames is trying to keep him alive. And he's warning him. I found in one instance Ames is warning Ali Hassan don't open your mail, any mail that's addressed to your apartment. And indeed the Israelis had -- were sending out letter bombs and he was targeted and one letter bomb was delivered to his apartment and they took it to an X-ray machine and indeed there was a bomb inside. And then in the summer of '73 in Lillehammer, Norway a team of five Mossad agents thought they had found Ali Hassan Salameh and they killed instead a Moroccan waiter who was married to a Norwegian woman and was six months pregnant. That ended the assassination attempts for a while.

And it's really interesting, when I talked to the Israelis about this they insisted that he was being targeted because of his role in Munich.

MR. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. BIRD: And they would sort of nod and wink yes, maybe also because they knew that he was the clandestine link to the Americans and their worst fear is that this was going to result in Yasser Arafat standing on the White House lawn someday. So I think it was a combination of both. I think they were probably mistaken about Ali Hassan's direct role in Munich. But in any case when Begin became Prime Minister in '77 he reactivated the assassination plot to find Ali Hassan. And in the

summer of 1978 a Mossad officer approached one of Ames' bosses, an officer named Alan Wolfe in London, and asked point blank is Ali Hassan your man? And Wolfe turned around and walked away gruffly and -- but had to report this back to Langley.

MR. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. BIRD: And this stimulated the debate inside the Agency, well what do we tell the Israelis? And it's sort of a classic intelligence dilemma, as I understand it, and complicated by the fact that indeed Ali Hassan had never accepted money. They had offered a -- Ames had refused by they did at one point in 1972 send in another officer to actually make a -- to pop the question and it blew up in their face. Ali Hassan got very angry and walked out. But he wasn't their man. But if they said he wasn't their man then that would give the green light to Mossad to go ahead. It was a dilemma in which they in the end I'm told by Clair George that they decided that no answer was the best answer. But that of course was an answer too. Ames was quite upset I'm told by this debate and the result and he attempted to warn Ali Hassan again. But in the end in January -- January 22, 1979 -- a team of 15 Mossad people infiltrated into Beirut in the fall of '78 and set up an operation. A woman named Erika Chambers was -- rented an apartment on the route that Ali Hassan took daily from his office to his apartment and they packed a VW bug with plastic explosives and she pushed the button as Ali Hassan's convoy drove by one day and he was killed.

MR. RIEDEL: But you have -- you can't stop there. Why did they pick her to push the button? That's a very -- it's a great little vignette.

MR. BIRD: This is a little detail. In Israel I learned from one of my sources that the head of the Caesarea Unit, Mike Harari, that had a legendary figure inside Israeli intelligence who had organized the operations that hit the PLO in retaliation for the Munich business, he set up the organization that targeted Ali Hassan in '79. And

in the practice runs all the men failed to push the button at the right moment. It was either too early or too late. And this young woman, Erika Chambers, did it at the right moment every time. So they sent her in. And she's still alive by the way and living in Israel.

MR. RIEDEL: See, you come to Brookings and you get unique gender insights you get nowhere else. I want to pivot just a little bit to Iran. Ames was the National Intelligence Officer during the build-up to the Iranian revolution; he served in Iran. Like most intelligence officers I think he had a hard time seeing the revolution coming. That was not unique to intelligence officers in the late 1970s. But then he actually also in addition to being the first man to be in the door with the PLO, he became almost the first man to be in the door in the Islamic Republic of Iran, if you could describe that episode a little bit.

MR. BIRD: Yes. When Richard Helms was fired by Nixon as Director they sent him as Ambassador to Tehran. And Dick Helms had sort of mentored the young Bob Ames for many years. They were good friends. And so when Helms left for Tehran he insisted that Ames should be assigned to come with him. But he wasn't a Farsi speaker, he had no expertise on Iran per se, but he spent about six months there. And then when the revolution happened they sent Ames back in to try to reestablish some kind of connection with the new regime and he had -- it's a great story. He flies in - - I have the passport number and his pseudo -- his alias and -- he has a series of meetings with the Foreign Minister Ebrahim Yazdi and the Prime Minister at the time of the interim provisional revolutionary government, Mehdi Bazargan. And the purpose was to try to entice them into more normal relations by suggesting -- offering them some intelligence, a warning that Saddam Hussein seemed to be massing his troops on the border and perhaps they should be aware of this military threat from their neighbor. And

by the way there is an intelligence installation that used to be in working order prior to the revolution, a radar installation that could provide you with good intelligence about that kind of -- those military maneuvers across your border. And maybe you should reopen it and by the way it would be useful to us too to be able to monitor Soviet missile tests and such.

So Ames was a part of this sort of clandestine diplomatic overture. And it was a successful meeting but alas, you know, this was the wrong moment in the course of the revolution. Khomeini was in the process of radicalizing his regime and Bazargan didn't last much longer as prime minister. The intelligence warning was ignored and -- but Ames had an interesting time. He actually met with Ayatollah Beheshti who is one of the key sort of ideological intellectuals behind the revolution. And Ames also had later on a role in trying to plan the Desert One rescue mission which of course failed. So it's another chapter in his sort of Zelig-like presence in the Middle East.

MR. RIEDEL: Right. And of course we come to April 1983. As *The New York Times* has told all of you, you make the argument in the book that the attack on the American Embassy was not just Hezbollah but also the government of Iran—the argument has been made before. At the end of the day I think 62 people or 69 people died in the attack. You said earlier that you thought originally that was going to be the whole book. How would you sum up your conclusions on the death of Bob Ames and who was responsible, plus the "where are they today"?

MR. BIRD: Yes, the last chapter of the book is an investigation of who did it. And the presumption for many years was there was no answer to this. There were investigations but they never really went anywhere. I interviewed several CIA officers who were responsible for supervising the investigation and they claimed to me that it never went anywhere; they never really concluded who had done this. Hezbollah did not

exist in 1983. There were an early sort of Islamic Amal faction of the old Amal party that had broken off and this -- so there were people who would morph into the Hezbollah as we know it today in about 1985, but in 1983 it really didn't exist. And there was a presumption over the years, a consensus arose that a young man named Imad Mughniyeh was involved. Mughniyeh -- as one of my interview sources said when in doubt blame Mughniyeh. Because he was indeed involved in the TWA high jacking in '87 and the kidnappings of Americans in Beirut and a whole string of operations including he became an important sort of intelligence and military commander for Hezbollah during the 2006 Lebanese war.

But in 1982-83 Imad Mughniyeh was 20 years old and he had indeed ironically enough he had been trained and recruited by Ali Hassan Salameh as a 417 bodyguard for Arafat. So the circle of ironies is incredible.

MR. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. BIRD: But in the wake of the Sabra and Shatila Massacre in September of '82 after the PLO was forced out of Lebanon the young 417 guard named Imad Mughniyeh was left behind. He was a Lebanese Shiite who grew up in the camps of Sabra and Shatila and this -- the massacre gave him motivation to retaliate. In any case I come down on the argument that it was a larger conspiracy. That Imad Mughniyeh may have been part of it but it was too complicated. It was a 2000 pound truck bomb. They did establish that the plastic explosives were military grade from a factory in Iran and, you know, it was a complicated operation and a young 20 year old bodyguard was not capable of doing this on his own. Now there was a suit filed in 2003, a civil suit here in Federal District Court in Washington. And there was a trial in which the survivors and some of the relatives of the victims filed suit against the Islamic Republic of Iran and there were expert witnesses and Iran didn't contest the suit. But there was a

trial and there was a judgment. And for instance the family of Robert Ames was awarded a judgment of \$38 million. Now they haven't collected a single dime but there was a judgment that Iran was responsible. And they named -- they said it was a Revolutionary Guard contingent. And so I did detective work based on that and concluded -- I found the names of a number of Iranian intelligence officers who had been shipped to Lebanon to the Beqaa Valley in the wake of the Israeli invasion in '82 and one name in particular popped out, a man named Ali Reza Asgari who was an intelligence officer in the Revolutionary Guard and who spent his entire career in the '80s stationed in Lebanon. And he arrived in the summer of '82. And I found another source who told me this the man who actually was the operational officer for the embassy truck bomb attack. And astonishingly enough the end story is that this young man Asgari rose to become Deputy Defense Minister in Iran, fell out of power in 2003, was briefly imprisoned in Iran, and in 2007 he smuggled himself across the border to Syria and then Turkey and defected. And there were numerous stories in the *Washington Post*, *The New York Times* and the European papers about this prominent defection of an Iranian general who brought his laptop and brought intelligence about the Iranian nuclear program and Hezbollah. And so ironically enough it seems that the assassin of Bob Ames is now or was living in America and was certainly debriefed by the CIA here at some point. And it's a mystery of where he is today.

MR. RIEDEL: I'm sure we're going to get into that some more in a minute but I have one last question and then I'll stop torturing you and let you ask your questions. The title, The Good Spy, could mean a lot of different things. I'd like a dispositive answer, what does "Good Spy" mean to you?

MR. BIRD: Well, I just think it's a fabulous title. And I actually have a friend who's a novelist, a very good novelist, Joseph Kanon whose first novel was called,

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Los Alamos. And Robert Oppenheimer who I've written about was a minor character in that sort of murder detective thriller. And we became friends. And Kanon then went on to write several other books among which was a book called The Good German. And when I started writing a proposal on a Robert Ames biography I came up with a notion of, you know, he's the good spy because he was a legend inside the CIA, although completely unknown to most Americans. And I think it's an intriguing notion. Well, you know, people scratch their head and say well, if you're a spy how can you be good? There's something nefarious about this. And yet Ames was very good at his work, both as a clandestine officer and later as an analyst and a briefer of Ronald Reagan and Secretary George Shultz. And he was good precisely not because -- precisely because he was not a James Bond. There's nothing sort of dashing or outrageous about him. He was very likable and he made friends, not enemies, and he cultivated good contacts. And that seemed to me to sort of symbolize what is good about human intelligence. And I think in this day and age where we're constantly being told that intercept intelligence is what is necessary to keep us safe, I think when you read The Good Spy you'll come away with some doubts about that notion and understand the value of human intelligence, which can give you insights into motivation and intentions and also help to -- as Ames did with Palestinians -- help to influence bad actors in dangerous neighborhoods. And this is a very valuable -- you know where a Foreign Service officer cannot tread. It seems to me Ames' career and life is an exemplary example of a good intelligence officer achieving something. And inside the Agency indeed he is known as the man who planted the seeds for the Oslo peace process. So I'll end on this little anecdote where he -- on the day that Yasser Arafat shakes hands with Rabin on the White House lawn Frank Browning (sic), who was a colleague of Ames in 1993 by then was head of all clandestine operations for the CIA in the Middle East, was driving to work

and he was a little troubled. He was wondering -- you know, he thought this should be a good day for old Middle East hands in the Agency. But he gets to his office and convenes his regular 9:00 o'clock meeting --

SPEAKER: Frank Anderson.

MR. BIRD: What did I say?

MR. RIEDEL: Browning.

SPEAKER: Browning.

MR. BIRD: Oh, that's an old friend. Frank Anderson I mean, Frank Anderson. And so Frank Anderson gets to his office and convenes his regular 9:00 o'clock morning meeting and says "so who is going to be representing the CIA on the White House lawn this morning?" And a phone call is made and the answer is no one. There are 3000 people invited that day but there's not -- not even the Director apparently is there. So Anderson says, okay, let's go visit our dead. And he asks one of his aides to arrange for a couple of buses to come and they round up some young clandestine officers and a few analysts and they go out to National Arlington Cemetery and they stand around the gravesite of Bob Ames at the moment that Arafat and Rabin are shaking hands. And Frank explains to these young officers who Ames was and how he really started this whole process and got the Palestinians talking to the Americans and then eventually to the Israelis. So it's a great story.

MR. RIEDEL: So I said I'm happy to take questions. We have a microphone right there. If you'd please identify yourself and -- yes, you.

MR. RAVIV: I don't want to be presumptuous. Thanks. Kai, congratulations. It's Dan Raviv with CBS and I write books about Israeli intel. In your description today of Ames and his love of the Middle East I'm trying to drill down a little bit more specifically as to whether it was a love of all things Arab, whether he was an

Arabist. And so still his relations with Israel were always kind of touchy. You know, a matter of trust, who you like more, et cetera. You also touch upon that -- remind of the title, your book about your growing up in Jerusalem.

MR. BIRD: Crossing Mandelbaum Gate.

MR. RAVIV: Crossing Mandelbaum Gate, another wonderfully written book. And so Americans often kind of lean one way or the other. I wonder what was clear about Ames?

MR. BIRD: It was very clear that Ames was, you know, highly sympathetic to the Palestinian cause, their plight, the refugees and, you know, the PLO and its efforts to achieve self-determination for its people as such. And he was an Arabist and, you know, he understood that it was as the Israeli's called it a dangerous neighborhood. But he understood also that, you know, the Arabs were ordinary people trying to make their way in life and he sympathized with the difficulty of the region. So I think, you know, the Israelis were quite right to be suspicious of him and as probably overly sympathetic in their eyes to the Palestinian cause. But on the other hand they really respected him. They understood that he was a straight shooter. He didn't hide these sympathies. And there's a moment in the book where I quote from one of his letters to Yvonne. He's back in Jerusalem one day and he's walking around the Old City and he comes upon this classic scene of hundreds of Israelis praying in front of the so-called Wailing Wall. And he writes to Yvonne that he was moved by the scene and that it reminded him why Jerusalem should really never be divided again and why the Jewish people should have the right to be at this special place. And so I think he in his conversations with his Mossad colleagues whom he had liaison with twice year, he conveyed, you know -- he would argue with them and challenge them and, you know, Israelis love a good argument and they respect it. So I think he was -- he showed that he

could be empathetic to both sides. And after all he was in his eyes, he was actually doing the Israelis a service by trying to in his relationship with Ali Hassan talk the Palestinians out of the notion that they could achieve their aims with a gun. He was trying to -- it was a two way street with Ali Hassan of course, who was trying to influence him to recognize the PLO and to drag the Nixon and other administrations into a relationship with the PLO. But Ames was actually engaging in clandestine diplomacy trying to persuade Arafat through Ali Hassan to think about a two state solution, a compromise, a political settlement. And I think he was effective, according to Mustafa Zein and his unpublished memoir, which I quote from heavily. Ali Hassan understood that in the end game there was going to have to be a political settlement.

MR. RIEDEL: As a footnote it's also worth remembering that any division up until I think 1976 or so didn't include Israel. Israel was a separate branch basically in the counterintelligence part of the CIA run by James Jesus Angleton, another legendary figure. So as a consequence an officer like Ames would have spent 15-16 years of his life in a division which was purely Arabists and Farsi speakers and South Asianists always seeing Israel as bureaucratically in his own organization a separate entity with which you were not really allowed to communicate. You could only communicate through the top down. A very strange bureaucratic formula.

Other questions, right here.

MR. COTTICK: Thank you. Stan Cottick. I'm wondering bar Beirut bombing what questions still linger in your mind about Ames and what he was doing and whether you ran into road blocks that you felt whether they were bureaucratic or security or whatever which stopped you from getting answers to those questions?

MR. BIRD: You mean to say what road blocks Ames felt?

MR. COTTICK: No, no. What you felt in trying to write the book and

what sort of questions you still have about him because you couldn't get the answers.

MR. BIRD: Right. Well, when -- I should say when I started out on the research I not only went to Yvonne Ames and I found Bob's sister, surviving sister, but I went to Langley and I had a meeting with the head of Public Affairs there, at the time it was George Little and his deputy, Marie Harf. And we had a great hour-long meeting in which I sort of was saying, you know, this is what I'm going to be doing. Ames is a great hero inside the Agency; it's a good story for you guys. And, you know, I would just like to get the story right and so I suggested that it would be very useful if they would just arrange for me to sit down with an in-house historian and I could check basic chronology, job titles, basic facts, and if they found a way to declassify a few of Ames' analytical reports or something that would be terrific. And George Little said this sounds doable, yes, it sounds like a great project. And I walked out and nothing happened. And I followed up with emails and I would never get a reply. And I found an email for the director at the time and then his successor, Petraeus, and I emailed Petraeus directly, never got a reply. But I found one by one a number of retired CIA officers who were eager to talk to me and wanted this story told. One of them, Henry Miller Jones, is sitting here in the front row and he was very helpful and introduced me to other people. He had known Ames himself, worked with him in Aden. And I think Henry at one tried -- wrote a personal letter to John Brennan and delivered it to his home and urged him to talk to me and nothing happened, nothing happened officially.

But I did find -- you know and the book has over 40 retired intelligence officers as sources. You know, I had to promise anonymity to them all but I went back to them as the book was finished and checked quotes and showed them how I was quoting them. And I said, you know, consider using your true name; you're really not telling me any classified secrets here. And besides if they're secrets, they're 30-40 years old. And

actually about 15 of these sources said yes, okay, you can use my true name which I'm very grateful for because it adds to the authenticity of the story. And, you know, I love Bob Woodward's books but he has no footnotes and I love footnotes and that's important.

MR. COTTICK: So you're comfortable that you have the whole story?

MR. BIRD: No. No, there are enormous gaps. You know, I'm comfortable that I was really lucky to find these letters that Bob wrote and Mustafa Zein. I found -- tracked him down in the Middle East and he had -- he was both a great story teller and he also saved everything. So he saved his own correspondence with Ames and photographs and -- but there are enormous gaps in my knowledge. I found a few memos that Ames wrote as an analytical officer in the Reagan Library, a few other pieces of paper with his name on it in the National Archives, but there's very little. And I think, you know, I could have benefitted greatly from someone in the Agency saying hey, this is a good story and yeah, we don't have any control over it, Bird may come up with something that makes us unhappy. But it's an old story. There's nothing -- no dangers to national security by giving this reporter access to what Ames wrote about for instance Iran in the revolution during the period when he was on the analytical side. So, you know, there are many gaps, yeah. Someone else will have to tell the story all over again in 20 years.

MR. RIEDEL: Right behind you.

MR. BURRIDGE: I'm Jim Burridge. I'm afraid I'm one of those in-house historians.

MR. BIRD: Where were you?

MR. BURRIDGE: I should have worn a bag over my head today. My question is it made sense for George Shultz in 1982 to act surprised about the 14 year back channel. Even within the bureaucracy there was a policy that had to be upheld. But for him to do it in his 1993 memoir reminds me of Captain Renault in Casablanca,

shocked that gambling was going on at Rick's Place. Do you have any comments or insights on that?

MR. BIRD: Well, you know, I looked at Shultz's memoirs and he says some very nice things. He tells a few anecdotes about Ames in particular. And, yeah, there is at one point he relates how Ames came to him in the summer of '82 and mentioned that he was going to be seeing his PLO contact and Shultz said well, you can't do that, I forbid it. And he learned a few weeks or days later that Ames had ignored this directive and he had gone -- and he -- of course he was doing his job. And I think there's a little -- this illustrates a little -- this shows that even Shultz understood that this was necessary and is what a good intelligence officer should be doing in the midst of this enormous crisis in the summer of '82. If you weren't talking to the PLO who was a major player you're really out of the loop. And Shultz, you know, came to have -- acquire an enormous respect for Ames and Ames persuaded him to sign on to what I argue in the book is an instrumental -- that Ames played an instrumental role in creating the Reagan Peace Plan that was released on September 1st, '82, which was a really good step forward. And it was a hard thing for Shultz and Ronald Reagan to accept but they went along with it partly because they were persuaded by someone like Ames. Kissinger does the same thing in his memoirs too.

MS. DAMMARELL: I'm Anne Dammarell and I used to work for USAID and was in Beirut at the time of the bombing. Did you come up with any indications that the bombers knew that Ames was there?

MR. BIRD: Yeah, there were stories and suggestions over the years that perhaps Ames was himself being particularly targeted. But I found no evidence of this and in fact just the opposite. I found Agency officers who had met with Ames the day before he left for Beirut and his trip was something that he initiated. He hadn't been back

in four or five years to Beirut and he wanted -- he felt he really needed to get back on the ground and spend a few weeks. And he had initially planned on this trip to first go to Tel Aviv and then go to Beirut and at the very last minute he switched and he went to Beirut first I'm told and then was planning to go onto Tel Aviv. So the fact that he was in the embassy that morning -- he arrived the day before -- was I think just sheer coincidence and very, very bad luck.

MR. RIEDEL: There.

SPEAKER: First of all thanks for this today and thanks for a really fantastic book. Just following up on this last question, I was hoping could you describe a little bit more why you think whoever did the forgotten bombing as you refer to it, why they did it? I wrote a book on Hezbollah, came at this bombing from the Hezbollah angle not the peace process angle and found some material but the same thing. There's a whole lot less material out there and fewer people willing to talk than on the other Beirut bombings.

MR. BIRD: Yeah, I -- it is the forgotten bombing; everyone remembers the Marine barracks. But this was the first use of a truck bomb against a U.S. facility but there had been -- as you know a truck bomb was used against an Israeli Army outpost in -- Sidon was it -- which killed 75 Israelis. It was a horrendous attack. And there had been a similar tactic used, a truck bomb against the Iran embassy -- wasn't -- I think the Iran embassy before this in Beirut. But it was new tactic, relatively new and the whole notion that, you know, you could recruit a young man to do this, to sacrifice himself was sort of an astonishing thing too. But I think, you know, the embassy was targeted because of Sabra and Shatila. I think that was the motivation, that horrendous massacre. You know, hundreds if not upwards of 2000 people killed. It really was -- it shocked people and made America a target because America at that time was so closely identified

with the Israeli adventure in Lebanon. And as I alluded, this fellow Imad Mughniyeh was directly affected by Sabra and Shatila. He was angry, he was well trained by 417 and the Shiites were -- this was just at the moment when the Shiite Lebanese community was being mobilized, becoming politically active and asserting their rights in the Lebanese mosaic. And so, you know, it was sort of a perfect storm I guess.

. And then there was Iran and they had the notion of exporting their revolution and Lebanon was the perfect place to do this because of the large Shiite community in the south that was disenfranchised and poor and had become the -- you know, it was bearing the brunt of the Israeli invasion and then occupation. But it -- I think that's why it happened. And it was an intelligence operation. That's been concluded by not one but two court cases here in Washington. And ironically enough, you know, this is -- it's not only the forgotten bombing but we're now involved in very delicate negotiations with Iran to try to persuade the Islamic Republic not to weaponize their nuclear capabilities, and that's a good thing and we want to avoid a war. But these civil suit cases are actually an impediment; they're a complication. The State Department hates the fact that they're still out there. But there are lawyers who represent the victims of these bombings who -- and there are judgments that haven't been paid and if the Obama Administration ignores the judgments and signs a deal without -- well -- and if the sanctions are lifted and Iran begins to trade in Europe or with American companies the lawyers are going to go after the assets of those corporations that trade with Iran. You know, and then the Iranians are going to claim that we are breaking our deal. You know, so these histories have to be addressed.

MR. RIEDEL: Judy?

SPEAKER: This is fascinating for me because I was at the Agency at the time and I did work for Bob on some things and I find it hard to say that it was just a

coincidence. It doesn't work for me. And I think Iran involvement, I'm glad to hear the pattern, but Hezbollah is just beginning at the time. I don't think they're equipped and who's involved, and at the time they've got some of their best -- who turn out to be their best most experienced people in the IRGC now. I think even Qasem Soleimani was there training them. But you don't mention -- at least -- I haven't read the book, but where's Syria's hand in this? Because Syria at that time was heavily engaged, is involved with 417, it's involved with the Iranians, but they're really the driver for so many of the operations. You found no -- is there no evidence tracing back because we -- I -- having been inside and outside, Syria was always assumed to have had some kind of a role. There are several hands at work here. I just -- something's missing here and it really --

MR. BIRD: Right.

SPEAKER: And even 417, you said they were protecting the embassy, but are they all protecting it? Is there something -- some faction working there that was also involved? So then I don't have enough to convince me of all this. I'm sorry.

MR. BIRD: Right. Well, you're right, it's a complicated mystery and there are still threads of it that are mysterious. And I think you're right that the Syrian regime was enabling the Iranian Revolutionary Guard. They had to transit through Syria; they had to be supplied through Syria. There were -- and we know in the court cases there was evidence that emerged that there was some intercept intelligence that implicated the Iranian Ambassador in Syria in Damascus holding meetings with allegedly Imad Mughniyeh and Ali-Reza Asgari in Damascus and so I think it was and I think there's a good argument to be made that -- and I make it in The Good Spy -- that it was an Iranian intelligence operation, your right though, facilitated by Syrian regime.

MR. RIEDEL: Over here.

MS. WILDER: Thank you for a great presentation. I'm Ursula Wilder, former Federal Executive Fellow here at the Brookings Institution. A follow up on the question about your engagement or lack thereof with CIA formally on your book, you have also engaged with other intelligence services, the Mossad and perhaps others. And I would be very interested in a comparative analysis of how these various intelligence entities, let's say outside of the United States, worked with you on this book to the extent that they did.

MR. BIRD: Well, you know, I interviewed retired CIA officers and a few retired Mossad officers, and Mustafa Zein who was not an intelligence officer at all but was part of this world. And Mustafa I should say, you know, he was a great source, but he's a fabulous story teller and for that reason alone I had to check out everything that he said and I didn't use anything that I couldn't really find another source for. But Mustafa, you know, felt that he was a near victim of the bombing. He had been in the embassy or near -- he had gone to the embassy lobby that morning. And Ames' death was devastating to him. And he has spent much of his life since then wondering about and investigating the bombing. And he made trips -- you mentioned Syria -- he made trips to Damascus in 2006 and 2007 and '09 trying to interview the Syrian intelligence officers. But as far as cooperation or anything I mean I -- the only cooperation I got from this intelligence world was from retired officers, respectively Israeli and American. I'm reminded though of one interview that I had with a very high ranking Mossad officer who -- we were -- this is in his home and he gave me two hours. And, you know, in these interviews as you're starting out, you try to impress upon your subject how much you know by telling stories that you've learned --

MR. RIEDEL: Right.

MR. BIRD: -- hoping that this will elicit comment and more information.

And this Israeli sort of interrupted me about halfway through the two hours and said well, Kai, is your government really going to give you permission to publish all these secrets? And I said well, you know, there is no official secrets act in America and I'm just a journalist-historian and I -- so he was rather astonished by how much I had been able to learn and he told me some more stories.

MR. RIEDEL: That's the essence of debriefing. More questions? Over there.

MR. VOTAW: My name is Greg Votaw. As Anne knows my only sibling was one of those killed in the Beirut bombing. I have a question that has -- it doesn't -- it really goes beyond your book but it's about the Agency. I was puzzled why we had Marines sitting ducks some months after the Beirut bombing. I was sufficiently puzzled so that I went to my congressman. I come from Maryland so my congressman was a Democrat. And I said, Mike, I don't understand you guys. There's been this bombing of the embassy in Beirut, why hasn't the Congress investigated that? And he said, what do you know? He knew I was working in the Middle East in those days. I said I don't know anything but common sense tells me that if my kid does something wrong and I don't notice it and pay attention he will do something that attracts my attention more dramatically as soon as he gets a chance. And it always puzzled me that the Congress never investigated this. And I realize this is a rather touchy subject currently 30 years later, but why didn't the Agency say to somebody in the White House hey, you got all those Marines over there, we better take some special protective measures?

MR. BIRD: Well, I know, it's a terrible story and 241 servicemen died as a result of this. And it --

MR. VOTAW: Negligence.

MR. BIRD: I'm sorry?

MR. VOTAW: As a result of negligence.

MR. BIRD: It was a security --

SPEAKER: Lapse.

MR. BIRD: -- lapse. And far -- thank you, Henry. A security lapse that was far worse than Benghazi let's say and yet we're having all this controversy and now apparently a congressional investigation into Benghazi. But, you know, again in 1982 there was no congressional investigation. You know, I don't know how to explain it except it was the Reagan Teflon presidency. He got away without a scratch. And there were serious security lapses. One of the things I relate in the book is I talked to one of the security officers who came to investigate the bombing right after -- the day after the bombing and he told me that there had been plans to install a security gate, a heavy metal thing, and it had actually been delivered and was in storage and was perhaps apparently going to be installed two weeks down the road. But this doesn't explain why the Marine barracks were so exposed, surrounded just by barbed wire I understand. But it was, you know, it was hard to imagine even after the suicide truck bomber plowed into the embassy that it could be done again and again.

MR. RIEDEL: Of course the embassy itself was attacked a second time and blown up a second time.

MR. BIRD: Right.

MR. RIEDEL: I can't help but tell just one amusing vignette. I served at a post overseas and they did install one of those things. Turned out they installed it backwards so that instead of stopping a truck it would have actually vaulted the truck. But the good news is that they figured that out after a period of time which I won't say how long it was.

We have only a few more minutes left. In the back please.

MS. DOUGLAS: Thank you so much. My name is Kerri Douglas and my father used to work with Mr. Ames and said he was a first class person. My question is can you talk about -- you mentioned it earlier -- but can you talk about some of the differences between the human intelligence and the current state of intelligence relying on technology and surveillance?

MR. BIRD: Well, that's probably beyond my expertise. I don't know much about intercept intelligence. But as I said earlier, you know, I think Ames' life and career should be a reminder of the importance of just human relationships and human intelligence.

SPEAKER: (off mic).

MR. BIRD: Arabic. Well, it's important -- for instance my wife has reminded me that, you know, Bob Ames had Arabic that was good enough so that he could carry on a political conversation with a native speaker. He could read the newspaper, he could joke in the language. He loved the nuance of Arabic, he loved the music, Fairouz and Koltun. And that's very important. But I think when -- at the heyday of his career in the early '80s I think there were no more than six CIA clandestine officers who had that level of proficiency. And on the eve of 9/11 that number was about the same. And that sort of suggests why we've been operating blindly in the Middle East, why we're so perplexed and astonished that there's such hatred for America. You know, we don't understand them and we're -- it's a very foreign complicated culture and it's hard to not penetrate in an intelligence sense, but to penetrate as an ordinary American and come to understand this very foreign society. Now that's the larger intelligence failure that I think still exists. And all this reliance on intercept intelligence, I'm personally skeptical of it. It doesn't show you intentions; it doesn't give you an understanding of motivations. You know, why do these angry young men do these things? That's what

you want to get at rather than, oh, when are they going to do them. Well, they're going to do them at some point. These terrible things are going to happen. You can't prevent acts of terrorism, maybe once or twice you get lucky, but if there are enough angry young men out there who are motivated to do these horrendous things and are willing to sacrifice themselves in a suicidal fashion, well, there's not much of a defense against that.

MR. RIEDEL: We have time for one more question. Over here. Oops, sorry, we'll take two; why don't we take both of them?

MR. ESCANDER: Thank you. John Escander. I'm looking forward to reading the book. One of the things that is sort of in this last bit of your conversation you've brought out that sort of the fact that he was this Arabist and famously say within the State Department after Kissinger Arabists became, you know, a problematic category and term and so on. And so I was just wondering if you would speak more broadly to that. I mean it's not that there aren't Arabists throughout the government and so on now. But I mean if this -- I was surprised sort of what you just said about sort of the period after Ames, that there were so few. Is your sense of the workings of the Agency in this period that there was sort of greater openness to people who could bridge these worlds or was that also somehow problematized in that period?

MR. BIRD: Right. Well, I --

MR. RIEDEL: Why don't we get the other question too --

MR. BIRD: Sure.

MR. RIEDEL: -- and then you can --

MR. BIRD: Sure.

MR. RIEDEL: -- wrap up both.

SPEAKER: I think we're more or less asking the same question but I'll

frame it in a more direct way perhaps and then you can choose to answer it however you wish. I hear you speaking about a man who had a nuanced sophisticated view of the Middle East and the Arab world. And then I read the newspapers, I listen to the mainstream media and I don't hear that. Having lived in both Israel and Palestine and also for three years in Damascus, I know that that world exists and I'm wondering if you see now the same mistake being made that was made then, you know, vis-a-vis, organizations like the PLO or name your favorite terrorist organization, when we talk about Israel, Palestine and talk about the State Department or the U.S. government's view of organizations like Hamas or any other organization that we now deem terrorist and then we refuse to deal with? Do you think that the government is making the same mistake now vis-a-vis those organizations as they did back then during Mr. Ames' time?

MR. BIRD: Well, let me answer that by telling a story from the book in which one of my interview sources describes the sort of -- how enthralled a young clandestine officer can be when he begins his career and realizes that he's learning secrets and has access to this other world and it's exciting to have access to classified information. And then you think that you're going to be able to use it to influence the policy makers and change things that are -- bad policy will become better policy. And then gradually over your career you become more and more disillusioned and cynical and you realize that U.S. foreign policy as this guy said to me is based not on -- it's not based on fact. And so think this is an old, old problem and yes, we're probably dealing with it today too.

Coming to your question -- oh, I just lost my train of thought. I had a story to -- oh, the value of the Arabic. Oddly enough Ames had encountered the same skepticism. His bosses sort of criticized him for being too intellectual. One of his bosses, Alan Wolfe who's no longer with us so I'll tell this story, he would say oh, you know, you

don't really need to learn these languages. He was very critical of Ames' investment in spending so many hours on the language. He says, you know, these Wogs, any of them that you really need to talk to who have good information, they'll speak English. And so Ames in his career, he was frustrated more and more. He was very ambitious but his career was blocked. He wanted rise up higher in the clandestine, the DO, but he encountered this attitude that, you know, his -- he read too many books, his language was -- investment in Arabic was too much. And he wasn't a drinker. One of my sources said, you know, he wasn't a very good recruiter of agents; he never closed the deal and he didn't drink. And if you don't drink how can you recruit agents?

SPEAKER: That's a little bit harsh.

MR. BIRD: A little --.

SPEAKER: Don't put it all on (inaudible).

MR. BIRD: But, Henry, they were Ames' bosses and so he was -- he felt this very personally that he was like -- I'm sure that's a gross exaggeration.

SPEAKER: Can I make a comment on this particular subject?

MR. BIRD: Yes.

SPEAKER: Because I think it's an interesting question and one that's perplexed me many a year I guess. I'm half an Arabist because I got pulled out by the likes of Alan Wolfe from about halfway through a two year course of Arabic in Beirut at the same time Bob was there. I think it's something that the American people need to understand that intelligence officers are just like they are. We represent the American culture. And the Middle East is a very difficult culture for us to breach into. It will become better and more easily penetrated so to speak from our -- using our language as more and more immigrants from the Middle East come here, become Americanized and go back and take their language and their sense of the culture and understanding of it. But

you have to understand that when we were going overseas, and this is not true of just intelligence officers, it's certainly true of the foreign services. Gene will probably back me up I hope. Living out there with a family, all American, in very difficult surroundings is not easy and people don't spend careers in it. They get out an awful lot of the times because their wives don't want to stay with them. There are lots of divorces in the clandestine services and in the diplomatic services as a result of this. Consequently it's very -- and it's very hard to find people who would be motivated enough to go out and dig deep into the culture like Ames did and that was unique to him. In my experience he's probably one of two or three people I knew in my entire career who cared enough about what he was studying to go that deeply into it. And to know the language is another thing. Arabic is the second hardest language for an English speaker according to the likes that know these things to learn, Mandarin Chinese being the first according to the list, and Russian up there someplace. But Arabic is very, very hard to learn. One of my classmates, a Foreign Service officer, had a four level Arabic at the end of his two years, four level out of five; five is native. He couldn't read Hassanein Heikal's articles on the front page of the Al-Ahram, the Arabic New York Times, the day after he graduated from the course and took his job in the office. It took him an hour of going through the two column article with a dictionary to understand what Heikal was saying in his rather foreign poetic way. But it's not easy and people have to be able to understand that. And this is one of the reasons why Ames was a good spy. I have some problems with that title as Kai knows, but nevertheless he qualifies in Kai's terms and in many others. Okay.

MR. RIEDEL: I'm going to finish then by reading you one more short quote from David Halberstam's book because I think it kind of sums up where we ended. "A great intelligence officer studies the unknown and works in the darkness trying to see the shape of future events. "He" -- and I'll add or she -- "covers the sensitive ground

where prejudice or instinctive cultural bias often meets reality. And he must stand for reality even if it means standing virtually alone." I think that you've done us all a great service, Kai, in telling the story of Bob Ames. Thanks for coming today. The book will be available for purchase and for signing I hope. Thank you again. Thanks for coming, thank all of you for coming. I look forward to the next Brookings Project event.

(Applause)

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