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MR. NYE: I'm Joe Nye the dean of the Kennedy School and it's a pleasure every year at this time to welcome you to the annual Goldsmith Awards, which recognize excellence in political journalism.

The Goldsmith Awards were designed to promote strong investigative reporting, and now it's grown into a recognition of terrific books in the field as well, the awards for research and an award recognizing outstanding careers in political journalism.

Over the last 11 years, the various Goldsmith Awards have been given to journalists whose work has not only piqued widespread public interest, but has contributed to larger public discourse. And as such, they recognize one of the crucial missions of the Kennedy School, which is to bring together practitioners and scholars to serve the public interest.

These awards are named for Berda Goldsmith, a woman who was passionately interested in the relationship between the press and politics and an
avid newspaper reader. A faithful follower of investigative reporting, she especially loved programs like "60 Minutes" and "Washington Week in Review" and her legacy is reflected in these awards.

A number of people combined their efforts to establish the awards, including Bob Greenfield, President of the Goldsmith-Greenfield Foundation, who worked together with the Shorenstein Center on Press and Politics. We're very grateful to have members of the Greenfield family here tonight.

We're also delighted to have Walter Shorenstein, whose foresight really was the origin of the Center, which saw the importance of the role of press and politics. So thank you, Walter, for your valuable contribution.

(Applause)

MR. NYE: And now it's my pleasure to introduce Alex Jones, who is the director of the Shorenstein Center, who will take over from here. Alex is a distinguished journalist and scholar, a prominent voice through National Public Radio, The New York Times, a recipient of the Pulitzer Prize, and we're lucky to have him here at the Kennedy School.

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Alex?

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Thank you.

This is a very happy night for the Shorenstein Center. This year marks the twelfth anniversary of the Goldsmith Awards Program and each year this night is one of the high moments for the Shorenstein Center, and if I may say so immodestly, also for American journalism.

You heard Joe's account of how the award was created, now let me tell you what really happened.

Gary Orren, who is on the faculty here, is a friend of the Shorenstein Center, was on a beach in Florida. He struck up a conversation with Robert Greenfield, who happened to be there. He was a Philadelphia lawyer, and a man of quite remarkable character.

Bob had a client named Berda Marks Goldsmith, who had just died, and thought so much of her lawyer, Bob, that she had left him her entire estate. He declined to accept it. Let me repeat. This is a lawyer who declined to accept it.

(Laughter)

MR. JONES: I think that if you're a
journalist, you've got to get a dig in at somebody somewhere. And he was searching for a good way to spend the money, a good place to put it.

Berda, as Joe Nye said, was passionately interested in government. She was very much a follower of the news. She was particularly outraged by misconduct. And when Gary heard this, he said, do I have the right place for you, and made a beeline for Marvin Kalb, the Center's founding director and the man that I'm proud to have succeeded.

Marvin and Bob Greenfield worked out the details and the result was the Goldsmith Awards in political journalism, which include the investigative reporting prize, book prizes, fellowships and the career award. This all came about through the generosity of what has become known, as Joe said, as the Goldsmith-Greenfield Foundation, of which Bob is president. The Greenfield family is most remarkable and I'm very glad to say that some of them are here tonight, Bob, his wife Louise, their grandchildren Michael, Lauren and Jill. Also with us is Deborah Jacobs, the Foundation's administrator.

For many years Bob has been the family's
representative on the Goldsmith selection committee and he told me recently that Michael will succeed him. Without the Greenfield's continued support and good faith, this night would not be possible. And I ask that you join me in saluting Bob Greenfield and the Goldsmith-Greenfield Foundation.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: I also want to take the opportunity to thank publicly the man who has made my job possible. As Joe said, Walter Shorenstein is the visionary whose generosity and instinct for public service was the reason for the creation of the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy. Walter is 88, he thinks he's 58 and he has the drive and energy of someone 38. It was that drive that led him to start as a guy with a thousand dollars after World War II and turn it into a fortune in real estate in San Francisco. But it was his keen and passionate engagement with the world that led him to endow the Shorenstein Center as a memorial to his daughter Joan, a highly respected journalist at CBS who died far too young of breast cancer. As Joe said, Walter, thank you very much.
MR. JONES: The first Goldsmith Awards are the book prizes and making those presentations is my colleague Tom Patterson, the Bradlee Professor of Government and the Press at the Kennedy School.

Tom?

MR. PATTERSON: Thank you.

Every once in a while there's a happy intersection between one's past and one's present, for me, tonight is one of those happy moments. Three decades ago when I did my first media effects study, it was a period in which the dominant theory was the theory of limited effects, in which the idea was that the media didn't have much impact, because we filtered these messages through our personal predispositions.

Just as I was digging into my work, I ran across the work of someone else who was thinking about the issue more clearly than I was and was doing it better, and that was Doris Graber. And as it turned out, I picked the right role model, Doris Graber is the best mentor in the field of political communication.

She was the founding editor of our premiere journal,
Political Communication. She was the organizing force between the American Political Science Association and the International Communication Association for creating the political communication sectors and she's been advisor to at least two generations of media scholars.

I should say also she's a dedicated scuba diver, and if this was next week, she wouldn't be here. She's going to be in the Virgin Islands scuba diving next week.

So tonight it's a real personal pleasure and professional pleasure for me to award Doris Graber the Goldsmith Book Prize for the best scholarly book in the field of Press, Politics and Public Policy published within the last two years. The award is for her 2001 book, Processing Politics: Learning From Television in the Internet Age.

In it Doris challenges the conventional assumption shared by scholars and practitioners alike that television is inferior to print as an information source. She argues that television's audio-visual dimension gives it an informing capacity that we tend to underestimate, largely because we persist in
defining an informed citizenry by people's ability to recite specific policies, places on the map and leaders rather than by their ability to navigate the political world in which they live. Graber shows that television as a medium can be quite effective by the standard and it would be even more so if broadcasters fully understood the civic potential of their medium.

Doris, please come up to receive the Goldsmith Book Prize for the best academic book in the field of Press, Politics and Public Policy.

(Applause)

MS. GRABER: I want to thank the Shorenstein Center and my colleagues in political communication for this award, which means a great deal to me, because it's for a book which unlike a lot of other books doesn't necessarily bash the media. It's, I think, a real pleasure to be here tonight in the presence of so many people who represent the finest in the media and show that it is a wonderful, very essential calling.

So I'd like to accept this prize for myself, but also for all of you who are toiling in this field, which is so essential to our democracy. Thank you.
you.

MR. PATTERSON: There's a second Goldsmith Book Prize, one for the best trade book in Press, Politics and Public Policy published in the last two years. And I should say that the winner in both cases is chosen by a committee, which this year consisted of Alex Jones, David King, Michael Waldman, Tami Buhr and myself. The winner in the trade category is entitled, The News about the News: American Journalism in Peril, by Leonard Downie, Jr., and Robert G. Kaiser.

We need to know what good journalism is and Alex Jones, in a few minutes, will give us about six prime examples of good journalism. We also need to know what bad journalism is. As Downie and Kaiser sort of describe it, it is journalism that fails to report important news, that reports the news inaccurately or unfairly, that leads us to believe the world is a different place than it actually is, Oz not Kansas. The news about the news is the story of how market-driven journalism and the bottom line thinking of media conglomerates are impairing good journalism.

The authors' argument, of course, is not a new one. Three years ago we awarded a Goldsmith Book
Award to Robert McChesney's *Rich Media, Poor Democracy*. But the Downie and Kaiser book is distinguished by the nuanced observations that stem from their experience.

Both men have been in journalism as reporters and editors for the better part of four decades. As they note in their book, not every reduction in news staffing hurts the news products, not every soft news story erodes audience understanding, not every grant to management undermines journalistic integrity. But some concessions do imperil the news and it is these bows to the marketplace that must be contested, if good journalism is to prevail; to take one of their cases, the sharp cutbacks for profit making reasons in foreign news gathering and reporting in the several years preceding 9/11.

Len and Bob, please step up to receive your Goldsmith Book Prize award.

(Applause)

MR. DOWNIE: Thank you very much.

I want to thank the judges first of all and Walter Shorenstein and the Shorenstein Center and the Goldsmith and Greenfield families for this award. But I also want to thank those same people for

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something I think is more important, which is
encouraging the kind of journalism that will be
rewarded here tonight, all the finalists as well as the
eventual winner. It will encourage the news
organizations that these people work for to continue to
fund this kind of journalism, which is so important to
the future of this country.

Thanks.

(Applause)

MR. KAISER: Very briefly by way of a plug
that Professor Graber may be proud that she did not
bash the media, we are quite proud that we did bash the
media.

(Laughter)

MR. KAISER: But only the part that
deserved bashing.

Thank you very much.

MR. JONES: It's now my pleasure to
present the six finalists for the Goldsmith Prize for
Investigative Reporting and also to present a special
citation.

The Goldsmith Prize is for a special kind
of investigative reporting, in that it honors
journalism which, like the Shorenstein Center itself, is focused on politics and public policy. In creating the prize, the Greenfields wanted it to be an award that had a profound impact on the public and on public institutions, if you will, on the common wheel.

The civic aspect of the award is emphasized in our selection of judges, who come not just from journalism, but also from the worlds of politics and policy. This year's judges were Dan Glickman, Director of the Institute of Politics, the Kennedy School; Terry Smith of "The News Hour"; Elaine Kamarck, lecturer in public policy at the Kennedy School and an experienced political hand; Susan Smith, a columnist at The Austin American Statesman and a Nieman Fellow at Harvard; Jack Nelson, former Washington Bureau Chief of The Los Angeles Times; and Robert Greenfield, representing the family and the Foundation.

That judging process is something that is taken with utmost seriousness and involves a huge amount of work, and I want to thank our judges for their willingness to undertake such a task. Each year the judges choose up to six finalists, which are
immediately announced. They also choose an overall winner, which is not announced until tonight. Our purpose is to honor the superb work of each of the finalists, to give each of them a chance to be recognized individually before we announce the overall winner, because, as you will see, they have all done great work. I shall present the finalists in alphabetical order based on the name of their news organization.

The first finalist is The Boston Globe, the stories they dubbed: "Crisis in the Catholic Church."

Like many of you I picked up The Boston Globe on a Sunday in January, fourteen months ago, and was stunned to see a six-column headline over one of the most shocking stories I'd ever read. The Boston Globe Searchlight Team under the direction of Martin Baron, the paper's editor, and Walter Robinson, the Searchlight Team boss, had pulled back the curtain on years of systematic denial and irresponsibility by the Catholic Church when it came to protecting children from predatory priests.

The story the Globe began to tell on that
Sunday, and has continued to tell in dozens of carefully researched and sensitively written articles, has sent shockwaves all over the nation and the world. Its impact has been profound and the painful truth it has told has prompted a revolution in the way the Catholic Church understands its responsibility to its weakest and most vulnerable members, its children.

In addition to Walter Robinson and Marty Baron, I ask you to salute the other members of the Globe’s team, Matthew Carrol, Kevin Cullen, Thomas Farragher, Stephen Kurkjian, Michael Paulson, Ben Bradlee, Jr., Sacha Pfeiffer and Michael Rezendes.

Would you all please stand.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Thank you.

The next finalist is The Dayton Daily News. You've heard the expression down on the farm, well, The Dayton Daily News called its entry: "Down on the Factory." And it tells its story in compelling and frightening detail of the dangerous impact of so-called megafarms. They are much more a factory than farm.

Megafermering is now commonplace, and when those megafarms are focused on pigs, chicken and other
livestock, the impact on the environment from their
waste can be appalling. We're not talking about some
manure for the rosebushes, but tons of waste that is
handled in ways that The Dayton Daily News showed in
harrowing detail is almost entirely unregulated or
ineffectively regulated.

The paper's reporters traveled to eleven
states and also abroad gathering information about
contamination linked to livestock megafarms. They
found pollution on a massive scale and the enforcement
of environmental laws so lax as to be laughable. In
Ohio they found that the state's largest cattle farm
had been operating three years before state officials
even knew it was in business. Two days after their
series concluded, legislation was announced that
promises to put powerful controls on the megafarms and
to monitor far more closely their environmental impact.

Representing The Dayton Daily News team
are Mike Wagner and Ben Sutherly and I ask them now to
stand.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: If there is one man in the
United States who is truly hated by the tax cheats of

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this world, it is David Cay Johnston of The New York Times.

David Johnston is the kind of reporter who patiently, calmly, dispassionately, relentlessly tears apart the boilerplate in the obfuscation of tax avoidance schemes and lays out for all of us to see how some of us are trying to get a grotesquely free ride tax-wise.

His articles on illegal methods used by corporations and by some very wealthy Americans to avoid taxes have struck home, even in an administration that does not seem particularly sympathetic. In early February, the Bush administration increased by a third the number of auditors for people suspected of hiding income tax through tax shelters and other means.

There can be very little doubt that this action was prompted by the fallout from the articles David Johnston did last year on how the IRS looks for tax cheating by wage earners more carefully than it looks for cheating by people whose money comes from their own businesses, investments, partnerships and trusts.

It was also David Johnston who blew the
whistle on American companies that moved to Bermuda to
avoid taxes. As a result of the uproar, shareholders
of many of these companies are demanding that they
reincorporate in the United States. Similarly, a tax
gimmick that Johnston described in detail, which
enabled two top Sprint executives to save more than
$100 million on taxes, is being investigated by the
IRS. The list could go on. As taxpayers, we owe a
debt of gratitude to David Cay Johnston and to Glenn
Kramen, the business editor of The New York Times.

Would you both please rise.

(Appause)

MR. JONES: Our fourth finalist is Steve
Inskeep of National Public Radio.

On the night of January 24, 2002, U.S.
Special Operations Forces conducted their largest raid
to date in Afghanistan, attacking two buildings in the
village of Oruzgan. U.S. military officials said that
more than a dozen senior Taliban figures were killed
and twenty-seven captured and taken away.

When journalists got to Oruzgan, however,
villagers told them that the men killed and captured
had nothing to do with the Taliban or al-Qaeda. With
no hard evidence, however, the Pentagon simply dismissed the villagers' assertions.

Steve Inskeep was in Kandahar and unlike many other journalists, he did not let the matter drop. He went to Oruzgan himself and stayed there interviewing and probing, and ultimately coming up with evidence so convincing that the military released all the prisoners taken in what had been revealed as an ill-conceived and misguided attack in which there were innocent civilian casualties.

Steve is, as you might expect, in the Persian Gulf waiting. I ask you in his absence to join me in honoring his exemplary work.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Our fifth finalist is WFAA-TV, a local television station in Dallas.

The drug bust looked like an open and shut case, an informant led police to drug dealers who were based on a quantity of white powder found in their car. But the team of Brett Shipp and producer Mark Smith smelled a rat.

In nearly fifty separate reports they slowly uncovered a genuine police conspiracy, in which
former drug felons turned professional informants had fingered innocent people, usually illegal immigrants, who were arrested on trumped-up charges. The white powder often turned out to be ground-up wallboard or billiard chalk, but the damage to those arrested was devastating.

In a particularly powerful segment of their coverage, they showed something that television can do that no other medium can, they showed some hapless immigrants in the company of a paid informant going into a restaurant and theoretically leaving hundreds of thousands of dollars in drugs in an unlocked car. The dazed immigrants were then arrested as they emerged from the restaurant in a clearly contrived scam. Ultimately, WFAA's work contributed to a major investigation, which went all the way to the police chief and the district attorney general.

Brett Shipp and Mark Smith, please stand up.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Few journalistic investigations have had more impact locally than that of our last finalist, The Wisconsin State Journal of

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Madison, Wisconsin., when it probed the corruption of
its state legislature.

Now please listen to this list. A powerful state senator who was considered a shoo-in to
become the state's attorney general was charged with
eighteen felonies, including illegally soliciting
contributions from lobbyists and altering subpoenaed
records. The senate majority leader was charged with
twenty felonies, including extortion. The assembly
speaker was charged with three felonies, the assembly
majority leader with one. In all, forty-three felony
charges were made and new legislative leadership
pledged, of course, reform.

This all came from the work of Dee J. Hall
and Phil Brinkman, who conducted scores of interviews
and pored over hundreds of documents in a seven-month
investigation. As often happens, the project sprang
from the small moment when Dee Hall found that the
candidate's campaign spokesman seemed to working on
state time, from that thread all the rest unraveled.
The Wisconsin State Journal is not a huge paper, but it
took on some of the most powerful political powers in
the state.
Please join me in saluting Dee Hall and Phil Brinkman.  

(Applause)  

MR. JONES: Before I announce the winner of the Goldsmith Prize I have a special citation to present. In the course of their deliberations, the judges were struck by a remarkable entry from The San Francisco Chronicle by reporter Seth Rosenfeld. Seth had been a journalism student at the University of California at Berkeley, and seventeen years ago he got a line on an intriguing story of how Ronald Reagan and J. Edgar Hoover's FBI had abused their power at Berkeley through unlawful covert intelligence operations. 

He pursued the story for seventeen years, fighting for access to documents through the Freedom of Information Act and he won. The final story was published by the Chronicle as "The Campus Files: Reagan, Hoover and the University of California Red Scare." It was the judges' wish that Seth's work be honored and, thanks to the Goldsmith-Greenfield Foundation, he will also receive the $2,000 award that goes to all finalists.
The citation is as follows: "In a seventeen year pursuit of truth, Seth Rosenfeld fought a marathon legal battle to win the right to tell the embarrassing and frightening story of how the Federal Bureau of Investigation had misused its power. While the story he sought to tell took place in 1967, its relevance is clear. The perseverance and courage of Mr. Rosenfeld and The San Francisco Chronicle are inspiration to those who cherish a free press."

Mr. Rosenfeld, please come forward and accept your citation.

(Applause)

MR. ROSENFELD: Thank you very much.

I'd like to say on behalf of myself and the Chronicle that this is a great honor to share the stage with so many terrific journalists. And it's real encouragement to keep pressing in the face of official resistance, even during a turbulent time, to find out what some of the nation's most powerful intelligence law enforcement agencies are doing with tax dollars and civil liberties.

So in that spirit I'd like to thank the Shorenstein Center and Walter Shorenstein and the

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Greenfield and Goldsmith families very much for this award.

MR. JONES: We now come to the moment when the winner of the 2003 Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Reporting is named. The award this year goes to The Boston Globe for "Church in Crisis." Would all members of the team please come forward.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: I'd like to make a correction. I'm the former editor of small newspaper in Tennessee that had a Searchlight Team. This is the Spotlight Team.

Which of you would like to say something? Robbie?

MR. ROBINSON: Thank you. Thank you all very much. Thank you, Walter Shorenstein. Thank you to the Greenfield family. Thank you very much for this honor for the Globe.

These remarks, as you might anticipate, are impromptu, but speaking on behalf of my colleagues and myself, after what we now believe is somewhere in the vicinity of 900 news articles since January 6th of 2002, this has been for all of us quite a roller
coaster ride. The demographics tell us half the people in the Greater Boston area are Catholic, at least nominally, and this has been very upsetting to everybody, Catholic and non-Catholic. We all hope that some change will result from this, much already has.

In the end, for all of us you have worked on this, this comes down to the kind of journalism that we all do in the business every day in one way or another. Much of what we do focuses on the children and issues that we cover and this is for the children.

Thank you very much.

UNIDENTIFIED: Like Robbie, I didn't prepare for this either and that's because we knew we were up against some really extraordinary competition. I don't want to talk about our work, which Robbie addressed, but I really want to pay tribute to all of the others who were finalists for this award. The work is enormously impressive and we're proud, all of us, to work together with each other, but also to be part of this extraordinary group of journalists who are here today, so we want to pay tribute to you as well.

Thank you.

MR. JONES: There will be a plaque for ADVANCE SERVICES

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everyone, don't worry.

(Laughter)

MR. JONES: Let me tell you what it's like to have Sy Hersh as the recipient of your annual Career Award. On Friday, Sy sent us an e-mail which said in part, "Tell Alex that I have a pretty wild piece coming out this weekend in *The New Yorker*. The piece was entitled "Lunch with the Chairman" and it was a painstakingly sourced and devastating account of the financial conflicts of interest that Richard Pearl has regarding a war with Iraq.

As most of you know, Pearl is the chairman of the Defense Policy Board, which is a group of civilians who advise the Defense Department on all manner of defense issues. As its chairman, Richard Pearl has been hugely influential in pushing for invasion of Iraq, something he has been advocating since before 9/11.

Well, it turns out that Mr. Pearl is also the managing partner in a venture capital company called Trirene Partners, LP, which was chartered in Delaware November of 2001 and whose main business, according to a letter that Sy Hersh managed to get his
hands on, is to invest in companies dealing in
technology, goods and services that are of value to
homeland security and defense.

I won't go into the details of the piece
which I strongly commend to you, but I think you can
imagine that it was not likely to please Mr. Pearl. So
yesterday we get a second e-mail from Sy, saying, "Tell
Alex that Richard Pearl called me a terrorist yesterday
on one of the Sunday morning talk shows. You might
want to be sure to have your security people frisk me
before I'm allowed a drink." Being called a terrorist
by a powerful political figure may, in fact, be the
worst thing Sy Hersh has been called.

Henry Kissinger, for instance, is not a
member of the Hersh fan club. You see, it was Sy Hersh
who reported that then-Secretary of State Kissinger had
authorized wiretaps on seventeen National Security
Council aides. You were known to write a devastating
book called Henry A. Kissinger: The Price of Power,
which depicted Kissinger as double-dealing,
unscrupulous, self-serving and worse. Kissinger said
parts of the book were, and I quote, "a slimy lie".
But others disagreed, it won a National Book Critics
Circle Award in 1984, the same award that our colleague Samantha Power has just won for her book on genocide.

Indeed Sy Hersh has won many fans and many awards with his work, but maybe not so many friends.

In The Nation, Eric Alterman compared Sy to Bob Woodward, Washington's other famous investigative reporter. He said, "Woodward was the nice one. He felt your pain and flattered your ego and maybe even came to your dinner party. Sy Hersh," he said, "he was the nasty one. He didn't feel your pain, he caused it."

(Laughter)

MR. JONES: But look at what he's done in his remarkable career. Sy will be sixty-six next month and he's been a reporter for nearly forty-five years. He learned his craft as a wire service reporter and specialized in some very early probes into biological and chemical weapons. When the Associated Press, his then employer, butchered a major piece, he quit and became a freelance investigative reporter.

In 1969, he got a line on the secret courts martial of an Army lieutenant named Calley, who had been responsible for killing civilians in Vietnam...
at a place called My Lai. The Hersh form of reporting is relentless and it took that to shake loose what happened. But the result was a series of stunning stories about the murder of more than 450 people, which won Sy just about every award in journalism, including a Pulitzer Prize.

He's been at it ever since, doing it much the same way. Phone calls, digging, going back, bullying, bluffing, suggesting he knows more than he knows, twisting arms, it isn't necessarily pretty. His work is very often controversial. He's made mistakes, even some bad ones. He's also, it should be said, had as one of his targets John F. Kennedy, which may mean that the spirits around the Kennedy School are unquiet tonight.

But throughout his career his passion has been to reveal what has been hidden, to tell secrets that needed to be told and to let the people know the truth about the world, especially about the government.

It is very much in the tradition of the Goldsmith Award for Investigative Reporting that this year's Career Award should go to the man who, for my money, is the best investigative reporter ever, Seymour
M. Hersh.

(Appplause)

MR. HERSH: So much for e-mails. I'm also really happy, I've got to tell you, that this procedure tonight didn't begin with a prayer. It's great. We are not a theocracy, folks, believe it or not. And unfortunately, we may end up in a holy war, but tell it to the White House. So I thought what I'd do is tell you, it's ten to 9:00 and talk a few minutes just about -- like everybody I'm enormously impressed by the awards. I heard about the people who won and didn't win and it's remarkable we have such good reporting.

It's also so interesting to me that none of the stories really are out of Washington, because I think it's a very tough time for us in Washington. I've been around thirty-five or so years, since '64, in Washington. I make the joke and the joke is, I've never been so afraid since I watched the Wizard of Oz with my six-year-old daughter. These guys scare me. They're insulated. They're tough to get to.

The Pearl story, his counterattack is beyond belief. He's been calling me a terrorist as you
heard and worse, and it's just because I wrote a story
well within the bounds of what we do for a living. Is
there anybody who doesn't think Richard Pearl meeting
with Adnan Khashoggi, the middleman in Iran Contra, in
a secret lunch in Paris or in Marseilles in France,
it's a story and that's what we do for a living.

But these guys are really special. I'm
serious. This is a crowd that's going to put us into
something. I don't know what information the President
has. I have a lot of friends in the government. I've
never seen my peers, and even I've been around a long
time as you heard, as frightened as they are. It's
almost a waste to be a line officer in the State
Department or certainly an I&R. And many of the
bureaucracies there's just despair about the inability
of people to get meetings, to have an impact on
meetings.

It's very hard for the press. In
Washington they try hard. I was sort of mortified by
the news conference, a program president. There were
some very good questions. Just to show you what an
awful, one of the things that interested me, the
president had his, he turned sort of the press corps

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into puppets, because he read from a list and he bypassed an excellent reporter for The Washington Post, Dana Millbank, who got the president mad. I know what I would have done if I'd been there. I would have stood up and said, I give my question over to Dana, and see what happened.

But you can't do that. That's why I'm a little crazy, I guess, because I would have done that. But somebody should at some point. We can't let them get away with orchestrating us like he did, the president. We're not seals. I don't know what we can do about it. Mendacity passes for daily occurrences with the press secretary. There is no real standard anymore of integrity or truth, because the White House doesn't have any. So we're all left on our own to sort of stagger around and try and figure out what's going on. He is the president and he does have the power to send our children to commit murder in the name of democracy, and we respect that, we have to and we do.

But we've got a real crisis coming. But I can tell you I wish there was better reporting out of Washington. I know how hard it is, I know how tough it is. I also know that we will survive this, even if we

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end up in a hundred year religious war. I don't get any of this is a White House that deals in a lot of self-introspection, a lot of thinking. I don't think the president after 9/11 asked for a briefing on the Koran and what do we have here, what's really going on here.

And we can talk to politics and I'm going to only speak for a few moments, but I'll just sort of tell you where I come off and what I think about the few little standards I have and the reason why Richard Pearl can just -- I don't care, he can call me names, but he's got to answer the question of what was he doing, that's the ultimate thing.

It is a sense that I think particularly at moments like this and having gone through the Vietnam War, having seen what we can do wrongly and for good reasons, for honest reasons, there was no attempt to take oil or something. We just did it, misguided, Cold War, etcetera, and the not learning is sort of scary. But I think the only job of a reporter is to hold people in public life to the highest possible standard and that's the simple way of looking at it. You simply have to do it. You can't compromise. We can't say,
Ari Fleischer just told another one. It's not funny.
It's not funny anymore.

We're getting down into a question of there's been serious questions raised about some of the probity of some of the statements Mr. Powell made, the Secretary of State, who we all know is an honorable man. So one of the stories I'm looking at is how did he get some of the information he gave out, who briefed him, who told him, who told him it was okay, what does he feel about it now, because he's smart enough to know that some of the stuff he put out wasn't good. I'm sure he was told it was. Who's spinning the Secretary of State? And why? So these are horrible stories I try and report.

I guess one of the things I always think about and just to show you how hard it is right now, I'll tell you a couple of stories. One of the stories I did that I really liked a lot was a story about the CIA and domestic spying. I was at The New York Times a lot of years, with Alex, different cities. I don't know how you can stand working in New York, Alex.

But anyway, I was in Washington and one of the stories I did was about the CIA spying on American
citizens and other things, domestic spying. And I wrote it in December of 1974 and it led to Church Hearings indirectly, pretty much led to it I think, and there were a lot of investigations, sort of famous hearings that Senator Frank Church, the late Frank Church, did in an attempt, that failed ultimately, to put some caps on the CIA and what they could do, what's legal, what isn't legal.

You know, the truth of the matter is the way it works in America is the president can call the CIA director in and take a walk in the Rose Garden and something bad can happen and it's never connected to him and that bothers me. It shouldn't happen that way, that's not what democracy is.

Just like I don't make light of the fact that we all know in Washington that some of the people who are arrested now, the al-Qaeda people, we know where they're going. They're going to Thailand, they're going to Diego Garicia. They're going to lose a quarter of a finger a day. We know what's happening. We don't really talk about it, because we know. We know what they're doing, we're doing torture. We don't do it directly, we pass it off to third parties.
That's wrong, that's not what we're about. And we shouldn't be doing that. We all tolerate it, because what else can you do? How much can you put your nose into it?

So in any case, I learned a lot. The CIA is an operation that's designed to go overseas. They're here in America. They were put on to it by Johnson anti-war people. I never could write it, because I could never prove it, but the real drive was to go after some of the black radicals, Stokely Carmichael, etcetera. I know a lot of papers were destroyed about it -- when I got into it I knew that's what it was about, eventually morphed into something more. They kept dossiers on anti-war people. They opened mail. They broke into houses. They did all sorts of stuff, everything you would expect an out of control intelligence agency to do.

So some of the people who were talking to me I ended up getting mad at them, because, you know, expiation, you know, talk to me, you can get rid of it. Sometimes I feel now I'm getting a lot of stuff, I've got to tell you, lot of stuff from inside.

For some of you who remember Nathaniel
West, who wrote a wonderful novel called Miss Lonely Hearts. It's about a guy who writes a gossip column and one of the letters he gets is from, the way he sets it up it's a sixteen-year-old girl and says she writes this to the lovelorn column at The San Francisco Chronicle, I guess, one of the papers in San Francisco. This is a circa 1938-'37 setting. And she writes, Dear Miss Lonely Hearts, I'm sixteen years old and people tell me I have a wonderful figure and long blond hair and great legs and I've never had a date. Do you think it's because I have no nose? So I feel like Miss Lonely Hearts a lot. Just in the last week since I did Pearl, you can't believe some of the stuff I'm hearing about from inside. But it's not just enough to tell me, you have to do more on the inside. I don't advocate people breaking the law, but we're going to have to have something break loose soon from inside. There are too many people that know how vile it is on the inside right now, how narrow it is, how a few people have a lot of control over policy, they simply don't want to hear anything outside. The reason Richard Pearl can call me a

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terrorist is because he represents a point of view
that's very closely held at the top of this government,
that if you're with us you're great, if you're against
us you're really against us. You're an absolute enemy
of the state. There's no such thing as loyal dissents
up close. I know there's some exaggeration, you might
think, but I don't think it is. I think it's closer to
the truth.

Anyway, back in '74 I got mad at one of my
guys one day, one of the CIA guys that was talking to
me, sort of F-U dumping this stuff on me. Why didn't
you do something about it? It's one of my favorite
stories. And he said to me, this is apocryphal. And
he said it was apocryphal. He said, let me tell you a
story, Hersh. This is literally how he did it.

In '56 there was a famous Party Congress
in Moscow where Khrushchev made Stalin a non-person and
he was just carrying on before all the party delegates.
Bam! Stalin this, Stalin that. All of a sudden,
somebody stood up in the middle of his speech from the
auditorium and said, hey, Comrade Khrushchev, where
were you when the trains were rolling east every night,
when our grandmothers and grandfathers who thought

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thoughts that they shouldn't think we're going to
Siberia? Where were you when you couldn't publish
anything, any dissent? Where were you when it was to
be a Jew in Russia was to be put in the hands of the
NKPD intelligence service? Where were you? And
Khrushchev said, who said that? Who said that? My
friend waited. After thirty seconds Khrushchev said --
no, total silence. He said, that's where I was. Okay?

So where are we? So one of the things we
have to deal with in the press corps, nothing to do
with editors, I've always hated editors as just a
matter of practice. I've never known an editor who
didn't like a good story. I've never known an editor
who said to me, oh, my God, it's a great story, but you
can't do it. With the Pearl story, it was like, you
know, it's not everybody's, you don't want that story,
some editors and some lawyers, because it's problems.
He's probably going to sue, he says he is, in England
anyway.

(Laughter)

MR. HERSH: Gimme a break. He can't sue
here. One nice thing about America is, I mean maybe
they'll get to this. We shouldn't talk about it,

Anyway, I'm there on the way, by the way, this second act of the Patriot Act that Chuck Lewis's operation got its hands on. It's unbelievable. They're backing off from it. But what can I tell you about John Ashcroft? He confuses his personal definition of God with the Constitution. So you've got really, probably without question, the least knowledgeable and the most dangerous Attorney General we've ever had. If we get any more arrests, Bin al Sheeb and Khalid Shiek, they're all important, but if you go back and read what they said, this is it, we've broken the back of al-Qaeda. The answer is there's a lot of answers we don't have.

Anyway, the point of all this is to give you some idea of where we're at. So here I am, Mr. Tough Guy, and last fall I do a story of Massoueh. Massoueh's this sort of poor schlepp. Actually, the Russian Post ran a couple of stories that nobody picked up on about him. There's testimony the government now has that Massoueh was not the twentieth. He wasn't picked. Bin al Sheeb, Bin Sheeba, rather, al Bin

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Sheeba. I'm mangling it, but I assure you he's Arab.


He has actually sung and said that we didn't touch Massoueh. He wasn't going to be the twentieth guy. He's too crazy. And the story I wrote was out of a lot of guys I knew in the FBI and one guy higher up in the community who told me that they got a lot of problems with Massoueh, because they knew very early he wasn't a big player. They had some information from, I didn't write it, from British intercepts, British monitoring, he was living in a mosque and connected to a mosque and the British had something on him.

He was sort of a self-starter. He comes here, he's a crazy guy. I'm telling you the story for a reason. He's a crazy guy who comes here and wants to get into the act. He knows there's going to be a bomb, a lot of people flying planes into buildings. He wants to be one of the players with the big boys. He's far too fanatical, too religious. The nineteen guys who did it were very cool. One of them reported a small
crime. He had his car broken into a month before 9/11 and reported it, gave a police report. I mean, they were cool. That doesn't mean there's a million of them.

I noticed again in the paper the other day, in the Post, Khalid Sheik Mohammed said, there's dozens of us ready to take, I noticed the word dozens. I don't know, maybe it's a bad translation, but it isn't thousands. And the issue of whether we've been sold too much down the river on al-Qaeda or not is a tough issue, because the day you write that story something will happen. That's what every editor thinks, but I tend to think we're way overboard on the threat. Not that they're not bad guys, but I don't think they're in every major city waiting to strike us.

That doesn't mean there's not an issue, but it's just a question of how much we take these alerts to heart.

In any case, what I learned is that the intel boys know he's no good. He's not one of the twenty, but they also know he's in al-Qaeda. And here Ashcroft's got him on a death penalty. And some very senior guys in the FBI along with the guy in the CIA make a pitch to Ashcroft. Drop the death penalty,
let's talk to this guy. He knows al-Qaeda. We have nothing on al-Qaeda. It's been six months since 9/11 -- this is the spring of 2002 -- let's go talk to the guy. Ashcroft won't drop it, he wants to hang him.

So they never do talk to the guy, which is amazing. And the guys are very pissed off about it, because it's stupid, it's counterproductive and they've got a narrow-minded, crazy Attorney General that they can't deal with. So a lot of guys quit. Not because of this, but it was one of a series of things. Some very senior guys quit sort of quietly last summer. Three or four top guys in the FBI who knew a lot about terrorism just disappeared. One went to home cooking school, seriously, went to be a cook, wanted to cook. Interesting guy, though. Very interesting.

Anyway, the point of all this, so I write this story about Massoueh saying, hey, you know, it's more complicated than we think. He may not have been the world's worst guy, he's not a good guy. He would have done what they asked him, but they didn't ask him. He wasn't invited to the party. There was a lot of problems with it.

I'm sorry to tell you, that lady, Raleigh,
out in Minneapolis is a loon, all that stuff about the
FBI out there. There was a lot of problems with Pfizer
once. I give them all this stuff and I'm going to get
the series published and I'm going in the morning to
sort of pimp it for The New Yorker on television, which
is what I do, sometimes.

And I'm going down to CNN in the morning,
I'm thinking to myself, Jesus, maybe I'd better roll
back on this and just start off by saying, hey, by the
way, folks, I don't like Massoueh, I don't like what he
stands for, al-Qaeda's dangerous, but let me tell you
the problems with the story. In other words, Mr. Tough
Guy, My Lai, you've heard about all these tough
stories, looking Kissinger in the eye and Richard Pearl
and all that stuff, I was scared. I was nervous about
going out in front, self-censorship. It got to me
and I can imagine how much it gets to a lot of other
reporters. It got to me big time, I was really worried
about this story. Because I was out there I felt I was
going to get exposed, I was going to look like a guy
who really didn't appreciate it.

I did whatever I did. The story was
ignored, because the story's always ignored. The New
Yorker had a great story the other week on John Walker Lindh, just last week, on some of the misdoings in the Justice Department. That was pretty much ignored, too, because it doesn't fly in the face of where we're going. In a funny way, we're driven a little bit by a frenzy about the war. It's very hard to take a deep breath and go the other way. John Walker Lindh, there's a lot of aspects to that story, but in any case it's worth reading.

So there we are. It's sort of scary. I wish I could give you something optimistic to say. I think this guy will do what he wants to do. If he wants to go to war, he will. The only thing keeping him back now is Blair. I can tell you right now the military, despite all that talk you think, get down deep, get below the chairman's level, they don't like it. Smart officers don't like it, there's an awful lot of dissent. But a few stories about it in the press.

Actually, at The Post Tom Ricks has done some stuff and it's totally right on. It's tremendous. I've never seen such disaffection. I know a lot of three and four stars. I mean, it's very profound. Nobody's going to talk about it. I can't write about

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it, because I don't want to burn anybody. It's not a
popular war in the military among certain officers in
certain services, particularly the Marines.

And so there you are. I don't know what
we can do about it. We do our best. There's something
that makes Washington and going up against the flag and
the president I guess I would think it's no harder than
going up against the church or going up against the
cops in Dallas, believe me, I can imagine what that was
like for those guys down there.

But there's something about it that just
stops us. It's not from lack of trying. It's not the
fault of editors, there's no great censorship by the
publishers, but a lot of stories just don't get done.
And I don't know what to do about it. Nothing. Just
sit there and duck and wait, maybe buy a house in
Europe somewhere.

So let's do some questions. This is a
totally uncheerful account. Here we are celebrating
all this great journalism and I tell you folks we're
sort of stuck. We have a basically undemocratic
presidency and government that doesn't really believe
very much in what we do for a living, that thinks the
only way to deal with us is to manipulate us. And if
we get out of line or we get in trouble, we don't get
called on at speeches or press conferences and worse.
So there we are. It's always been part of it. I just
think it's so much worse now and so much more
frightening. And there we are.

Let's do some questions. Somebody must
have some questions.

MR. JONES: Before we go to questions.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: In addition to the prize that
we give Sy, we have another traditional present that we
give to the winner of this Career Award, so that you
can really aggravate George W. Bush even more than you
already do. The thought of you doing your work while
sitting in a Harvard chair with your name on it I'm
sure will really antagonize him. This is yours, and as
you can see it has your name on it.

(Applause)

MR. HERSH: is going to take a few
questions. We've got a microphone here, there and up
here. I would encourage you to line up at the mics,
and those of you who are journalists in the room, you
should feel welcome to step up and participate in this.

Yes, sir.

MR. HARRINGTON: Yes. First, Mr. Hersh, I want to congratulate you on the award you received this evening.

MR. HERSH: Thank you.

MR. HARRINGTON: My name is John Harrington and I'm a mid-career student here at the Kennedy School.

You mentioned earlier in your speech and I want to quote, "There's no truth and integrity coming out of the White House." Do you think it's these broad and absolute statements that sometime give rise to mistrust of the press when you paint a very broad and absolute picture?

MR. HERSH: I'll make it little truth.

(Laughter)

MR. HARRINGTON: Okay, so you did adjust your statement then; huh? That's all I wanted. I'm happy.

MR. HERSH: Let me say this. On the notion I do believe that the president believes what he says, if that's what you mean. I think he believes
what he says. I think much of the evidence he
presented we now -- we've had case after case of things
falling apart. The story on al-Qaeda, they won't give
up on the al-Qaeda story, they won't give up on the al-
Qaeda connection to Iraq. They keep on pushing that
issue. I have friends in the CIA that tell me if they
hear one more story about weapons of mass destruction,
of nuclear weapons in Iraq, they're going to become
democrats. It's just not there on the inside. So
there are some serious problems.

Let me roll back, let me protect myself a
little bit. Obviously, there are an awful lot of
tremendous people in the government, particularly in
the intelligence service and the military. I just
happen to think that some of the people in the higher
levels of the White House and the little cluster that
works close to the president, I think they see the
press as something to be handled and they handle us. I
don't think they see it even in terms of an obligation.
I don't think they see a sense of obligation to be
candid with us. We're just something to be handled.

This is always true in all White Houses.

 Everybody wants to sell the story the best they can,
but I've never seen a White House in which it has been
harder to get behind the facade. It's just very tough.
And they punish people. There's a tremendous amount
of withholding of access, etcetera. You either tell
the story their way or you don't have to tell it.

We had a story the other day in The New
York Times, with great fanfare told us that the
president actually sat through a movie two weeks ago,
just to show how calm he is, sat through a whole movie.
It's that kind of nonsense that gets published,
because people want to position themselves in such a
way that they can continue to have access. For
reporters on a beat it's very tough.

To refine what I said and to be a little
more serious about it, and I'm serious all the way
along, I'm dead serious about what I'm telling you,
we're in for a ride with these guys, I don't know where
it's going to take us. My belief is that their
attitude towards the press is that if it's a question
of any particular imbalance or anything that could be
upsetting to their policy or causes some embarrassment,
you withhold or you manipulate or you distort. And
that's what I mean. That's pretty serious. That's

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very serious. I don't trust very much what the press
secretary says, because he's been demonstrated to say
falsehoods. But then, he's just a press secretary.

MR. WILSON: My name is Greg Wilson. I
work here at the Kennedy School.

Last week Ari Fleischer had a press
conference and it was sort of a classic moment in time
where what the press secretary says met with a burst of
laughter from the press corps because it was so absurd.
The video was on the internet, but it never made the
network broadcasts.

Basically, he said that the coalition of
the willing was a process that was being built and
developed, but countries weren't being bought or they
weren't being bribed. Right when he said that the
whole room exploded with laughter and he left the press
classroom podium and walked away. But that video
never made the network news broadcasts. I was just
wondering if you had any comments, because often people
say it's tough to tell a story unless you have the
pictures.

MR. HERSH: Well, your story is the
comment. That's the same thing I'm talking about. The
problem is this isn't just about some campaign horsing around, this is about committing a quarter million people to war.

Have some of you had a chance to read the new book by this marine, *Jarhead*, the one that was reviewed in *The New York Times*. What interested me about the book was that he was describing, he went through the same sort of training we're having in the Gulf War. Before the Gulf War he was in a Marine sniper squad. He was sort of an elite marine and he went through months and months of special training waiting for the war like our guys are doing, not as long obviously, but they've been there some for three, four, five weeks or more.

And this whole notion of we're going to do everything we can to fight a humane war, minimize casualties, he said, by the time the war began I wanted to -- this is literally what he said. He said, all I wanted to do is get out there and drink and dope and rape and murder. It wasn't a judgment, it's just what you're trained to do. He wanted to kill some Iraqis. The point he was making was, what do you expect? And so I don't quite know once we start a war how we can
really be so sure that we're going to minimize, it has
a potential for killing an awful lot of non-combatants,
a little on our soldiers.

So I don't quite know how --. Is it
morality? Is it common sense? I don't quite know how
we're here. I don't know how we're here. I don't know
why we're here. I really don't know. And it's
stunning to me that we're here. And it's stunning to
me that so many of us in the press corps, it doesn't
matter, we're beat. We can't beat a system that's as
powerful as the White House and its apparatus.

So why would the networks not put it on?
I can give you a million reasons, but one of the major
tones has to do with continue to have good relationships
with the, they want to put people, they want to embed
their people, they want to be able to get the story.
As much as I think the internet is fantastic, it's an
incredible device that cuts across all ideologies,
cable television in terms of the war and what they're
doing to fan the war and with the vested interests in
the war is stunning to me.

And there are a lot of reporters I know
that already have contracts for books on the war and
are covering the war. You can't begin to explain to
them, if you've got a contract for a book on the war
and you're covering the war, don't you think that might
impact how you would write about the war? No,
absolutely not. I don't know how we got here. All I
know is we're going to all be real sorry soon.

Eric?

MR. ALTERMAN: Sy, I think Alex probably
spoke for most of the room, I don't know, when he
called you the best investigative reporter of all time.
I certainly share that feeling.

MR. HERSH: You're not by brother-in-law,
right?

(Laughter)

MR. ALTERMAN: I wouldn't be surprised if
a lot of editors who you work with call you probably
the most difficult investigative reporter of all time.
But I think it's fair to say that you can almost
measure the health of the profession by whether or not
you're working steadily, whether or not your work is
being treated with respect.

I thought Bob Thompson wrote a beautiful
profile of you, one of the longest articles I read in
my life in the Washington Post Magazine, where he compared the period where you were published in The New York Times in the early '70s, as if they were publishing Izzy Stone's weekly every day in The New York Times.

The New York Times is still the most powerful journalistic institution we have, still the most influential, despite the network, despite the company in the room, I don't think we can argue that. I'm wondering if you could reflect a little bit on your history with that institution. In other words, here's the most powerful journalistic institution we have and the most influential. It loves you and it hates you. It wants you and it doesn't want you. It doesn't know what to do with you. Is there a place for someone who's not as well known, who's not as powerful, doesn't have the kind of cards you bring to the table to do that kind of reporting in an institution like that, where it's most necessary?

MR. HERSH: Do you somehow, Eric, think I'm into self-immolation? Do you think I'm some bomb from Vietnam, I'm going to burn myself in protest?

MR. ALTERMAN: Yeah, I do, actually.

MR. ALTERMAN: That's an accomplishment of some sort.

MR. HERSH: We should go a couple more.

Hello, Mr. Secretary.

MR. GLICKMAN: Thank you.

I'm just fascinated by you and I had the privilege of serving both the legislative and executive branch of government. I'm listening to all this stuff and I'm thinking to myself, boy, do we only have one branch of the government in the county? Is Article II the only branch of government? And what strikes me about this conversation is you've only talked about Article II. There's been no mention of Article I. The founding fathers kind of intentionally made Article I the Congress, I think because they believed that one branch of government was slightly more equal than the other.

You haven't mentioned the Congress in terms of your contacts, in terms of your sources, in terms of who you deal with. Has the Congress become irrelevant in all these stories?
MR. HERSH: It's gotten so much dumber it's embarrassing. That's the real problem, it's the dumbing of Congress is one of the biggest problems we have. We can all blame the Democrats, but I can tell you right now there are a lot of wonderful conservative Republicans with great ideology, Henry Hyde. People who are really sticklers, who know there are a lot of problems who aren't talking about it, who are just as afraid as some of the Democrats who wonder what the hell's going to happen if I go out against this guy, will I win the nomination, etcetera, etcetera.

So of course there's been a collapse of the Democratic party, but there's also been a collapse of Congress. When I first got to Washington in the '60s, we used to kvell when the annual Senate and House Appropriations Hearings on defense spending came up, because you knew in those classified hearings when the intelligence community and the military community had to go in and explain some of the more sensitive weapons they were buying, you knew there was incredible questioning. Even old man Stennis, the senator from Mississippi, you knew there'd be great questioning. It doesn't exist anymore. John Stennis is now replaced by

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John Warner. What, a 200-point swing? What can I tell you? So it's not just that smart anymore. It's not that smart. It's not that interesting.

In the '70s, when I was a kid at The New York Times, every reporter will tell you you had a relationship. You leak me this, I'll do this, hearings. You had Harold Hughes of Iowa, who was on the Armed Services Committee. There was some series of articles I was running about a yeoman, something about the Vietnam War, some guy that was just ratting out the generals on bombing without authority. And Harold Hughes wanted an investigation. And he said they beat him up so badly in the committee, Thurman and Stennis and Symington, he said he cried, he told me, but I got the hearing and we had an investigation to do. He got the hearing.

Jim Woolsey right now was one of the people who was pretty active in it. He was then sort of, he was actually a Joe McCarthy Democrat once in his life, he'll probably sue me for it, in London, though. (Laughter)

MR. HERSH: I just think it's appalling. I do some of the stories. I did something Bill Moyers
had me do. It was an old story, but I did it because he's smart, Moyers is smart.

I did a story a year ago for The New Yorker. It came from guys in Delta. I can tell you that. And they're fighting the war. The war's two weeks old. The war is real simple. Three or four hundred special forces guys did amazing things in the war with the help of bombs, etcetera. There was a lot of deal-making, you go to the various tribal chiefs and you cut a deal.

But basically, the war was won very quickly, very early and it was a great coup, to their everlasting credit. And they had a lot of bad guys al-Qaeda captured in a town called Kanduz. This is late November after the first battles. They won a first early skirmish. And then they had them all captured, they had six, eight, maybe ten thousand.

And we had the air. We were flying all over. One night they got an order. There was a channel cut out of the air pocket. They were denied a channel. There was a ten-mile corridor they could not operate in for a week, and the corridor went from Kanduz about 150 miles or a little more, a couple of

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hundred kilometers, into Pakistan. And what it was they later -- they went nuts, because their job, they were going around happily killing people with the choppers, all of a sudden they couldn't fly in the zone. And every night planes started flying out, Pakistani airplanes. Initially they were told the goal was Musharraf who needed help. His intelligence people, the Pakistani ISI, and by the way, the arrest of the sheik the other day in Pakistan in a house owned by ISI people. I mean, the real question -- I'm glad he was arrested, but it does raise a lot of questions still of how many al-Qaeda are there? How many Taliban are there in Pakistan? What does the government really know? Giving us that guy, was that his way of buying us off so he can stay neutral in the U.N.? Who knows what the game plan is.

But in any case, he had a few hundred or more Pakistani military people who were training the al-Qaeda, including two generals. And he had to get them out. He had to get them out, we could not arrest his people, because it would have been too humiliating for him. He probably would have been overthrown. He was in real worry. And it was a reasonable thing, he's
our guy. So we flew him out. We lost control.

Every ISI guy took out as many al-Qaeda as he could, so anywhere from 2,500 to 4,000 people got out. And for the life of me -- and the best Rummie could do on that story was to say -- and there had been reports in the press. Guys in the field had said there's planes going on, all that stuff, and Rummie said, I don't know anything about it. News to me. He didn't deny it. And it just slipped by, I don't understand.

It's not the press that interests me, where in the hell was Congress on a story like that? They could get it. Call in hearings. The smart guy is Levin and of course, Chris Dodd is smart, but he's Chris Dodd. Much as I adore him, he's great and he's wonderful, but ambivalent's a good word on a lot of things. He's so smart and he knows it.

But Levin is great, Armed Services Committee, he's the one guy I know they're afraid of in the Republicans. I know the White House. It's the one guy they don't like. When he starts a series of questions, people have told me high up in this administration, believe it or not I've got a couple,
and they say he's the one guy we don't know where he's going, because he's too smart. But he won't do it.
You can't get anybody to do it. It's an incredible failure, I mean, it's a staggering failure. Does it say something about money and politics? Does it say something about -- I don't know about what.
But obviously it's a loaded question. You don't disagree, do you? Or do you?

MR. GLICKMAN: No, but I'm more interested in what you have to say.

(Laughter)

MR. JONES: We've got one more up here.

MR. HERSHEY: Yes, sir. Last one. It's 9:25.

FROM THE FLOOR: Could you please elaborate on some of the instances of fabrication, fraud, manipulation that you alluded to. To give you a couple to possibly choose from, the February 5th Powell speech where he called the U.K. intelligence document fine, which turned out, well, you know the story.

MR. HERSHEY: Plagiarism.

FROM THE FLOOR: More than that, but also inflated and altered. The recent Niger--
MR. HERSH: Stop right there. That's interesting. That's the most interesting right now.

FROM THE FLOOR: The aluminum tubes.

MR. HERSH: The tubes you can argue, you can argue that any way you want. The Niger's really interesting.

FROM THE FLOOR: And the spying. I don't know if you believe that the e-mail that supposedly, the NSA thing that ordered the surge in--

MR. HERSH: If the NSA wants a surge in spying on the U.N., what else do you want them to do? I'm glad they're doing it. I'm sorry somebody leaked it, if it's true. But that seems to be, they're talking about picking up e-mails, they're not talking about breaking into offices in that memo, they're talking about picking up e-mails and monitoring the people in the, they're going to have a tough vote and they want to know what the thinking is. They could just as easily get it from reading the press.

In one way the American press corps has been great, on the whole U.N. thing, they've been terrific. You really can learn a lot. And that's largely because, among other things, it's the U.N. We
have foreign governments talking to us. We can get a
lot of informed comment from the French and the
Germans, although if I were those countries, I'd really
start investing in homeland security. Maybe Richard
can cut a deal. I withdraw that.

(Laughter)

MR. HERSH: in any case, the Niger is
interesting for this reason. Niger is the case where
there was an allegation that the Iraqis had been buying
uranium and there was some contact between Iraq and
Niger. There was some uranium ore shipped and there
were papers presented that turned out to be falsehoods.
They were made public and there was some embarrassment
in this government.

And I'll tell you what the people on the
inside say to me, it didn't come through normal
channels. There's a lot of intelligence that doesn't
get through George Tenant's hands that's getting to
people through the DOD and other places. There's
little special collection cells set up now. That's one
of the sort of incredible breakdowns in civilization
we've had. Because normally the CIA director would see
everything and vet it. And there's stuff going
directly into the White House from groups in the
Pentagon and elsewhere, Doug Feiss, Sharpe and others.

It's been written about, but not to the extent that
probably it should be, but it's hard to get it. What
I'm telling you is just fragmentary, although I haven't
written it, but I'm telling you.

In any case, it wasn't a good fraud.

There was no way it wasn't caught. My friends on the
inside are very upset about it, because somebody passed
it on. Somebody said, it really doesn't matter that it
isn't good, it might work, and let the secretary drop
it off. I can tell you right now, from inside the
government people say to me, if there's nothing, I have
an e-mail from somebody, a station chief, who's very
involved and his answer is, there's nothing as
dangerous as allowing intelligence you know not to be
good to get to the national command authority leaders
and not stopping it when you know it's not good.

There's nothing as dangerous as perpetuating a lie on
an eve of a very dangerous war. And that kind of stuff
has gotten a lot of people very, very upset, if it's
so.

So Niger is the one that interests me the
most right now. Sort of running it what they call in
the intelligence community is you white out, you try to
find out where it started, who said what, what the real
story is, who fabricated these pretty bad fabrications.
They were so bad that any good professional
intelligence officer with some skill in the area would
pick it up right away. Impossible that our
intelligence people did not pick it up, unless it
wasn't given to certain people to vett and it was
passed on into this private channel. If that's going
on, and what I'm telling you, obviously I think it is,
we're dealing with a very serious issue
When you have the major, major spokesman
for the government in the State Department being given
information he has no idea is not good, but there are
other people in the government who have a pretty good
idea it isn't and they're not sharing that information,
you're on the edge of sort of chaos and that's scary.
Goodbye.
(Applause)
MR. JONES: Sy, may you live a long life,
sincerely.
(Applause)
MR. JONES: Let me remind you that the
finalists and winners of the Goldsmith Awards will take
part in a seminar tomorrow in the Malkin Penthouse,
which is on the top floor of this building. The
seminar will deal with the present and future of
investigative reporting. We've heard a lot about that
tonight. We'll be talking more about it tomorrow.
This is open to the public and all of you will be most,
most welcome. We start at 8:30 with a continental
breakfast, the seminar begins at 9:00.

Let me once again congratulate all of you
who are honored here tonight, all of you. Goodnight.
(Applause)

(Whereupon, at 9:28 p.m., the session
was adjourned.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the preceding transcript is an accurate record based on the recordings of the proceedings taken:

Before: ALEX JONES, Moderator

In the Matter of:

THE GOLDSMITH AWARDS

Date: March 11, 2003

Place: Cambridge, Massachusetts

Martin T. Farley
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