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SPYING ON THE WHITE HOUSE

ON Thursday afternoon, December 16, 1971, Navy Yeoman Charles Edward Radford left his house at Bolling Air Force Base on the edge of Washington, D.C., and steered his blue Datsun toward the Pentagon. It seemed like springtime; the temperature had climbed to a record 74 degrees, and as he passed the Tidal Basin and then crossed the Potomac River Radford could see a few cherry blossoms sprouting on the trees, and joggers running along the Mall near the Lincoln Memorial. The lanky, mustachioed twenty-seven-year-old with the friendly open manner had made the routine commute many times since arriving in Washington fifteen months earlier, but this was a special trip, one that made Radford too tense to enjoy the balmy weather. A day earlier, the Navy had placed him under virtual house arrest, and he dreaded what was now about to happen. He was on his way to an interrogation by Defense Department investigators who suspected that Radford had leaked classified documents to columnist Jack Anderson.

Radford had never liked Washington. He had enlisted in the Navy in 1963, and four years later the Navy had sent him to Defense

Intelligence School near the capital. He'd developed a strong dislike of the city, and was glad when his administrative training ended. In May 1967, he was posted to the defense attaché's office in the United States Embassy in New Delhi, India. He liked New Delhi, where he met and married the daughter of a U.S. Navy officer. The first two of their eight children were born in India. After three years, when the assignment to India ended, Radford sought the job of "admiral's writer," a post that involved clerical work, dictation, and memo writing, and that would make him personal aide to a flag officer; that was the route, Chuck Radford thought, to earning an officer's commission. The Navy agreed to give him such training at a school in Bainbridge, Maryland, and Radford hoped that after it he would land a post in the Pacific Northwest, close to his own family and that of his in-laws.

The Navy had other plans for him. In the summer of 1970 a prestigious and highly sensitive assignment linking the Pentagon and the White House opened up, and Radford, third in his class at the "admiral's writer" school, became a leading candidate. Offered the job, he was urged to take it. In the Navy you don't say no very often if you want to get ahead, so he accepted the post.

Upon arriving in Washington in September 1970, with his wife Toni and two children, he went to work in an office that directly served the nation's senior military man, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). Radford became the personal aide to Rear Admiral Rembrandt C. Robinson, an ambitious and politically savvy officer, who served as a top assistant to the chairman, Admiral Thomas H. Moorer. Moorer was the boss, an ardent anticommunist who concealed tenacity and a thirst for bureaucratic combat beneath a thick Alabama drawl.

Admiral Robinson and Yeoman Radford were a two-man team that ran the Joint Chiefs' liaison office to the National Security Council (NSC). Their assignment didn't amount to much on the organizational chart, but it connected them on one side to the highest reaches of the military, and on the other to the White House and its powerful national security adviser, Henry A. Kissinger. Robinson and Radford handled the flow of classified documents and messages between the Joint Chiefs and the NSC. Though small in size, under Kissinger the NSC wielded far more power than the mammoth bureaucracies of the departments of Defense and State, principally because President Richard M. Nixon wanted it that way.

The two-man team was Moorer's eyes and ears at the NSC, and Robinson stressed to his yeoman that his loyalty to Moorer stood above all else. "It was his responsibility to keep the chairman informed, and I was to help him to do this," Radford later testified of his instruction

from Robinson. Though Radford performed all the usual menial tasks of an assistant, from taking dictation to typing, filing, pouring coffee, serving lunch, and arranging Robinson's transportation, the yeoman understood that his main job was to assist Robinson by ensuring that everything they saw and heard inside the White House was promptly passed on to Chairman Moorer.

The Robinson-Radford team would begin each morning at the Joint Chiefs' suite on the second floor of the E-Ring of the Pentagon, then drive to their NSC office, 376A of the old Executive Office Building (EOB) just west of the White House; later in the day they would return to the Pentagon. They often worked past dark, and usually had long, grueling schedules that allowed Radford little time for his family. That loss was offset by his continguity to power and the intimate secrets of the nation's foreign policy. His dedicated service to Robinson, Moorer, and the Joint Chiefs earned him Robinson's praise and the promise of an officer's commission.

Chuck Radford was a sensitive young man, the product of an unusual childhood and a broken home. His father was a Native American, his mother descended from Slavic, Irish, and Jewish ancestors, and Radford had had difficulty gaining acceptance at the places to which his family moved, and at the foster homes to which he had occasionally been sent. Perhaps that was why, from the very outset, Yeoman Radford was enthralled by his new job. "It's a long way from an Indian reservation to a position like that," he remembers. "I thought, my gosh, I've finally broken those ties with my past, and I can really be better than a lot of my cousins and a lot of my family had been. I can finally accomplish something. I even stopped reading newspapers—that's how exciting it was—because the stuff in the newspapers was boring; they didn't know what they were talking about."

The fall of 1970, when Yeoman Radford took up his post, was a pivotal time for the Joint Chiefs of Staff. From their point of view, the president of the United States was out of control.

On January 20, 1969, Richard M. Nixon had become the thirty-seventh president of the United States. Earlier, as a private citizen, Nixon had contemplated several historical foreign policy shifts, including new relationships with the United States' cold war adversaries, China and the Soviet Union, an end to the war in Vietnam, and an attempt to stop bloodshed in the Middle East. Though long regarded as a conservative anticommunist, Nixon actually had a world view that favored diplomacy and arms control over confrontation and a continued

arms race. He cultivated a public image of anticommunism because he found it useful, but privately was more flexible in his thinking.

His slim electoral victory in 1968, with a margin of only a half-million votes, represented a tremendous comeback from defeats in the presidential election of 1960 and in the California gubernatorial race in 1962. As he entered the White House, Nixon was full of bitterness and anger about these past defeats, and about years of perceived slights from others in the political establishment. He believed he had never been treated with the respect that a former vice-president should have received. He viewed the nation's capital as a hostile territory populated by his enemies. "Washington is a city run primarily by Democrats and liberals, dominated by like-minded newspapers and other media," Nixon wrote in his autobiography, *RN*. He urged his cabinet to replace holdover bureaucrats with "people who believed in what we were trying to do," and insisted they do so quickly, or the old establishment would "sabotage" their intended reforms. What he wanted from these new people was "undivided loyalty."

Nixon's need to control his political destiny and to prevent the blunting of his agenda by bureaucrats pushed him toward the establishment of what was, in effect, a secret government. An intensely private and withdrawn man, almost the opposite of the usual gregarious politician, Nixon often recoiled from social situations and preferred to be closeted with familiar aides or to sit alone with a pad and pen and jot down his own thoughts. "Meeting new people filled him with vague dread, especially if they were in a position to rebuff or contradict him," Henry Kissinger observed of his former chieftain in the first volume of his own memoirs, *White House Years*. Nixon usually directed his chief of staff H. R. "Bob" Haldeman, his counsel and later domestic adviser John D. Ehrlichman, or his attorney general and close friend John N. Mitchell to carry out the dirty work of imparting bad news or even somewhat unpalatable directives to subordinates.

Both Nixon and Kissinger saw the government bureaucrats as roadblocks to be circumvented. To Nixon, Congress was under the thumb of the Democrats; the Department of State and the Central Intelligence Agency were havens for Eastern Establishment liberals who hated him; and the military was full of doctrinaire, inflexible anticommunists. To circumvent them all, Nixon determined to use an agency first established in 1947 that had lain dormant in the Kennedy and Johnson years but was under the complete control of the White House—the National Security Council. For a man who loved secrecy, it was perfect. While the statutory members of the NSC were officers of the cabinet, the national security adviser and his staff were presiden-

tial appointees who did not have to be confirmed by Congress. The NSC was chartered as a clearinghouse for information from State, the Pentagon, and the intelligence community flowing to the White House, and it could take action quickly. Nixon had seen the NSC work under President Dwight D. Eisenhower, but then it had been balanced by the power and influence of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles.

Nixon constructed a cabinet that could be ignored or easily manipulated, depending on the whim of the White House. Generally, the most important cabinet post for an incoming administration is the secretary of state. Nixon appointed to that post William P. Rogers, attorney general under Eisenhower, and a man who had befriended Nixon at a time when he had needed friends, after the gubernatorial defeat in 1962. In the opening hours of Rogers' tenure as secretary of state, Nixon had Kissinger send letters to many leaders of foreign nations, without advising Rogers or his department that he was doing so. Rogers' refusal to show outrage at this deliberate slight assisted in his department's emasculation. Rogers' complete eclipse occurred less than a month later, when Nixon met with Soviet Ambassador to the United States Anatoly Dobrynin without Rogers present, and told the ambassador that Kissinger would meet regularly with him from then on. As Kissinger reports in his memoirs, after that, Rogers was routinely left out of all important initiatives having to do with foreign policy, or informed only after they had been irretrievably set in motion. Items on which Rogers was kept in the dark included the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) with the Russians that aimed to put a ceiling on nuclear arsenals, the secret negotiations with China and the trip to Peking, and the secret peace talks with the North Vietnamese in Paris.

Whereas Bill Rogers had no real foreign policy experience, the man selected by Nixon as secretary of defense had considerable experience in military affairs. Melvin R. Laird had spent eight terms as a congressman sitting on the powerful House Appropriations Committee, which handled the funding of the Pentagon and the intelligence agencies. He understood the military bureaucracy far better than Nixon or Kissinger. He also appears to have understood the way Nixon planned to work, and though he protested being cut out of many decisions, he decided to continue on in his post in an attempt to make his own imprint on winding down the war in Vietnam.

Nixon's agreement to let Johnson holdover Richard M. Helms remain as the director of the CIA was among his most astounding appointments. "The two were polar opposites in background," Haldeman wrote in his memoir, *The Ends of Power*, "Helms the aloof, aristocratic, Eastern elitist; Nixon the poor boy (he never let you forget

it) from a small California town." The appointment was especially puzzling in light of Nixon's deep-seated belief that the CIA had contributed to his loss in the 1960 election. Back then, Nixon told friends, the CIA had played politics with the Bay of Pigs operation, briefing candidate John Kennedy on it to the point where he was able to take a strong anti-Castro stand that Nixon did not want to take because it might jeopardize the impending Bay of Pigs invasion; the CIA had also given Kennedy ammunition for his accusations about a "missile gap" that he exploited in similar fashion. On both of these issues, sabotaged by the CIA, Nixon believed he had appeared weak or uninformed during the televised debates, which were widely credited with having won Kennedy the election. That the election had turned on a number of factors, not the least among them Nixon's physical appearance on television rather than the content of his remarks, did not prevent Nixon from continuing to believe that the CIA had done him in. Nixon planned to ignore the CIA as much as he could, and leaving Helms in place—where he and his agency could be embarrassed—became part of the plan. Nixon and Helms thought little of each other; there was at least one near-confrontation between them. According to Nixon's memoirs, when Nixon requested the complete Bay of Pigs files, Helms, after initially balking, turned over what the president believed to be a sanitized file.

Nixon's relationships with the senior military officers of the nation were the most complex of those within the upper echelon. It was impossible to carry out the war in Southeast Asia without cooperation from the Pentagon, and such matters as the secret bombings in Cambodia and the air war against North Vietnamese cities required the support of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. But Kissinger courted individual service chiefs and encouraged them to report directly to him rather than to Secretary Laird. He also, on behalf of the president, requested that the JCS set up a "backchannel" through which he and Nixon could transmit private messages within the government and abroad. Such backchannels were normally operated for the government by the CIA and the National Security Agency (NSA), but Nixon wanted to circumvent those intelligence agencies. Using special codes, teletypes, and secure terminals located at the Pentagon and in the White House Situation Room, the president and his national security adviser could send and receive messages to selected American officials and members of foreign governments around the world without alerting the rest of the United States government.

This backchannel for transmitting and receiving messages was under the control of the JCS and physically located in the Digital

Information Relay Center in the Pentagon basement. Operated under a twenty-four-hour guard and open only to those with the highest security clearances, the center was linked to military commanders and installations worldwide. It allowed senior officers to communicate in single-copy messages that were not filed or retained and could not be read by others in the government. At banks of code machines, terminals, and teletypes, technicians would decipher incoming messages using a card system and then route the information via pneumatic tube to the proper location within the Pentagon. Or it would be sent to compatible equipment located in the West Wing basement of the White House, adjacent to Kissinger's office. One of the most secret links at the center was the Navy's SR-1 channel, which Kissinger would use on his first secret trip to the People's Republic of China because it could not be monitored by the State Department or the CIA. The secretary of defense normally had access to the Relay Center, but, according to a technician who worked there at the time, in late 1970, the guards at the main doors were given orders—apparently from the White House—to prevent Laird or any of his aides from entering the facility.

Kissinger wrote that "extraordinary procedures" were necessary for a president who didn't trust his cabinet and wouldn't give cabinet officers direct orders:

> Nixon feared leaks and shrank from imposing discipline. But he was determined to achieve his purposes; he thus encouraged procedures unlikely to be recommended in textbooks on public administration, that, crablike, worked privily around existing structures. It was demoralizing for the bureaucracy, which, cut out of the process, reacted by accentuating the independence and self-will that had caused Nixon to bypass it in the first place.

To the Joint Chiefs, the backchannel and the Kissinger overtures to the service chiefs provided the military with special access to the commander in chief, a wondrous thing at a time when they were engaged in a war that was not being won. Yet these backchannel operations also provided the chiefs with indelible evidence that the president was circumventing other officials in the government, and was probably doing the same to them.

The Pentagon brass faced a dilemma. On the one hand, they approved of the president's and Kissinger's readiness to use military force in an effort to rejuvenate the United States' efforts to win the grinding, frustrating war in Southeast Asia. They secretly applauded when in March 1969 the president charged them, through backchan-

nels, with conducting secret bombing missions over neutral Cambodia. These missions would continue for the next fourteen months, and had as their target suspected North Vietnamese and Vietcong "sanctuaries" in that country. But even when the brass was included as a partner in White House machinations—used to create a second set of reports to conceal the actual targets of the air strikes, or asked to provide military communications links for secret diplomatic forays—the brass was an uneasy partner in the alliance. Military officers sensed that they were merely being used as instruments to further Nixon's own ends; their belief that this was the case was furthered by the events of ensuing months, during which they saw themselves being ignored, cut out, and circumvented on all the important issues—the conduct of the war, troop withdrawals, the peace negotiations, and SALT, just to name the most important ones. The members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff watched with rising frustration as the president and the former Harvard professor—whom they especially disliked—exerted dictatorial control over the military bureaucracy by telling the brass how to run the war.

One of the men who served on the Joint Chiefs, former Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., wrote of the problem in his 1976 memoir, *On Watch*. He described

> the deliberate, systematic and, unfortunately, extremely successful efforts, of the President, Henry Kissinger, and a few subordinate members of the inner circle to conceal, sometimes by simple silence, more often by articulate deceit, their real policies about the most critical matters of national security: the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) and various other of the aspects of "detente," the relations between the United States and its allies in Europe, the resolution of the war in southeast Asia, the facts about America's military strength and readiness. Their concealment and deceit was practiced against the public, the press, the Congress, the allies, and even most of the officials within the executive branch who had a statutory responsibility to provide advice about matters of national security.

The Joint Chiefs, the military advisers to the president, consisted of the chairman, the chiefs of staff of the Army and the Air Force, the chief of naval operations, and the Marine Corps commandant. The men in what was known as the Tank, the windowless room in the Pentagon where the Joint Chiefs of Staff met, grew increasingly desperate through the first years of the Nixon administration, believing that the political side of the United States governing elite was under-

mining the military's legitimate efforts to conduct a war and to keep the country safe from external threats of harm.

Admiral Thomas H. Moorer was appointed by Nixon to be chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in July of 1970, after a period of months in which he had done the job on a day-to-day basis because of the illness of his predecessor, Army General Earle G. Wheeler. A swaggering former aviator who had survived Pearl Harbor and wore that as a badge of honor, Moorer constantly made reference to that Japanese attack as the reason why the United States must build its war machine and be prepared for a global battle with the communists. Moorer "made no pretense of academic subtlety," Kissinger wrote; rather, "he exaggerated the attitude of an innocent country boy caught in a jungle of sharpies." The admiral was known for his tough talk, especially his insistence that the U.S. could still prevail in Vietnam through effective use of its military might. Because of this Moorer stance, Nixon and Kissinger believed they could convince him to carry out certain secret military operations that would be kept from the Pentagon bureaucracy. Upon his elevation, Moorer decided to cooperate with the White House. However, Moorer must have recognized that Nixon's and Kissinger's penchant for secrecy was resulting in the military being denied the information it thought it needed to win the war and to keep the country safe from the communist threat worldwide.

Moorer must have felt desperate, but desperation is often born when men are in the dark, as the JCS was in those days. While Kissinger and Nixon reassured military and congressional conservatives about their dealings with the Russians, they told liberals and arms control advocates that assuaging these same conservatives was making progress difficult on SALT, which involved complex formulas to limit warheads, bombers, submarines, and the defensive weapons system called ABM, the antiballistic missile. This strategy of telling each end of the spectrum that the other was at fault left hawks and doves screaming at each other, and Kissinger and Nixon free to do whatever they wanted in the SALT negotiations. The JCS's sense of betrayal intensified during 1970. They felt beleaguered by an unpopular war that seemed only to expend lives and weapons; while the military services took the casualties and the brunt of the public's antipathy, behind the chiefs' backs, Nixon and Kissinger were negotiating away everything for which American and South Vietnamese blood had been spent. To the JCS, the fact that the Nixon-Kissinger secret diplomacy was being conducted to end the war while at the same time White

House instructions were in place to escalate the war on the battlefield was tantamount to treason.

The backchannel existed, and so did the liaison office that consisted of Admiral Robinson and Yeoman Radford. The office provided a home for the JCS inside the White House and, as Radford later explained, shortly after he arrived at his post in September 1970, JCS Chairman Moorer became the beneficiary of an espionage operation run by Robinson and Radford and directed against President Nixon and National Security Adviser Kissinger.

The very chaos attendant on Kissinger's effort to control foreign policy and expand his NSC empire gave the spy ring breathing room at its birth. During the Kissinger-led expansion, Robinson managed to establish himself and Radford in an office in the EOB from which Robinson was able to remove all the civilians. Now, Robinson could handle the flood of paperwork between the Pentagon and the NSC as a lean, all-military operation. Unseen by civilians, the office faded into the background, and Robinson liked it that way, for he enjoyed the intrigue and secrecy attendant upon acting behind the scenes. Robinson's attitude became evident shortly after Radford started work at the liaison office. The yeoman had innocently told a caller that the admiral was unavailable because Robinson was then out of the office at a meeting with Kissinger's deputy, Brigadier General Alexander Meigs Haig. When Radford later informed Robinson of the call he was reprimanded and reminded not to reveal Robinson's whereabouts to anyone. If Robinson received a visitor at the office, Radford was not to tell anyone that the person had been there. "He [Robinson] said that if the wrong person found out" about the visitor, "they might think that something was going on."

That was before Radford himself found out what was "going on." The first sign was the removal of the last civilian secretary from the liaison office, who was bitter about losing the job. Admiral Robinson had done his best to make her feel unwanted, for instance by refusing to let her type his most sensitive memos. Chuck Radford liked the secretary, for despite her anger, she even helped Radford learn his duties so he could properly replace her.

Radford was able to make friends with the woman he replaced because he had a gift for disarming people and collecting information, traits that served him well as Robinson's aide—and that also served Robinson's purposes. The senior officer told the yeoman he must be wary of everyone else, and he must not let himself be pumped for information, especially by Kissinger's NSC civilians who would inevitably try to query him about the JCS. At the same time, Robinson

instructed, Radford should collect information and gossip from the NSC and make sure that Robinson "saw or knew about what I saw by bringing him a copy or asking him if he had seen what I had seen. . . . He made it clear . . . that he expected my loyalty, and that I wasn't to speak outside of the office about what I did in the office."

Radford attacked the task with gusto, getting to know many people on the EOB staff, "people in the reproduction center and the burn center and in the bookkeeping center. You know, I was everywhere. Always constantly moving and talking." Radford fed back to Robinson the substance of these conversations and was praised, and came to feel he was "pretty well liked."

Yeoman Chuck Radford, the straight arrow, was an espionage controller's dream, a barely noticed secretary who traveled easily through NSC staff offices. It wasn't long before he was converted from a passive to an active spy. It happened around the time Radford was taking dictation, a memo to Moorer about a conversation Robinson had had with a defense contractor; as Radford scribbled in shorthand, he mentioned that he had picked up some information on the same subject in conversation with an NSC staffer. Robinson stopped dictating and told Radford never to hold back anything he'd heard, no matter how minor it seemed. Radford understood that he was now to do more than look or listen. That was when he began to steal information actively, taking documents from burn bags, making extra copies in the reproduction center, peering over the shoulders of bookkeepers. As the yeoman grew more adroit at gathering information, he earned ever greater praise from his admiral.

"You have to understand," says retired Rear Admiral Gene R. LaRocque, "that with the military it's 'us versus them.' The Navy in particular. Civilians are all to be feared and distrusted and guarded against. . . . So that reading their traffic and taking it out of their burn bags was all considered legitimate. They [the military] saw themselves as beleaguered." LaRocque, who first learned about Radford's activities when pieces of the story broke publicly, deplores the spying, but understands it as an extension of Robinson's personality. Robinson was, LaRocque says, "totally blind-doggedly loyal to Moorer."

When Rear Admiral Robert O. Welander replaced Robinson, who was being given a cherished sea command, the praise for Radford became fainter—but the job was still there to be done. From late 1970 to late 1971, Yeoman Radford collected literally thousands of documents from the White House and, while on foreign trips, documents that ranged from private messages between Kissinger and Nixon that involved their secret China gambit, to negotiating stances over sensitive

European military bases, to closely guarded policy papers put together by Kissinger's staff, to Nixon's strategy and timetables for withdrawing troops from Southeast Asia.

On the morning of December 14, 1971, Yeoman Chuck Radford read Jack Anderson's column and realized it was trouble. Anderson had obtained explosive White House and Defense Department documents on the Nixon strategy of secret support and a "tilt" to Pakistan in its South Asian border war with India. One of these was a memo on naval ship movements written days earlier by Admiral Welander. Cited in the column were also four more top-secret government memos, and their accumulated weight blew away Nixon's public stance of neutrality in the conflict.

The Anderson column embarrassed Nixon and Kissinger at a time when Nixon was already enraged because the "tilt" as a strategy was failing. After two weeks of fighting, Pakistani forces had been routed by the Indian army and a final surrender was imminent. The Washington Special Action Group (WSAG), a crisis management team of senior bureaucrats established by Kissinger, had met on December 3 and 4, and Anderson had obtained minutes of these meetings. They contained Kissinger's complaint that he was "getting hell every half hour from the president that we are not being tough enough on India. He doesn't believe we're carrying out his wishes. He wants to tilt in favor of Pakistan. He feels everything we do comes out otherwise." The Anderson column also revealed that Nixon had sent a naval task force to the Bay of Bengal, risking a "dangerous confrontation" with Soviet vessels stationed there in support of India.

Part of the reason Nixon and Kissinger were so embarrassed was that West Pakistan's president Yahya Khan was involved on the losing side of the conflict. In fact, the "tilt" had been ordered to support Khan, whose army had been inflicting atrocities on tens of thousands of East Pakistani separatists and ordinary citizens in West Pakistan, and whose outrages had induced India to enter and prevail in the conflict. Why support such a butcher? Nixon and Kissinger backed Khan because he had provided the link to the Peking leadership through which the president and Kissinger had negotiated his stunning diplomatic opening to China.

To get away from the now-public disparity between his stance of neutrality and his open tilt to Pakistan, Nixon flew to Key Biscayne and sailed aboard his friend Bebe Rebozo's cabin cruiser, the *Coco Lobo III*. And Kissinger and the Department of Defense issued orders to find and punish whoever had leaked the memos to Anderson.

Radford knew he had not been Anderson's source, and planned to say so as he completed his drive to the Pentagon for interrogation on December 16. Chuck had never discussed the details of his job with any outsider, not even with his wife, Toni. Moreover, this incident had blown up just when he thought he was on the verge of getting away from clandestine work. He'd been trying to get a new assignment since Admiral Robinson had gone to sea and been replaced by Welander. His new boss was a tall, studious, career destroyer officer who came reluctantly to the liaison job; to Radford, Welander appeared indecisive and nervous about the work they were called on to do for Chairman Moorer. "He wasn't careful like Robinson," Radford remembers; "He just didn't seem very astute." By the fall of 1971 Radford had begun to seek a transfer and the commission he'd been promised. His fitness reports glowed with praise from both Robinson before he'd left and Welander, as recently as December 1, when the admiral had judged Radford "hardworking and reliable . . . displays initiative and imagination in performance of assigned duties . . . has performed exceptionally well in a unique and demanding assignment." The transfer didn't come, but Radford continued to seek it. Welander didn't assist him in that search, saying a transfer would have to wait because Radford was too important in his present post.

When Welander read the Anderson column on December 14, and before he'd actually talked to Radford, Welander rushed to accuse Radford of the leak, and did so to an officer to whom he had close ties, General Haig, deputy to Kissinger. Haig called presidential assistant John Ehrlichman, who immediately assigned White House aide David R. Young to investigate the leak. Young was a Kissinger protégé who had worked at the NSC and had transferred to Ehrlichman's staff. In July 1971, with Nixon's approval, Ehrlichman had appointed Young and another aide, Egil "Bud" Krogh, Jr., to be codirectors of a new Special Investigations Unit and to investigate the leak of what became known as the Pentagon Papers; Daniel J. Ellsberg, the former government analyst accused of leaking the documents, was also targeted for study. With their office in the basement of the EOB, Young and Krogh were later dubbed the Plumbers, because they were assigned to stop news leaks, and because Young had a self-deprecating sense of humor and had placed a sign on the door that read PLUMBER. Krogh and Young had worked closely with Haig on the Pentagon Papers–Ellsberg investigation and on a leak to *The New York Times* concerning the SALT talks. Thus, when Welander came to him about the Anderson column on December 14, Haig immediately turned to Ehrlichman, the boss of the leak investigators Krogh and Young.

The top civilian investigator at the Defense Department was W. Donald Stewart, an irrepressible, tenacious, and earthy former FBI man whose honesty and blunt language often rankled the high-ranking military officers and senior bureaucrats who became the targets of his probes. Stewart also had been involved in the Pentagon Papers–Ellsberg investigation, as well as that on the SALT leak, and had been trying to track down the source of eleven other Jack Anderson columns published between March and May 1971 that contained classified information from the Defense Department. In his job, Stewart often dealt with the department's general counsel, J. Fred Buzhardt, who reported directly to Secretary Melvin Laird.

To investigate this new Anderson column Stewart quickly assembled a four-man support team that included Raymond J. Weir, Jr., a polygraph expert from the National Security Agency, the Defense Department's code-breaking and communications arm. Stewart and his support team joined Young from the White House and decided to question all officers and enlisted men assigned to the suite of offices in which Chairman Moorer's staff at the Pentagon worked. Based on Welander's assertion, Chuck Radford was the prime suspect.

Welander was outraged; as he told Haig on the morning of the fourteenth, the column "could only have come from my files." He thought so because the Anderson column cited or quoted five documents: 1) a Welander memo to Haig, dated December 10, that detailed the movements of the USS *Enterprise* carrier task force as it steamed toward the Indian Ocean; 2) the minutes of the December 3 meeting of the Washington Special Action Group; 3) a separate JCS memo on the December 4 WSAG meeting; and 4 and 5) two State Department cables from the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi. The presence in the column of his memo gave Welander the idea that Radford had been the leaker, for that memo (and no other one cited) contained a phrase that Anderson had repeated but misconstrued. Welander had talked of the ships being armed "with Tartar Sam," by which he meant that they carried surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) that went by the name of Tartars. Anderson had mistaken Tartar Sam for the name of one of the ships.

Welander was certain the leaker was Radford, but there was room for doubt. At least five people had seen the "Tartar Sam" memo—Welander, Radford, Haig, Kissinger, and an aide to Haig. Moreover, the prevalence of photocopying machines in all of their offices argued that far more people might have had copies of the memo. And the other documents cited by Anderson spread the net of suspicion even wider; for instance, the minutes of the December 3 WSAG meeting had been written by a civilian assistant secretary of defense, and the

memo on the December 4 meeting had been produced by one of Moorer's aides. Questioned later, Welander admitted that about fifty Pentagon officials had access to each of these documents, and ten to both; that many people on the Haig or Kissinger staffs could have copied Welander's memo; and that several persons in the Pentagon could have had access to his files, safes, and the burn bags in which he ordered Radford to place rough drafts of documents.

The people who had a clear motivation to make the leak were the Joint Chiefs. On December 10, and without any consultation with Laird or any senior Navy commanders—or even a meeting of the NSC or of the WSAG—Nixon had sent the *Enterprise* and nine accompanying warships filled with two thousand combat-ready Marines to the Bay of Bengal. The group was known as Task Group 74. The action outraged the Joint Chiefs, as Admiral Zumwalt reported in his memoir, *On Watch.* They were especially concerned because in response a Russian task group also moved into the area, making it possible that a confrontation could happen, one about which the Joint Chiefs had little information. "Perhaps the President and Kissinger, both of whom were quite clearly frustrated by their inability to influence events on the subcontinent, impulsively organized TG 74 and sent it on its way in a final effort to show the world that America was not to be taken lightly," Zumwalt wrote.

The investigators were convinced that Radford had been responsible for the leak to Anderson in December and for those in the spring of 1971. As it turned out, the source for the eleven earlier columns was an Army enlisted man at the time, a communications specialist named Stephen W. Linger, who had worked at the Digital Information Relay Center, the room through which Moorer provided the backchannel to Kissinger and Nixon. Linger insists that he never gave Anderson anything that threatened the lives of U.S. servicemen and never turned over top-secret documents, but that he had given important material to Anderson because he had become disillusioned with the Pentagon and the conduct of the Vietnam War. Linger had nothing to do with the India-Pakistan leak, since he had left the military in March 1971. But he has admitted to making the eleven others to Anderson, which revealed the Air Force cloud-seeding program over Laos, U.S. monitoring of South Vietnamese President Thieu's private conversations, and Admiral Moorer's receipt of FBI surveillance reports on antiwar and black dissident groups in the U.S. These FBI reports involved domestic political activity and were outside the purview of the chairman of the JCS. Linger handled the reports when they came over the teletypes at the Pentagon Relay Center. "I grew up real fast at the Pentagon,"

Linger told us. "I saw the government was doing things that were wrong."

But Radford was the prime suspect in the December leak at the time, and not only because of his contiguity to Welander. He had two strikes against him: He had been stationed in India, and he had some social contact with Jack Anderson.

The social contact had come about by accident. While attending a Mormon service in New Delhi, Radford and his wife had met Jack Anderson's parents, who were traveling through India en route to Ethiopia. The Andersons needed help with their visas, and Radford, who worked at the embassy, was able to lend a hand. Correspondence and exchanges of Christmas cards followed, and, soon after the Radfords were posted to Washington in the fall of 1970, the elder Andersons, while visiting their son, invited the young couple and their children to the columnist's Bethesda home. It was not until he arrived at the suburban home that Radford realized that the man he was visiting, and to whom the elder Andersons had referred, was the famed investigative reporter. Jack thanked Radford for the help he had given the elder Andersons in India, and his parents spent most of the evening talking to Radford about the Mormon Church and India. Anderson confirms that he hardly talked to the yeoman at all that night, and not at all about journalism or the military.

Next day the yeoman told Admiral Robinson where he'd been the previous evening. "Robinson was surprised," Radford told us, and Robinson then called Moorer to report. Word came back from Moorer that Chuck was to keep his job separate from his social activities. Radford recalls, "I felt better for having told him. I wanted to make sure that he could count on my loyalty."

After several more months of no contact with the Andersons, Chuck Radford was doing some research on his great-great-grandfather and called Libby Anderson, the columnist's wife and a Mormon, for help with the family genealogy; later, Toni Radford talked on the phone with Libby about how to conduct the research, which is required of Mormons. Then, on December 5, 1971, Jack called to extend an invitation to his parents' fiftieth wedding anniversary in Utah; the Radfords declined, unable to make the trip. A week later, on December 12, Anderson called again and asked the Radfords to come to dinner that very night. Radford thought it odd to get such an invitation on short notice, but he and Toni met the Andersons at a Chinese restaurant of which Anderson was a part-owner.

That dinner two nights before the column appeared would provide investigators with their strongest evidence linking Anderson and Rad-

ford. But Radford said he had no idea of the forthcoming column, and didn't discuss India or Pakistan or any other aspect of his job at dinner. Moreover, if he had been the source, he surely would not have accepted a dinner invitation from Anderson and then been seen with the famous columnist in such a public way at a time close to the column's release. Anderson denies ever receiving material from Radford. "I got those documents from at least five or six sources," he says. Although even many years after the event he would not name the real sources, he did say that "You don't get these kind of secrets from an enlisted man. You get them from generals and admirals. You don't get them from the little guys."

On December 14, when he read the column, Radford knew it was trouble, and focused, as Welander had, on the reference to "Tartar Sam." When he and Welander made their daily ride from the Pentagon to the EOB, the atmosphere in the car was tense and the conversation brief.

"Radford, did you give my memo to Jack Anderson?" Welander asked.

"No, sir, I didn't," Radford said.

Despite his denial, Radford was ordered to stay home the next day and wait for a call from the Navy. "I was under virtual house arrest. I felt humiliated. . . . I felt things were going on around me that I couldn't control. I felt helpless."

So it was that around three in the afternoon of that balmy December 16 he arrived at the Pentagon for interrogation. The event was held in a two-room suite on the second floor of the E-Ring, in a green-walled office furnished with standard furniture and military pictures. Stewart, chief of Defense's investigative division, and Weir from the NSA were accompanied by Young from the Plumbers and Stewart's assistant Joseph D. Donohue. Immediately on arriving, Radford admitted that he was in a vulnerable position because he had known Anderson for about a year. This information startled the investigators, because no one in the Navy had told them of the relationship, even though Radford just as quickly told them that he had relayed news of his meeting Anderson to his former superior, Admiral Robinson. The investigators called Welander, who said that he had not been apprised of the relationship when he took over the liaison office. Radford insisted that he'd told Welander of the December 12 meeting with Anderson, just as he'd reported his first dinner at Anderson's home to Robinson.

Investigator Stewart was upset by Radford's claim of having told Robinson of the first dinner, because earlier in the year, when he'd been looking into the sources for those earlier Anderson columns, he

had questioned Robinson, and Robinson had never mentioned that his yeoman was a social acquaintance of the columnist. Once the initial interrogation concluded on December 16, Stewart asked his immediate superior, D. O. Cooke, to call Robinson in San Diego and ask him about this lapse. Cooke made the call, and Robinson verified Radford's story, even remembering that the columnist had met the yeoman through Anderson's parents. But, as Stewart's investigative report concludes, "It was never made quite clear . . . why [Robinson] had not furnished this information during the [earlier] investigation." A year later, Robinson would tell an investigator that he hadn't told Stewart in early 1971 about the Radford-Anderson acquaintance because he had not been specifically asked if he knew anyone acquainted with the columnist.

That afternoon of December 16, Stewart, Young, and the rest of the team asked Radford to take a polygraph examination about his contacts with Anderson. He was willing to do so, believing he would pass with flying colors. Weir and Radford moved to an adjacent office and the yeoman was strapped to the lie detector. What Radford did not consider, and what the investigators did not know, was that an ancillary question about to be asked while Radford was "on the box" would uncover the deeper and more explosive secrets that Radford knew all too well—the extent to which he was spying for the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the president of the United States.