that we really absorbed and attempted to absorb--the attitudes of other intelligence agencies allied to us with equal interest in the country. And therefore, I think, that the intelligence failure was simply that.

Fritz Kraemer, as many may know, is given to--what shall I say--a kind of dramatic and stark pessimism. The time that Fritz sent that letter to me with a number of cables attached, I thought that the Shah was indeed in considerable trouble. The letter said, "Sir, the Shah is in mortal peril." "Mortal peril" struck me as a Kraemerian overstatement.

But, what shall I say, the "indulgent" attitude that was taken by American intelligence up until the time of the Abadan fire and indeed beyond the Abadan fire, was wholly unwarranted, even though one might not agree with Kraemer's immediate and intuitive judgments of this. Intelligence communities, or at least our intelligence community, does not make an intuitive judgment. They look for hard evidence, as they put it. Intuitive people, like Kraemer and those agencies that have fewer resources and have to depend upon shreds of information and lots of intuition, are in a position to make those judgments and those intuitions happen in that case to have been far sounder than any of the hard take that we were getting.

Q: Earlier you said that there were basically two authorities of policy between what you suggested and the State Department position. Comment on the State Department position and your position.

Schlesinger: It was a basic difference in approach. I have raised questions about the appropriateness of the approach of Brzezinski and

myself, even more so because Brzezinski went on and on in January and February when I thought it had become quite irrelevant. The reason that I stress the inappropriateness in retrospect was that none of us had knowledge that, indeed, to borrow Kraemer's phrase, that the Shah was in mortal peril from cancer and that therefore might be physically and psychologically in no position to carry off the actions that history imposed upon him under those circumstances.

Q: Given those alternatives, do you suggest that Carter not make a choice?

Schlesinger: Oh, yes.

Q: Could you a sense of why that was the case, why you decided on that policy? Can you give any hint from his advisers as to what the process was?

Schlesinger: Well, Carter's propensity was to let things sort themselves out. Carter tended to believe in reconciliation, if I can put it that way, and negotiation. If you put Sadat and Begin into the same room, they hammer out a reconciliation of sorts. If you put Energy and Environment in the same room, they hammer out the reconciliation. He was a believer in consensus. It was the way, in part, that he succeeded as governor of Georgia or he felt he succeeded. And he applied these techniques on the international scene to groups and nations to which they were inapplicable. He thought that people could hammer out their differences and that no differences were so

irreconcilable and that therefore the thing to do was to let people mill around and that sooner or later they would bridge their differences. It happened to be a deeply felt faith with Carter. I think that it comes out of his Sunday School tradition, that people of different views through extensive discussion would ultimately come to a measure of agreement. That was part of it.

More on that point and parallel to it, Jimmy Carter had the deficiency, in my judgment and understanding, that he did not understand when there was a hopeless logical contradiction. Carter was a detail man. He never did quite get an overview. If he had more of a capacity to overview, he would say, "What I'm hearing from these fellows and what I'm hearing from these fellows is simply irreconcilable and I'm going to have to decide." He didn't believe in logical irreconcilable differences.

So I think that that's it. Also, as I mentioned, Carter was himself preoccupied with the normalization of China. Throughout this period, the process of the Salt II negotiations were far more important to the United States, quite frankly. He was paying less attention to it. As I say, when I visited him early in January, just prior to the visit in Guadeloupe it was plain that Guadeloupe was much more on his mind that was the development--he gave me a little speech on what was going to happen down in Guadeloupe at the outset of our discussion. It was plainly much more on his mind than what was happening in Iran. So he may not have felt it necessary to focus on it, as well as Carter had great difficulty saying these positions are really irreconcilable.

It was true inside the country. He did not understand, in my judgment, at least, that there were irreconcilable positions within the

country, that they could not be straddled by Barzagan, or for that matter, by a council of elders, or council of notables, that either the throne was going to be sustained by the army or Khomeini was going to take over, and that you didn't have other alternatives.

Q: I don't have any more questions unless there are other comments that you wanted to make.

Schlesinger: I don't that I have. I don't know that I have any concluding remarks. It may well be true, though I did not think of it at the time, and still have doubts about it, that this was a hurricane of revolutionary force that was not going to be suppressed by any measures. That is not my reading in general of lesser states that are leaned upon by great powers, particularly Iran. While it is less plausible that the Shah had the fortitude to pull these things off because of his illness and it is less plausible since you see the outcome in Iran that you cannot foresee in advance, everything in retrospect looks inevitable.

The British historian, [Frederick William] Maitland, said something to the effect--I can't recall his exact phrase--that in looking back we see so many things that are inevitable that as we look to the actual development at the time seemed to the parties quite avoidable. And I think that that should govern our view of these kinds of developments. Now, to be sure, I cited Jaruzelski in Poland. But the Soviet thumb on Poland is clearly much greater than the American thumb on Iran at any time, including 1953. So one should not think of the outcome as inevitable or fore-ordained.

If you want me to, I can get that phrase from Maitland.

In retrospect, I think that the fact that the marshal law that was declared on November 6 was so visible a failure should have told us that the Shah didn't have what was needed. He didn't the will nor the insight to control the situation, and that, as a consequence of that failure, the thing was pretty hopeless and that the United States indeed should have moved, if you can imagine a compromise position between what I and Brzezinski were saying and between what the State and George Ball were saying, that we should have moved early. We should have obtained the knowledge about the Shah's cancer and moved early to replace the Shah with his son, that we could no longer pull, that the replacement of the Shah might have deflected the anger of some of the groups that had traditionally been supportive of monarchy or had good reason to support the monarchy. I refer particularly to the middle class and to the bazaar. And there might have been a wave of enthusiasm for the replacement, particularly if you had taken the ringleaders away just prior to that and limited Khomeini's communications with the country. But that the Shah himself couldn't pull it off any longer, that we probably should have recognized that late in November, early December. And the results of marshal law partly through the Shah's error of choice and partly through the Shah's ambivalence about marshal law, that the Shah didn't have it, that indeed he had to be replaced, not by this "council of elders" stuff--although that might have been a useful ancillary. One would have had to make the new, young Shah central to the hopes and to have him give some speeches that would have stirred hope for the regime and that might have calmed the streets. In retrospect, I think that that

was the only hope to head it off.

As to my own role, I regret that I was sufficiently self-preoccupied with other matters that was unable seriously to get engaged until it was almost too late but not too late. It was plain that the Shah was getting into some trouble by the summer, really was in trouble by the fall. I followed the intelligence with some interest but I never got involved seriously. The Shah would have benefited from some very clear guidance from the United States early on. He always felt the United States was ambivalent and indeed the United States was ambivalent. He was right. In the spring, I think that the kinds of gestures that were made in December, January of 1978 and 1979, attempts to transform the regime, to make it more open, to restore the constitution of 1906, in the spring, well before you had all of the events that followed Abadan, that that too, that reconciliation rather than the iron fist, might have worked. By the fall, it was too late because the public had the bit in the teeth.

Q: But even if the Shah conceded that, even if he had not been sick, would he have conceded, even if he had been healthy would he have been the kind who would have ceded power? Under the circumstances?

Schlesinger: It was very, very doubtful. He would have had to have been pressed very hard by the Americans. But, you see, the Shah, who could be so opinionated and arrogant argued when there was no trouble, could be a very indecisive man in the face of adversity. He had to be carried through in 1953 by the Americans. And throughout 1978, he was looking for guidance and I think it's plausible that if we had taken a

very firm line which is, "Your Majesty, you've got two choices: restore the constitution, call the Majles, make yourself in effect the leader of the establishment of a limited monarchy or, alternatively, you are going to have to sooner or later, crack down. You cannot pussyfoot." He might well have taken that advice.

Great Marxist historians like [George] Plekhanov tell us that it's social events rather than individuals that make history, but social events form the individuals. And one can argue on behalf of Plekhanov's views of that subject that both the United States and Iran were in that crisis plagued by indecision and indeed by leaders indecisive that they wanted it both ways. And more precisely,

Q: Thank you very much for your time.

[end of interview session two]