

COUNTERPOINT - the U-2 story

NARRATOR: Selmer Nilsen, Norwegian fisherman.

One-time spy for Russia.

NILSEN: I looked upon it as a job, even if it was forced on me.

Looking back on those days, if I had the choice, I would never start that job again.

NARRATOR: Francis Gary Powers, pilot.

One-time spy for the United States.

POWERS: Well, I was the one that got caught, I was the one that embarrassed the President, I was the one that embarrassed the CIA, which was in no way my fault, that I could see.

NARRATOR: Frank Powers and Selmer Nilsen never met. But at a certain point in time, the work of one became the work of the other, and contributed to the most sensational spy case of the Cold War - the U-2 incident.

TITLE: COUNTERPOINT.

Text: A number of the scenes portrayed in this film are reconstructions.

DICK WHITTINGTON, KGLI RADIO PERSONALITY:...and speaking of Francis Gary, the reason that he's up there flying around in that stupid airplane, brought to us this time by the Chevrolet Motor Division, is to tell us what's going on in the traffic - Frankie babe!

POWERS: The San Diego southbound is very heavy through Sepulveda Pass from Valley Vista all the way over to Maraga Drive.

NARRATOR: Frank Powers does not have a regular job. A first-class flier, he is now occasionally a traffic pilot over the Los Angeles Freeway. He once flew higher than anyone had ever been before, and reported on a different kind of traffic.

(Music, Carval Ice-cream theme.)

NARRATOR: Selmer Nilsen lives on an isolated fjord in northernmost Norway.

No-one else lives here. Nilsen grew up an outcast. Years ago, after Nilsen's parents came here, his father was suspected of murdering someone in the fjord. The authorities cleared him,

NILSEN: ...but the people around here, in northern Norway, they sentenced him, and that has since then branded our whole family. When I went to school, the other kids called me "murderer". You felt yourself to be innocent. But you grew bitter against society for that reason.

NARRATOR: Frank Powers' childhood was scarred by the Depression.

POWERS: Most of my years were spent in south-western Virginia, in the coal-mining area, in fact my father worked in a coal-mine, very primitive working conditions. The coal-mines in those days, in the Depression years, wouldn't work a full week. I remember my Dad would send me to the Company Store that they had there to see the sign, it said either, Yes, there was work today, or, No work today, and you didn't know sometimes from one day to the next whether you would work the next day or not. And anyone who wanted to do anything else had to leave the area, and the Service got me out, out of the mines.

When the War started in the early Forties - I was in High School during most of this time - we used to hear the bombers flying over, and of course, all the kids in an area like that, never having had *the*

opportunity to see an airplane at close range, were interested in what kind they were, and we'd run to the windows to observe and look.

The War years changed everything quite a bit, because industry picked up. My Dad went to Detroit, Michigan, to work in one of the defense plants. There was all the work that anyone needed at that time, and he'd work as much as 16 hours a day - he was very eager because of the earlier life that he'd led where a job was hard to come by.

NARRATOR: Powers has a vivid recollection of his first flight, when he was about 13 years old.

POWERS: My Dad stopped at an airport because I begged him to. He was afraid to let me go, I wasn't afraid to go. I was tremendously excited, my knees were shaking, and the instructor, the pilot, thought I was afraid, but this wasn't the case, I was just so thrilled at doing this, the thrill to me was just being up in the air, and I think I've experienced that the rest of my life.

NARRATOR: For Powers, the War meant getting out of the Depression; his strongest memory of those years is of a five-minute airplane ride. For Nilsen, the experience of war was a direct one, which started with the German invasion of Norway.

At this time, Selmer Nilsen was only an 11-year old boy. But what happened in the War affected his whole life.

NILSEN: In 1940, the Germans occupied Norway, our country, and in 1941, Russian agents came here, to my parents' house, and my parents started to work for the Allies, that is to say, against Germany.

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I didn't really understand what it was all about - I knew that the Russians were here, although I was only a little boy, and my father and the family, they collected information for the Russians about German activities, U-boats, airplanes, and everything like that. They had to be ready to help the Allied fleet, the convoys that went to Murmansk with weapons and ammunition.

NARRATOR: Murmansk is 200 miles by sea from the Nilsens' fjord. Such information as the Nilsens and the Russian agents were able to transmit to Russia was vital to the British convoys that took the most dangerous route of the War to supply their Russian allies.

Because of frequent surprise raids by the Germans, the Russian agents could not live all the time in the Nilsens' home.

NILSEN: They lived out here in the winter time, when it was difficult to get into the mountains because of the snow. They had to live as near the sea as possible, so that there wouldn't be any tracks in the snow after them. There, right where those sea-gulls are, that's the cave where they used to keep the radio transmitter that they used to send messages to Russia with.

One time, I remember, an ordinary fishing-smack arrived with Germans on board, on a raid here, and you can see that it's about a hundred yards from here to the jetty, and the Germans didn't show themselves on deck until the boat was at the jetty, and they started running towards the house. And the Russians

were sitting down and having dinner with us, at the table.

So they didn't have time to run up into the mountains, so we just had to hide them, put them down in the cellar there.

But the trap-door can be seen, and so that it shouldn't be seen, my mother took a wooden wash--basin and put it on top of the trap-door to hide it. And then they took some clean clothes and threw them into the basin, and started to wash them. And the Germans came in and searched the house, but they didn't find anything, because she was standing there washing clothes. So it was alright that time. They found absolutely nothing.

The Germans burnt the whole of northern Norway in the Autumn of '44, and we had to run away to the mountains, and live in those mud huts, and the Russian agents went back, back home to Russia. And a couple of my relatives went with them, over there. Because they joined the fight against Germany.

NARRATOR: Nilsen's relatives went to Murmansk, and helped the Red Army that liberated northern Norway.

NILSEN: And then, in 1945, when peace came, we came back from the mountains, and started to rebuild, and settle down again, and tried to lead a normal life again.

NARRATOR: At the end of the War, those Norwegians who had betrayed Norway were called to account. One of them, Quisling, bequeathed his name as a universal term for a man who betrays his country. Nilsen returned from fishing-school, and took up the life of a fisherman. And then, in 1948...

NILSEN: ...3 years after the War, a Russian agent who had been here during

the War came back to the fjord. And he wanted to take someone back with him to Russia. He just demanded that someone should go with him. And what led up to this must have been, well, that my brother and my brother-in-law, who were over there during the War, what they may have signed or promised, I don't know.

NARRATOR: The Russian agent said that Germany was going to be re-armed, and he needed their help.

The family held a meeting in their cottage, and gave in to the Russian's threats. Selmer was chosen, and was asked if he would agree to go to Russia.

NILSEN: I was rather young at the time - yea, I said, that's OK with me. There was no talk about what I was supposed to do there, no, I was just going to go to a school. But what kind of a school, and what I was going to do there, they didn't say anything about, at home here.

I must say, I didn't realize what it was all about.

NARRATOR: Nilsen collected a few belongings together, and went on board the Russian boat anchored outside the fjord, and was taken to Murmansk. He was 17 years old.

NILSEN: And once I was there, there was not much point in protesting. I was all alone over there. And so I went to this school, I had a cook, and an interpreter, a teacher in radio transmission, a language teacher, and a teacher in politics, to start with. But then I told them, Politics, I don't want anything to do with that - and they accepted that at once.



NARRATOR: Without politics, Nilsen was trained to be a spy.

NILSEN: And while I was going to this school, I wasn't allowed to do anything myself, absolutely not, everything was arranged, I was exactly like a little king there. Everything I pointed to, I got. Everything I asked for was given to me. I was very well treated.

NARRATOR: About the time Nilsen got home from Russia, in April, 1949, NATO - in which Norway was the northern bastion - was formed.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN: There are those who claim that this treaty is an aggressive act on the part of the nations which ring the North Atlantic. That is absolutely untrue.

NARRATOR: Russia, nevertheless, felt herself threatened.

Nilsen, now a trained radio operator, had instructions to keep in radio contact with Russia.

POWERS: When I was a senior in college, a team of Air Force people came around, recruiting people for pilot-training. I took the test, because I was still interested in flying, although I hadn't been up again in a plane since that time when I was about 13-14 years old, this was when I was 20.

NARRATOR: The Korean War, which started in 1950, confirmed the dangers of the Cold War, and froze each side in its fear of the other.

POWERS: In those days, there was much more of an anti-Communist feeling than there is today, and I feel, and I know that most of the pilots that I talked with felt, that it was the a very patriotic thing to go to Korea and fight, this was, well, stopping Communist aggression, and I had no qualms about it whatsoever,

in fact, I was looking forward to going over, because I wanted to - what do you say - try yourself in combat. I had never done this, and I wanted to see how I would react, actually. In a good cause, of course.

NARRATOR: Frank Powers was prevented from proving his patriotism in the Korean War by an appendicitis operation.

Motivated primarily by their war-time experiences, the Nilsens had assisted the Russians against what they feared would be a resurgence of German militarism. But in 1952, Selmer Nilsen's father decided that the family must stop this spying business. So he took his boat and went over to Russia, and told the Russians he would have no more to do with it, he wasn't going to use his boat for them anymore, or help them in other ways.

NILSEN: I thought it was a good thing, a brave thing, to do, to go over there. So the Russians said to him, Well, you can quit. And then the Russians took me by myself in another boat, and told me that they had put too much money into me for them to let me go. And my father, and the rest of the family, thought it was all over.

NARRATOR: And then, in 1953, Selmer Nilsen signed a contract to work for the Russians.

NILSEN: Not against my own country, but against Nato, foreigners. And in return, they would never bother the family again. And as far as I know, they stuck to their part of the bargain, and I of course stuck to my part.

NARRATOR: In 1956, Francis Gary Powers, now a lieutenant in the United



States Air Force, was recruited to work for the Central Intelligence Agency.

POWERS: The CIA, I had heard of it before this, I knew what its purpose was, I knew what they did, but they were a very little known organization at the time, and I probably knew as much or as little as anyone else, I knew hardly anything about it, except that I knew it was a highly secret intelligence-gathering organization. They had this plan with a new plane to do espionage over the Soviet Union.

NARRATOR: This plane was the Utility 2-the U-2. Developed by Kelly Johnson of Lockheed, it was intended to fill an important gap in US intelligence.

Coming under the CIA, the U-2 was given a civilian cover, that of weather research.

Stripped of every non-essential feature, including wheels, it was designed for only one purpose: to carry photographic and electronic spy equipment to a very high altitude, beyond the reach of aircraft and rockets. It could fly in excess of 80,000 ft.

POWERS: I still think it's one of the best planes ever made, it was just a tremendous thrill to be able to look down at the earth far below, and actually early in the mornings, with the sun just coming up, you could see the curvature of the earth out on the horizon, and it was just beautiful. Earlier in the program, flying this, it was thrilling to know that you were doing something that no-one else had ever done, except a very few people who flew this particular airplane. Each flight broke an altitude record.

NARRATOR: To fly this plane, you had to be a top-class pilot.

Powers was paid \$30,000 a year, which was not bad for a miner's son. The work itself was as exhausting as hewing coal - up to 12 hours in a pressure suit, unable to move, and losing 3-5 lbs. a flight from dehydration alone. Plus the risk of an accident, or being shot down. Nilsen's work could be equally exhausting. He made several trips to Russia, to report and pick up instructions, and these were made in ~~an open~~ a tiny open boat that sat low in the waves, thus avoiding detection by the radar of Norwegian coastal defenses. The long journey to Murmansk took 2 to 3 days, and Nilsen ~~did~~ did not dare to sleep.

The first flight of a U-2 over the Soviet Union took place in 1956. It was tracked by radar, but neither Russian planes nor Russian rocket defenses could reach it. The Russians made an official protest. They made no protest after that because it was humiliating to admit publicly that the plane was beyond their reach.

Painted black to avoid reflections from the sun, the Russians called it "The Black Lady of Espionage".

POWERS: I knew that flying this U-2 airplane without permission over the Soviet Union was spying, I knew that it was. But I really don't think that in the true sense of the word "spy" that I ever considered myself a spy. I was a pilot flying an airplane, and it just so happened that where I was flying made what I was doing spying.

I felt that it was a very necessary thing, and I was very proud of my country for having, I guess the word is, the guts to do this, because I had felt, and a lot of people had felt, that we had not been responding the way that we should have responded to threats from the Communist nations, such as Korea, and so forth, and when I found out that we were, I was very proud.

NARRATOR: But the U-2 was used not only to spy on enemy countries: in 1956, Frank Powers overflew Cyprus to check on British preparations to attack Egypt; a Norwegian general visiting Washington was shown highly detailed aerial photographs of his country's defenses. A U-2 unit was ousted from Britain when it was discovered that it was not only for reporting on the weather; but while in the air, the U-2 could go anywhere with apparent impunity. It's nickname was "the Super-Snooper".

Allen Dulles, Director of the CIA, considered the U-2 his most effective tool in the Cold War.

But in order to be most effective, it had to have bases overseas.

In Europe, these bases were in the Nato countries.

As his cover, Selmer Nilsen chose a traveling funfair, and the Russians paid for it. It was perfect, because in Norway, a country of small towns, everyone came to the fair - especially bored servicemen.

NILSEN: I could move around more freely, travel from one spot to another, change towns according to which town I was told to go to.

NARRATOR: The most important town on Nilsen's tour was the port of Bodø. This was a small Norwegian fishing town that had been transformed by Nato into an important air-base and military HQ. Boats and aircraft crewed by Nato personnel called here regularly.

The military airfield, which is also the civilian, is situated right on the edge of town.

Nilsen had a system. He always stayed at the best hotel, got to know visiting Nato officers, and arranged parties for them where he supplied the liquor and the girls.

NILSEN: I would always take two rooms. In one room we had parties, these I had girls and officers, but they could never get into this room, with the radio equipment, here I had the transmitter, here I had the code, here I worked. I stretched the antenna with tape up to the ceiling, and put the receiver down on the floor...and never let anyone come in and clean up, you just pay them, and they won't come in. It was just fun to see that it worked, it was possible, you could do it, it could be done.

Like they used to say around here, "When Selmer and the Yanks get in town, there will be some fun, they throw their money around."

NARRATOR: In 1959, Nilsen went over to Russia again. There, Russian intelligence told him that they were interested in a particular plane...

NILSEN: And as we were talking together, I and my bosses, they said that they didn't believe that this plane landed in Norway - but anyway, I had to be on the look-out.

NARRATOR: And that was to be his special assignment from then on.

NILSEN: After I had been to Bodø on one of my usual party rounds, trips with the funfare, I found out that that was the case, there was some secrecy about a certain aircraft, about one aircraft.

NARRATOR: This was at the time when the Soviet Union began to test nuclear devices inside the Polar Circle.

Norway was the nearest Nato country to the testing-ground, and so it was logical that the Americans would want to set up a base there - with or without the permission of the Norwegian government. And Powers believes that his group was the first U-2 group in Norway.

POWERS: I took a U-2 into Norway in 1958. There were some flights made out of there - I don't know where they went, because I didn't fly one of those, I just brought the plane in.

I really enjoyed this visit to Norway, at Bodø. We did stay there long enough - the weather was bad so that we couldn't fly, and we stayed there long enough so that we did get a chance to see some of the country and the fjords, and it was beautiful.

NARRATOR: The Norwegian Government later denied all knowledge of the U-2 flights into Norway. Because of Norway's vulnerable position with regard to Russia, she has always been careful not to provoke Russia, and even as a member of Nato, Norway would not allow foreign troops to be permanently based on her soil.

In some ways, Selmer Nilssen knew more about the activities of friendly nations on Norwegian soil than did the Norwegian Government at that time.

NILSEN: At a party with some girls and American Air Force officers, I got hold of a picture. The picture was taken from behind the wing-span, and forwards, and there were a couple of officers standing there, three in front of it; and I got that from a girl, and she had taken it from an American pilot, she told me. And then I got it sent over, by means of a secret postbox that I had. And when the Russians got the picture, and it was sure that the U-2 landed in Bodø, there



was a big state of emergency set in motion, and I had to do anything to find out when it arrived in Bodø, when it took off, what time, all kinds of things.

NARRATOR: The CIA men lived on a semi-permanent basis at the same hotel frequented by Nilsen, and he got to know them. When a U-2 flight was expected, the ground personnel were at the airport, and there were armed guards around the U-2 hangar. These guards were Americans, not Norwegians. On at least one occasion, they fired on a Norwegian officer who came too close to the hangar. In the harbor, there was a tanker that carried special fuel for the U-2. Nilsen was able to supply Russian Intelligence with full information on U-2 flights into and out of Bodø.

NILSEN: They \_\_\_\_\_ used to stay at this hotel! But here, at this hotel, for example, when we had parties, we always knew where the pilots came from, for the girls kept on asking, "Where will you be tomorrow?" with tears in their eyes, "Where will you be tomorrow?" Well, then they might say, "Tomorrow I'll be in Germany," "Tomorrow I'll be in Turkey." And that's good, isn't it, then you knew at once who was who.

NARRATOR: In the year 1959-60, a year of maximum activity out of Bodø, Nilsen's entertainment allowance from the Russians was \$5,000. Powers was in Norway only once, and he and the other U-2 personnel stayed at the air-base at Bodø, and he had no knowledge of Nilsen's activities. Powers' U-2 unit, known as the 10-10, was at this time based in Adana, in Turkey. There were 7 pilots in this group, whose main task was to make short-range penetrations into Soviet territory, under directions from a Central Intelligence Agency officer.



POWERS: We'd been doing this for a while, and I felt that the Soviets had become better able to do something about it, and I asked the Intelligence Officer what we should do if we were accidentally shot down, or if we accidentally went down. His exact words were that, "If you're captured, you may as well tell them everything, because they'll get it out of you anyway", and he led me to believe that there would be torture and this type of activity.

The Intelligence Officer also indicated that they - the Soviet Union - probably knew more about what we were doing, and each of the pilots and the people involved than we did ourselves.

NARRATOR: Nilsen used to store his funfare things in a barn near Bodø airfield.

NILSEN: Do you see that window up there? You can look out over the airfield, with a camera, straight down into the airfield. Inside that hill, they hid the U-2. When the Russians realized how close I could get to the hangar, they asked me if I could put a bomb on board the U-2 over there, but I said, No, it couldn't be done.

NARRATOR: For the Americans, there was a sense of urgency about the U-2 flights now. May, 1960, was to see the Paris Summit Conference between Eisenhower, Khrushchev, de Gaulle, and MacMillan. An East-West detente was expected. If this came about, in all probability U-2 flights over the Soviet Union would be stopped, for good. Therefore, the CIA considered the weeks prior to that meeting to be probably the last opportunity to gather vital information by means of the U-2.

In addition, the summer fogs would soon be hiding much of northern Russia from even the U-2. It was now or never.

A flight across the whole of Russia was ordered.

Because of a breakdown in communications, the message to proceed with the flight was relayed from Germany to Turkey over an open telephone line.

POWERS: It was a violation of security, just the way it was received. And if they were monitoring these telephone calls, they might have known my take-off time before I did, actually.

NARRATOR: But the Russians probably did not know the U-2's destination. That was the job of agents like Nilsen.

NILSEN: In 1960, at the end of April, I got orders from Russia that I had to go and get in position and watch out, (because the U-2 was supposed to come.

NARRATOR: Nilsen kept watch from an old German bunker. Also waiting down below on Bodø airfield were the American ground-crew from the CIA. By means of the transmitter that he set up, Nilsen could confirm directly to the Russians that a U-2 was expected.

Now in Pakistan, Frank Powers was scheduled to land in Bodø after flying across the entire Russian heartland. This particular flying date was postponed twice; for the first time, Powers learnt that each flight had to be approved by the White House itself.

It was now the First of May, 1960. In Moscow's Red Square, the Russians were celebrating their great day with the customary military parade. If the Americans had planned this flight as an insult, they could not have chosen a more appropriate day.

Frank Powers finally got the go-ahead. His plane was an unlucky one - it had recently crashed in Japan.

POWERS: We had a minimum altitude that we could penetrate the Russian border, I got to that altitude, gave two clicks that everything was OK, and I was going on, and then radio silence from that moment on. Headed across the border with

the usual apprehension that one has, you know, crossing this imaginary line, and then once you get across nothing happens, you settle down and do your job.

**NARRATOR:** Powers' job was to switch on his camera and electronic monitoring apparatus at certain points on his line of flight; over airfields, industrial complexes, rocket sites. Roughly halfway on his journey, as he neared Sverdlovsk -

**POWERS:** This big explosion took place, and the explosion I'm sure was behind and to the right of the airplane, but I don't know where back there, I didn't feel an impact against the aircraft, all I felt was a sudden acceleration like that, it just set me back in my seat.

You have to imagine that this thing is spinning very violently, no wings and no tail, around this heavy engine with the nose like this, this threw me out over it, and laying along the nose of this airplane, with my feet still partly in the cockpit, from my hips out, laying across the windshield outside. So, in struggling to try to get back to my destruct switches, so that I could activate those, I just flew out into space, and it felt exactly as if I were floating. It was a very pleasant sensation, maybe it was just the relief to get out of the plane, but I've never felt anything like it in my life.

**NARRATOR:** Powers, a spy pilot falling defenseless into the heart of Russia, was taken prisoner.

**NILSEN:** Then in the morning, I got a message through my transmitter that I could just - no plane would come & I could just go home. So I packed up my things, and went home. And on the way home, I heard on the

radio that it had been shot down.

**NARRATOR:** In Moscow, on May 5, the Supreme Soviet met. It was only two weeks before the Paris Summit, where Khrushchev and Eisenhower were to meet. In his speech, Khrushchev announced that an unmarked plane that proved to belong to the United States had been shot down over Soviet territory. Khrushchev asked, Was this an attempt to sabotage the Paris Summit? He ended with a threat: "He who comes with the sword shall perish by the sword."

Each U-2 plane was fitted with a self-destruct mechanism, and pilots had orders to use this if forced down over Russian territory; each pilot was also issued with a poisoned needle which he could use to avoid torture. The Americans therefore assumed that it was unlikely that Powers had survived, or that much of the plane was left intact. So they gave out their prepared cover story:

**LINCOLN WHITE:** ...an unnamed plane, a U-2 weather research plane, based at Adana, Turkey, piloted by a civilian has been missing since May 1. During the flight of this plane, the pilot reported difficulty with his oxygen equipment. Mr. Khrushchev has announced that a U.S. plane has been shot down over the USSR on that date. It may be that this was the missing plane. It is entirely possible that having a failure in the oxygen equipment which could result in the pilot losing consciousness, the plane continued on automatic pilot for a considerable distance and accidentally violated Soviet air space. The United States is taking this matter up with the Soviet Government with particular reference to the fate of the pilot.

NARRATOR: In reply, Gromyko, the Russian Foreign Minister, commented:

"Perhaps the crews of all American planes lose consciousness when they cross the border. This must really be a problem for medical science."

Then, brandishing his proof, Khrushchev exploded his bombshell: the pilot of the airplane was alive and kicking, and the Russians had the plane's wreckage. The pilot worked for the CIA, and this had been a routine spy-flight. Khrushchev showed photos of strategic sites taken by the U-2 over Russian territory.

The Americans saw that they had no choice but to admit the truth. They justified it in terms of the Cold War.

EISENHOWER: No-one wants another Pearl Harbor. This means that we must have knowledge of military forces and preparations around the world, especially those capable of massive surprise attack. Secrecy in the Soviet Union makes this essential.

NARRATOR: Eisenhower's pre-occupation with the comparative invulnerability of the Soviet Union to spying, contrasting strongly with the openness of American society, had led him to propose the Open Skies policy of tolerated spy flights over both countries to avoid surprise attack. Khrushchev had rejected this proposal out of hand. It is possible that Eisenhower ordered the U-2 flight of May the First to convince Khrushchev to change his mind.

EISENHOWER: I shall bring up the Open Skies proposal in Paris as a means of ending concealment and suspicion. My final point is that we must not be distracted from the real issues of today by what is an incident, or a symptom, of the world situation today. The emphasis given a



flight of an unarmed non-military plane can only reflect a fetish of secrecy.

NARRATOR: The Russians pressed their advantage by taking the U-2 case to the world forum of the United Nations.

GEOMYKO: ...the United States Government was compelled publicly to disavow this lying version - and I wish to repeat that, to disavow the lying version it had launched, and was forced to confess to pursuing a pirate-like policy of systematic intrusion into the air-space of the Soviet Union.

NARRATOR: The United States had undeniably been caught in a lie, and its President in conniving in that lie. It was a major triumph for Khrushchev's strategy, but it brought about a world crisis of major dimensions, and relations between the USSR and the USA stagnated for a decade.

In Moscow, the U-2 Exhibition opened.

VOX POP:  
New York My feeling is that the country did the right thing in sending these planes over, because we have to keep abreast of the Russians as far as information is concerned, and our people in this country back up their leaders 100%.

SOLDIER:  
New York Maybe the American public will finally realize that we're in a Cold War, and if such incidents as this shooting down of a plane continues, we'll be in a hot one.

NARRATOR: Khrushchev proclaimed that unless the spy-flights stopped, he would annihilate the bases whence they came. He included Norway in his threat.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think about it?  
New York



WOMAN: I only can say what were were told in church yesterday, we should pray for that boy. He needs it.

POWERS: This was a crime punishable by anything up to and including death.

NARRATOR: Powers had this thought constantly on his mind during his 4 months' long solitary confinement.

POWERS: I think there's a purpose to this, you can get so lonely that you welcome one of the interrogation sessions, so that you can talk to someone, even though you know he's trying to pry information from you. And they'd probably done this enough to maybe know that people would talk more in a case like this, I don't know what the psychology behind it is, but I know it's a horrible thing, you become your own worst enemy.

NEWSREEL TITLE: KRUSCHEV RESURRECTS THE COLD WAR.

NEWSREEL: President Eisenhower arrives unruffled by Premier Krushchev's propaganda blasts, but as President de Gaulle says goodbye to Ike, the world learns that the American accused Krushchev of trying to wreck the Conference, a charge that followed another 40-minute tirade by Krushchev in which he again insulted President Eisenhower and withdrew his invitation to Ike to visit Russia, after the brutal torpedoing of the Big Four Paris Summit Conference by Russia's Premier Krushchev, a man who seemingly is unimpressed by the seriousness of the situation he has created. Though he continues to hack - a feat he's become expert at when he can bury his verbal hatchet in anyone opposing his dictates. Again the shadow of the Kremlin conspirators threatens the light of the Free World.

NARRATOR: Krushchev still had one trump card to play: his captured U-2 pilot.

POWERS: I felt that by talking to them as freely as I could, tell them the absolute truth about everything that they knew about, I could establish a basis of truthfulness, so when it did come to a sensitive something that I didn't want to tell them about, I could lie, and they would believe me. And this worked fairly well. But there was still this threat of torture. And I felt that if I were tortured, that any information they wanted, I might give - I didn't know how I would react to torture, so that if I could prevent this any way, then I had to do it, because I had some information they could have used.

NARRATOR: To his surprise, Frank Powers was not tortured. The Russians wanted to put him on trial before the world, and for that they needed him in good bodily health. The Moscow trial was well attended by the world's press. Powers' parents attended, and much was made of the fact that Powers' father had been a coal-miner, and thence a proletarian. He refused to accept money from the CIA to pay for the journey. Two American lawyers attended as observers. They were paid by the CIA to try and see Powers and find out if possible how the U-2 was brought down, and how much Powers had given away.

The first day of the trial was Frank Powers' birthday.

POWERS: It's been I think aptly described as a showcase trial, because it was a show. They knew every answer I would make. They staged the trial so that the proper answers would be made at the proper time. Each session ended with me or them or someone saying a headline thing, so that the Press could get it out right away. It was a very well directed show, there's no doubt about this. In a situation like that,

even the Defense have lines that they have to follow. They cannot defend the way that we defend in the United States. Anything can be done here that will help the client; there, if you do anything, then you're as guilty as he is.

NARRATOR: At the end of the trial, Frank Powers made a plea to the Russian people. Much of this plea was drafted by Powers' Russian Defense lawyer to comply with Russian Law.

POWERS: You have heard all the evidence of the case, and you must decide what my punishment is to be.

I realize that I have committed a grave crime, and I realize that I must be punished for it.

I ask the Court to weigh all the evidence and take into consideration not only the fact that I committed the crime, but also the circumstances which led me to do it.

I also ask the Court to take into consideration the fact that no secret information reached its destination. It all fell into the hands of the Soviet authorities.

I realize the Russian people think of me as an enemy. I can understand that, but I would like to stress the fact that I do not feel, nor have I ever felt any enmity whatsoever for the Russian people. I plead to the Court to judge me not as an enemy, but as a human being who is not a personal enemy of the Russian people, who has never had any charges brought against him in any court, and who is deeply repentant and profoundly sorry for what he has done.

Thank you.

POWERS: The Prosecutor didn't ask for death, and that made me feel good, because I felt that if he didn't ask for it, they probably wouldn't give it. But when the judges came back, and said that I was sentenced to 10 years, the first 3 in prison, and the next 7 in a labor camp, I was - I felt a tremendous sense of relief, because I knew, or I felt almost positive, that I would be made an example of, I would be shot - and I felt a relief for, oh, a few minutes, and then suddenly it dawned on me that 10 years was one-third of my life that I'd already lived - and that was a long time. And then I became very despondent.

NARRATOR: Shortly after Powers' trial, Nilsen made one of his customary trips to Russia. This time, after promoting him, the Russians threw a party in his honor, to celebrate the downing of the U-2...

NILSEN: ...a really big party. I had of course my part in the party - let's put it that way (laugh). And then, at this party, one of the officers explained to me that the U-2 had not been shot down - they had managed to put a bomb in the tail-part, in such a way that it exploded exactly over Russian territory.

NARRATOR: If the U-2 was brought down by a bomb, then Nilsen's information to the Russians concerning the U-2's destination was // probably crucial, for it confirmed that the plane would be passing over Russian territory, and so a bomb would bring it down inside the USSR. A U-2 downed outside Soviet territory was worse than useless to the Russians for their intelligence or propoganda purposes.

From the Russian point of view, it was all to their advantage to have the world, and especially the Americans, think that the plane had been shot down by a rocket. It meant that all ~~future~~ U-2 flights over

Russia had to stop from that moment on.

Frank Powers spent 18 months of his 10 year sentence in a Russian prison. He was released by the Russians in exchange for the master-spy Colonel Abel, who had been caught some years before by the Americans. But now Frank Powers felt himself to be a prisoner of the CIA, while he underwent extensive debriefing.

POWERS: I didn't realize exactly what was going to happen, but one of the first questions was, Did I have a secret Swiss bank account? And another was, Had I done anything in the Soviet Union that I might be blackmailed for? So it was obvious that they were trying to find out if - oh, and they also wanted to know if I was a double agent, this type of thing. And, er - that was just a very small part of it, but it was enough to make one angry, because the insinuation was there.

NARRATOR: In the Cold War atmosphere that prevailed, Powers was a controversial figure. His loyalty, in the eyes of many, was in doubt. He was used by much of the Press as a scapegoat for the major embarrassment that the U-2 affair had been to national pride. Why had he not committed suicide with the poison thoughtfully provided by the CIA? Why had he not operated the self-destruct switches on the plane? What had he given away to the Russians? Above all, could he be trusted, or had he been brainwashed? Powers was summoned to Washington to attend Senate hearings on the U-2 affair. He was cleared of all blame by the Senate Committee: but the questions continued.

NEWS REPORTER: Would you do anything different at your trial?

POWERS: Well, it's very easy to see things now that could have been done differently.

NEWS REPORTER: What would you have done differently?

POWERS: I'd have to think more about this...I don't know...I think that...

well, I followed instructions, and I would follow instructions again.

NEWS REPORTER: Are you satisfied with your behavior?

POWERS: Yes.

NARRATOR: Powers was finally allowed to return to his family. He was given a desk job with the Central Intelligence Agency in Washington.

But he still wanted to fly...

Then Kelly Johnson, the originator of the U-2, offered Powers a job - as a test pilot on the U-2, with Lockheed in California.

The text reads: "To Gary Powers - in appreciation for many jobs well done - over the USA and Russia, signed, Kelly Johnson.

Frank Powers' future, doing the job he loved, seemed secure.

From his isolated home in northern Norway, Selmer Nilssen worked for 7 more years after the U-2 affair, 19 years in all, without getting caught. On Nato manoeuvres, military security located a radio transmitter in the fjord, and made a surprise raid by helicopter.

NILSEN: And during their search, they found an old code book behind a picture, that I had hidden and forgotten about. And when I told them that it was mine, they wouldn't believe me. No, no, no, it wasn't mine. So they didn't suspect me at all, neither the police, nor the military.

NARRATOR: When the military were about to leave, Nilssen asked for a lift to Hammerfest, to take his mother's sewing-machine in for repair. This was a test. The sewing-machine case was big enough to hold his transmitter: but no-one looked inside.

They suspected above all his relatives who had been to Russia during the War.

NILSEN? They looked upon me as a clown, an idiot, a drunk, without the



intelligence to be a spy.

NARRATOR: The Russians offered Nilsen the chance of going to live in Russia, before it was too late, but he refused. Shortly after, he was finally caught, perhaps because he wanted to be. He was tired of the game. After a secret trial, Nilsen was given a jail sentence of 7 years. He had to make a vow of silence concerning the trial proceedings. But his U-2 activities were ~~not~~ brought up at the trial, possibly because the whole business was still an embarrassment to the Norwegian authorities.

POWERS: The CIA has influenced my life a great deal, even before, but ever since I got back, and supposedly, you know, not working for them, in fact I was not working for them to my knowledge, I was supposed to have been working for Lockheed, but yet they still, through contact with Lockheed, controlled what I did and what I said, they tried to keep me from writing a story for a long time, and of course I went along with it, thinking that I wouldn't want to do anything that would harm my government.

NARRATOR: While awaiting permission from the CIA, Powers delayed writing his book, "Operation Overflight", with a great sense of injustice. He waited several years.

POWERS: Because of all the bad publicity that I received, I felt that maybe I should tell my side of the story. Finally, I just went up to them and said, Well, I'm going to write a book. My book was published May 1, 1970, 10 years after I was shot down. Actually, by doing this, I might have caused myself a little trouble.

NARRATOR: Powers had worked for Lockheed's Kelly Johnson for over 7 years.

Suddenly, he found himself jobless.

POWERS: When I was let go from Lockheed, Kelly Johnson told me that the CIA had not come through with another 3 months' pay for me, so he had to let me go. Well, he says that he didn't fire me, but when he asked me if I could be gone the next day, I assumed that this was being fired. They don't want people to write a book - that is the reason, apparently, that I'm finding difficulty getting a job. They're showing everyone else that "Maybe you shouldn't do this..."

NARRATOR: Around the time Powers left Lockheed, Nilsen was released early from prison on grounds of ill health, and returned home.

NILSEN: I was 17 years old when I started out to work as a spy. And the whole time I was not free, I was continually under pressure, and felt threatened. But when I came out in '69, then for the first time I felt like a free man. My neighbors treat me OK. What they are thinking underneath, that of course I don't know.

NARRATOR: Last year, Nilsen was beaten up in a nearby village. He says they were jealous of [redacted] the success of his salmon-fishing business. Maybe they considered him a Quisling.

As a result, he lost his right eye.

NARRATOR: Powers seems even more firmly trapped by the past than Nilsen. He seems doomed to act out his role in the U-2 affair over and over again. The Press, Powers' old enemy, remembers him from time to time, to ask: "Whatever became of Frankis Gary Powers?" - and then the tone is usually mockery.

In self-defense, Frank Powers offers himself as an after-dinner talker on the incident that changed his life.

POWERS: My story will be my side of the U-2 story. And it's quite a bit different from what was carried in the Press about 10-12 years ago. Several people in our Press criticized me for, as they said, spilling my guts or talking too much. They didn't try to find out that I had withheld quite a bit of information from the Soviet Union that I didn't have to, I was told I could tell them everything, because they'd get it out of me anyway. I still think we need a more responsible Press. But the President of the United States, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Senate Armed Services Committee, they knew the full story, they knew how much information I was able to withhold, but they didn't elaborate, because all they wanted to do is just get the CIA out of the news - an intelligence organization cannot stand too much publicity.

NARRATOR: The U-2 programme survived Frank Powers' disastrous flight, but no more U-2s were manufactured. Now that a Russian-American agreement on satellites has been reached, Eisenhower's Open Skies policy has at last come into being, and made the U-2 as a spy plane all but obsolete. Mutual spying is ~~now~~ tacitly allowed because almost unpreventable.

NILSEN: As my bosses over there used to say about spying, "What you don't know about the other side, whatever it is, is only good. It's what you don't know that is dangerous."

NARRATOR: Early last year, the winter storms broke up the wooden boat that Nilsen used to take to Murmansk.

NILSEN: Here in this fjord, here in Bakfjord, there used to live around 20 people - but all over northern Norway, in small places like this,

people have moved away to the big cities. The houses are empty, and start to decay, start to decay.

Over there, we plan to start a salmon-farm. You have to dam off part of this neck, and then have the stream flow in and out, so that the fish feel happy. And it would pay very well - if you imagine that you have to put a thousand small salmon in there, that would cost around \$200, and in 3 years, they would weigh about 8 or 10 lbs apiece, up to 14 lbs, and then you could get a price per lb of about \$3 or \$4 - you can reckon up yourself what that would come to in profit.

POWERS: In 1965, I was presented with a medal, it's called, the Intelligence Star. It says, "Central Intelligence Agency", and on the bottom, "For Valor". And on the back, "United States of America", and "Awarded to Francis G. Powers". Someone told me that this was gold, and so I asked the man who was in charge of medals back at the Central Intelligence Agency, and word came back to me that with this and 10 cents I could get a cup of coffee.

END