

EPISODE 502

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:00:00] AH: Well, I'm really pleased to be speaking to you about this. I'm a bit of a delton when it comes to baseball. Obviously, I never grew up with it, but I did fall in love with it going to see the Mets and going to see the Nats. And of course both of them happen to be in the same league. So I mean, I guess the first question is what's your prediction for the World Series? And is it influenced by your love of the Red Sox?

[00:00:23] ME: Well, so it's funny, because my Twitter account has now been completely overwhelmed by my insane twitting on the Red Sox. And I get messages all the time from people that are asking me like, "Can you talk about something else?" And I said, "No. Because it's all I think about 24/7 now."

The Red Sox are playing fantastic. What's really neat about this team is that they're so flawed. And I mean this seriously. Their bullpen was, for most of the year, awful. They decide to hit occasionally, at least well during the second half of the year. And all of a sudden everything's come together with this incredible manager in Alex Cora and some veterans who are providing leadership. So I'm having so much fun with this team because they are the underdogs. We don't usually talk about the Red Sox as being the underdogs, but this has been so much fun for me. And it's a nice distraction. Baseball playoffs in October, there's nothing like it.

[00:01:08] AH: There really isn't. It's one of my favorite times of the year. One of the things that I would like to discuss would be obviously the connections between baseball and intelligence. And I was hoping that we could maybe use a few examples. So one of my favorite old skill examples is the shot heard around the world in 1951. The Giants beat the Dodgers for the pennant. And it's one of the last big games that they have in New York before they both move to the West Coast. And I know that that's been caught up with signal stealing. And then talking about Alex Cora as well, he was suspended for a bit and came back. So maybe we could speak about the Astros and that kind of fallout. But if you've got more examples, please bring them up. I'm sure you've got plenty.

[00:01:52] ME: When I wrote the book, my book, *Clarity in Crisis*, so people come up to me on the street and they say – Some people say that's a great book on the CIA. And I say, "Thank you." Other people say that's a great book on leadership." And I say, "Thank you very much." But the most fun is when they say, "Hey, actually, that's a book about baseball." Because in all of my examples of leadership and the principles, I always use baseball analogies, whether it's the Boston Red Sox, the Washington Nationals, or even my son's high school baseball team, which in Vienna, Virginia, James Madison High School, was a nationally ranked team. And he had a tremendous time playing there. But in reality, right when I retired, one of the first articles I wrote kind of in national publications for a digital platform called the Cipher Brief was a comparison of baseball and the CIA. And I called it you know 10 life lessons from little league to the war on terror.

And what I did is I kind of came up with a whole bunch – Mike Morell taught me this and I know Michael's been on your show too. Michael makes a lot of points. So he has his five top points. So this is a top 10 on parallels between the two universes. But I really thought there were so many similarities between baseball and espionage. And really it all comes down to dealing with failure and how a baseball player can hit 300. That's failing 7 out of 10 times. But hit 300 and be an all-star.

You got to remember, in the national league this year, I believe only 10 players hit over 300. And that means the rate of failing in 162 game season is astounding. And so then let's go flip over to my old job as a CIA case officer, the espionage business. Well, my job was to go out spot, assess, develop, recruit and handle spies, agents. But that process of finding that spy, I mean, those odds are worse. I mean, you have to overturn a lot of rocks. You have to find individuals who are willing to betray their country for the United States. And so if I get three out of ten people I meet, I'm a superstar. And so I always just found the odds of success in both professions are so low. They're both so difficult. And because of that, you have to have this strong intestinal fortitude, whether you're a baseball player at any level, or you're in the espionage business. So I think there're some huge similarities there.

[00:03:50] AH: If you could put a figure on it, what would be the strike rate or the rate of failure for, say, the average case officer? And what would be the kind of Babe Ruth type baseball figure?

[00:04:01] ME: I mean, no. Look, there's no way you're batting 300. And in terms of finding individuals who have the right kind of motivations and vulnerabilities and willingness to spy for the United States, you might find one out of a hundred, not three out of ten. And so, yeah. So what is a Babe Ruthian operational tour as a case officer? I don't know. You get a couple recruitments on your traditional maybe two or three you're posting overseas. In reality, it's funny, Andrew. You're right, that the odds are much lower. You have to just have that intestinal fortitude.

I watched my son grow up. He played little league. Then in middle school, then high school baseball, and now he's playing baseball at a junior college down in Richmond. And you really have to watch your kids and you try to teach them to deal with failing all the time. The amazing thing is after you strike out. Or maybe perhaps in the espionage business, after something fails, you talk to someone, they don't want to talk to you. Maybe even a recruitment pitch goes badly. What do you have to do? Well, you got to kind of brush yourself off and pull yourself up by your bootstraps. You might have two more at-bats that game. So you got to brush it off. WE call it shake it off. And so it's the same kind of thing. You have to have this mental toughness to put that however you failed moments ago behind you. And it's the same thing again in the espionage business.

As you and I have talked before, I mean, it's very unforgiving. And I talk very seriously particularly my book, but you know I certainly have talked to you and others. Sometimes there's the ultimate sanction, whether it's one of our officers who is hurt or killed or one of our assets, and that's the worst possible thing that can happen. But sometimes you got to kind of push forward. That kind of mental toughness is really I think qualities that both baseball players and intelligence officers really have.

[00:05:31] AH: Just running with the analogy of types of hitters do you get. Do you get pen shutters and clutch shutters hitters and espionage too?

[00:05:40] ME: Sure. No. Absolutely. I mean, think about it in terms of teammates. I always talk about picking up your teammates because they're your brothers and sisters in arms. And one of my principles in my book has to do with family values. And that's this kind of close bond that you have. But even in baseball, think about what you have to do. So let's say you're coming up to the plate and it's the bottom of the ninth inning and there's a runner on first. Now your job is to move that runner over. So you're going to put down a bunt. Or perhaps it's a sac fly. But you're going to do something that's going to be selfless. You're not going to get credit statistically for it. But you got to move them over. And so that's picking up your teammates.

And then you'll see for baseball player. So let's say tonight, let's get some Red Sox analogies. Kiki Hernandez gets on base. He's batting second for the Red Sox. Rafi Devers is coming up. It's the bottom of the ninth inning. They're at Fenway and the game is tied. Well, Rafi Devers lays down a bunt, and he doesn't do that ever because he's a power hitter. He's one of the best players. Best third baseman in the game. Superstar under 25. One of the top baseball players kind of in this crazy youth movement. But he lays down a bunt. He makes an out, but Kiki Hernandez goes to second base in scoring position. You'll see when Rafi Devers comes back to the dugout. The whole dugout's going to be up. He made an out, but they're going to be up and giving him high fives.

So same thing in the espionage business. Let's say I'm running an operation. Sometimes we run assets and we have to do something called a high threat meeting where perhaps the asset's a member of a terrorist group or a country really hostile to us. So what am I going to have on the street? I'm going to have counter surveillance. I'm want to have my mates from the station out on the street sometimes for hours on end and a thankless job. They're not going to get credit. If I get that rock star piece of intelligence that saves the world, they're not getting any credit for it, but they're out there to signal me that the meeting is safe.

And so when I get back to the station, what am I going to do? I'm going to thank them right away. So it's that kind of picking up your teammates. And again, I think it's really important in both baseball and the espionage business. We'll talk Red Sox all day. I'll give you lots of examples like this. Because that's how you know you have close-knit teams when players

are really willing to do that. They have that selfless attitude. Same thing in a CIA station, kind of that selfless attitude, to just get the mission accomplish, that operation accomplished. We're in case in a baseball game, get that winning run across the plate.

[00:07:51] AH: I'm just thinking as well about some of the differences between, say, the FBI counterintelligence and the CIA. I mean, it seems to me that the FBI, generally speaking, always play in their home stadium, whereas the CIA are always playing on the road. They're always playing away. You're turning up to Amman. You're turning up to Moscow. You're turning up to wherever. So, yeah, I just wondered if you'd thought about that a little bit.

[00:08:19] ME: Well. So what makes a great baseball team? It's an ability to win both at home in front of your home fans. Fenway Park is going to have 34,000 rabid fans. You can't even hear. I was there a couple weeks ago during the regular season and it was loud. The crowd is deafening now. Right now, the series, they're up two games to one. But if they don't win the next two games, they're going to have to go to Houston, which also has a rabid fan base. So a great baseball team can go on the road. Sounds familiar, like CIA officers deployed overseas. A great baseball team go on the road and absolutely win and be able to shut down all that noise.

It's really interesting. Sometimes you talk to really elite high-performance athletes and you say to them in the moment. So JD Martinez, who's a power hitter for the Red Sox. He recently hit a grand slam. You ask him, "Did you even hear the crowd on the road?" And they'll say, "No." They were so in the zone. So focused. It didn't matter. And so that's kind of the same thing. You're a CIA officer. We never play on our home turf, and that's okay. And so you got to be able to kind of shut out all the noise. So I love that analogy. I never thought of that. I got to use that.

It's funny. Andrew, I've given this speech, this comparison between baseball, the CIA. I go to coaches conventions around the country. I've given the speech I did one a couple years ago before Covid to the Virginia Baseball Coaches Association. That's all the division one two and three college coaches, plus all the high school and travel coaches in the state of Virginia, and I gave this speech to them too. And people loved it, because people don't

really equate the two professions all the time. But I think there're a lot of similarities. Again, I love that. Yeah. So going on the road, well, that's what we do. I guess my whole life overseas was on the road.

[00:09:54] AH: I mean, I guess just an interesting recent example is when the Nats won the world series in 2019. I think it's the first time in the World Series where the winning team has won all their games on the road. And of course, the Astros won all the games at Nationals Park. That was a real curveball historically.

[00:10:10] ME: It was. It was. And it just shows the – I love that Nats team. I am a big fan of the Nats. I have season tickets. While I'm a Red Sox fans since I was little, I do love the Nats. But that team was really remarkable because how close they were. So I actually I see a lot of similarities in the Nats of 2019 and the Red Sox of this year in 2021. Really, underdog teams certainly with holes. But they just have this sense of destiny and teamwork together.

Again, so the reason why – One of the reasons why I think I'm so excited this year especially about the Nats is the part about the CIA that I love the most was serving in small stations or bases in kind of the most hostile locations possible, generally in war zones. But I remember when I was a base chief in Afghanistan, there're only several of us there. We fluctuated between maybe 10 and 20 Americans. But I was there for a year. But that tightness, that sense of camaraderie is extraordinary. That's what you get in a CIA station or a base. And that's what you get in a professional or even college or high school sports team as well. I mean, these are your brothers and sisters for life. And you can never take that away, that feeling that you did something special.

And so I see that on the Red Sox this year. And you can you can feel it. I used – A legendary CIA officer. And I don't even know if I can say his name in the past. He was very senior. He was on the seventh floor. But he used to come into stations and he would say to us, he goes, "I could walk into a station and I could feel it. I could just feel the vibe. I could feel the soul of the station." I love that. I stole it in my book. I mean, I talked about every station has a soul to it. But you can walk into a place and you look around and you say, "These men and women, they got it."

And usually it's not really in the capitals of Europe where living is pretty good. Usually it's in a third-world location, perhaps in Africa or the Middle East where the life might be a bit harder. But you just know. You feel that vibe in that soul and there's an energy. You can see that in a dugout too. I see that in the Red Sox this year. I saw it the Nats in 2019.

[00:11:55] AH: I was at the wildcard game in 2019, and it's difficult to describe. And I would never have told anybody at the time. But I just had a feeling in the pit of my stomach that this was a kind of unstoppable force. And I wasn't sure exactly how it was going to play out, but it really felt like there was a wave that everybody was on. Is that what you feel just now with the Red Sox?

[00:12:15] ME: I felt it that day. I was there too. I was in section 131. My son and I were there. That was one of the craziest live sporting events I've ever been to when Juan Soto hit that. Actually it was not a double. It was a single. HE got thrown out at second. But we had to kind of put the Nats ahead. I remember, people were throwing beer on each other. It was insanity in the stands jumping up and down. Sometimes these teams have this feel of destiny, and that's certainly what the Nats did there. And then of course you have to have players like Juan Soto perform. He was, and he's a joy to watch. My great concern on Soto is that the Nats might not be able to afford him in a couple years.

I had a Twitter meltdown when the Nats kind of gave up their entire team. I love Trey Turner. And I have season tickets too. I went on a boycott. I didn't use my season tickets for an entire month. I was so angry. Not that Mark Lerner or the Nats' ownership really care what I think. But I was on my own personal boycott.

[00:12:59] AH: Yeah. I think that he's arguably the best short stop around.

[00:13:05] ME: Oh, you mean Trey Turner? Oh, yeah. When they traded Trey Turner, that was devastating. So the Juan Soto sweepstakes will begin, but it's not looking that good. But we'll see.

[00:13:13] AH: So are you saying that sometimes in a station there would be that same feeling that, yeah, just of almost destiny that things were going to happen?

[00:13:23] ME: The most fun I've had overseas, the CIA with kind of the rules that we have. I could say that I served in Iraq and Afghanistan, but I can't tell you the specific stations I served in kind of our traditional tours. But I can say the Middle East. so I clearly remember at one Middle Eastern posting where we had a small group of men and women and really in a unique dynamic situation. It was extraordinary. And you never forget that the nearly three years I spent with them. I talk about my book the famous agency and baseball hang out, the Vienna Inn, which of course the Spy Museum is very familiar with. But ultimately, we'd come back and I still see them now. We do reunions at the Vienna Inn because we talk about those times, that really amazing unique nature. It just so happened in that location we ran some tremendous operations that really had an effect, a positive effect on U.S. National Security. And we also were subject to a terrorist attack. There was an Al-Qaeda attack on the embassy. Car bomb hit the back gate. Didn't go off. Well, that's a good thing because I'm still here. We wouldn't be talking right now.

So you go through these experiences of such incredible intensity, it's really hard to describe. Or it's hard for others, kind of the lay person who's not there, to understand. But as I tell people, one of the things I always would tell my officers especially after a tremendous tour where you had these really high-impact operations, but some really intense experiences that you're always going to walk tall. So it doesn't matter what you do the rest of your career. Just think back to the time in X, Y, Z, country and we're all together. And hey, you know you might have great success. You might turn out, get promoted to senior intelligence service, be a station chief multiple times. Hey, maybe you won't. Maybe this is it. This is the end of your road. You want to go do something else. Go be a baseball coach. That's what I should have done. I should have quit at the 10-year mark and become a baseball coach.

But ultimately you always are going to walk tall. And I think that sports teams have that as well. If you get that ring, that World Series ring that the Nats had from 2019. Nobody can take that from them. And that's kind of the same sentiment that I think a lot of us had when you kind of went through some really intense experiences overseas for CIA.

[00:15:11] AH: One of the things that I was wondering as well was I was thinking about your book, *Clarity In Crisis*. And one of the things that you talk about there, and we've spoke about previously, is that you discovered upon the fact that when there was a crisis, you managed to keep your head and kind of basically come through for the team. And I was thinking about what Nats player of 2019 the book would most apply to. And you know the book better than me obviously. But I was thinking Max Scherzer. I'm thinking of the game where he busted his arm and he couldn't go in. And then he played and apparently he was in pain. And his wife had to put his pants on and everything. He's someone that really came through.

[00:15:53] ME: You can talk about Max Scherzer in any one of these conversations because he's just a bulldog. If you wanted to build a baseball team – He's older now. But that's the kind of person you build around because he just doesn't tolerate failure. He'll tolerate failing if you kind of learn and grow from it. But that's a winner right there.

And I'll tell, the stories of Max Scherzer. They're playing cards in the locker room, or they're playing basketball together. He wants to compete at everything. He's going to beat you at everything. He's got that something in him. But really if you go back to 2019, the player that I loved on that team the most was Howie Kendrick. Howie Kendrick was – For a couple reasons. But during the playoffs – And I'm going to get this wrong. I should have the book in front of me right now. I should have it memorized for goodness sake. But ultimately he had some real struggles. Made some big errors earlier on in the playoffs. But then hit some huge home runs particularly in the League Championship Series, then the World Series.

And so, ultimately, that's the kind of player that I love because he went through so much adversity. I mean, he was at the bottom of the world and at the top of the world. But the thing about Howie Kendrick is he is a total veteran. He's retired now. This was at the end of his career. At some point he did an interview sometime and I heard him say – Someone asked him about this. He goes, "That's baseball. You have your ups and downs." And he's a very cool customer and very kind of flat. He's got this wonderful, beautiful smile. But you could tell that at the worst of the lows, or the highs of the highs, he's still got that kind of cool demeanor. But to me, that actually applies to some of the leadership principles I talk

about where, ultimately, when you're going through a lot of struggles, when you have tough times or there's a lack of situational awareness, times of ambiguity, that's your happy place. So maybe for Howie Kendrick, he's like, "I'm okay. This is tough right now. I'm going to be fine. I know I'm a good baseball player. I'm going to have another opportunity, because that's what happens in baseball."

He also is the most humble character of all time. Humble baseball player I've ever seen. And Andrew, you know I've talked to you in the past. The biggest character trait I think for an intelligence officer' is humility, because you can't believe your own hype. Because just like in baseball, you hit a grand slam, tie the game up and maybe you come out and come later on bottom of the ninth inning and the winning runs on there, or the tying run and you make an out and then you go from what is it, from hero to zero?

Same thing in the espionage operations. We can do some things that are pretty remarkable and then calamity is around the corner all the time. So you have to have that sense of humility that kind of don't believe your own hype. That trait of humility is really positive in both professions.

[00:18:09] AH: And when you were talking earlier, I was thinking to myself. I know you said that you picked some of this up from Mike Morrell. And I wondered if you – You must have compared notes. Do you have different views on this, A, because you were in operations and he was an analyst? And B, because you're the fan of, let's just say, more successful team, the Red Sox, and he's an Indians fan?

[00:18:32] ME: I think he's an Indians fan. He's from Ohio, right?

[00:18:35] AH: Yeah. So have you drawn different lessons from baseball or see different connections?

[00:18:40] ME: No. He's one of those bosses I had that I learned so much from. I consider and talk all day about Michael. But ultimately, it's someone who I think had this incredible sense of ethics and integrity and just the idea of doing the right thing. I worked for him of course. And at some point I had a lot of contact with him when I was running a

counterterrorism unit where I had to see him a lot on things. And sometimes we succeeded and sometimes we failed.

What he demanded was a sense of owning your mistakes, and successes too. So he would give you praise. And I talked about a scene. There's a scene in the book, and it's based on the principle. I talked about humility, where I had to go up after we had a bit of a screw-up in a counter-terrorism operation and we had – There was what we call civ cast, civilian casualties. No one was killed. But some innocent people were injured. And I had to go up and explain to the seventh floor of the agency what happened. And what was interesting to me in front of Michael and others is I went up there and I took ownership for it. I said, “Look, this is my fault. I own this. My unit did this. This is what happened and these are four things that we've corrected in the last 16 hours. So it'll never happen again. Any question?” And the answer is no. And I walked out. Actually I thought I was in a lot of trouble after that. And then a senior operations official said, “Look, everyone's okay because you owned the mistake and you fixed it.”

It's funny, because just recently when I was talking to Michael, I actually mentioned this. I said, “Do you remember that?” I wrote about it in my book. I'm like – He said he absolutely remembered it completely because it was just that idea of having that sense of ethics and integrity. And that's something that Michael really demanded of his people. And I certainly bought into it. When you walk into CIA headquarters, you know on the right side of course is the Hollowed Grounds. It's our memorial wall with 137 stars. But on the left is a biblical phrase which says, “And you shall know the truth, and truth shall make you free.” And that's all about one thing for us, and that's integrity, the idea of telling the truth. And so my biggest take away from Michael was that. Even if he's a Cleveland Indians fan, that's okay.

[00:20:26] AH: It would be fun to go through some other things and see how they apply to intelligence. So if you just humor me for a minute. So what kind of ints can be applied to baseball? So we've got second. We've got intersecting signals and trying to unpack it. We've got human intelligence. We've got for the shot heard around the world, apparently it was a telescope and someone was seeing what pitches were coming. But what else would apply to like imagery intelligence and –

[00:20:56] ME: Well, diving even deeper, perhaps in the human world. And I'm going to use a word that I say that has negative connotations, but it's really important, and it's called process. And Andrew, remember my book, I talk a lot about process and the need to have some kind of fundamental processes and there are times of kind of intense decision making. But you got to remember, there's the idea of trusting the process that both baseball, which is a historic sport. You're giving examples of the shot heard around the world. This is go back to Ken Burns documentary on baseball. I mean, it's something that's been a fabric of America.

And then espionage, that's the second oldest profession. So what the oldest profession is of course. So baseball and espionage are way older than you are. So baseball is a game of process. So how do you prepare for baseball? Well, you do a couple things. You take batting practice. So someone who wants to hit well has got to take batting practice every day. For pitchers, what do they do? They throw bullpens. So there's not just on their pitching day, but there's a set rhythm to baseball where you throw bullpen. So there is a process in a baseball player's life that is very regimented and set, that if they don't do that, you're not going to find success. It's impossible. You can't not go to batting practice and pick up a baseball bat.

I mean, hitting a curveball is one of the hardest things to do on the planet. Again, we're talking about people with 300 averages. So you got to hit all the time. You got to take batting practice. Same thing for a pitcher. You got to throw bullpens. So think about a recruitment operation then. And so what do you do when you recruit someone? Well, you don't just walk up to a Chinese diplomat and say, "Hey, do you want to work for the United States government?" No. There's a process in recruitment operations where it's spotting, assessing, developing. You're assessing someone's vulnerabilities. What motivates them? Maybe it's ideology. Maybe it's financial. And it's a process that it can take weeks, months or even years to take that individual, that target, and bring them across the line. But just like you can't hit without taking batting practice. You're not going to recruit someone without going through that kind of really time and trust the process.

Now sometimes we'll get a walk-in. And of course everyone listeners know what a walk-in is. That's someone who volunteers. And that's every case officer's dream, because you

didn't have to do as much. But in essence, the real process of recruiting someone takes a long time. There are kind of fundamentals that you have to cross each time. So maybe someone from a denied area country is willing to meet you privately. Well, that's interesting. Maybe they're willing to talk a little bit about what's going on. So you kind of bring them across the line. Again, it's trusting the process between baseball and espionage. So I think that falls into the human intelligence category.

Now, look, there're a lot of other things. Now, you raised before the famous Astros and the cheating scandal. That's a counterintelligence issue right there where clearly they were stealing signs from opposing teams, but they got caught. So there you go. Sometimes spies get caught. And so the 2017 Astros certainly got caught and still are paying for it now. I mean, fans just relentlessly boo them and all these things.

What's interesting though, and let's raise one key point. Now you have me going now, because Alex Cora to me is such an interesting figure. So he was the manager of the Astros and one of the ring leaders. He was suspended for a year. No Astros players were suspended. But he was suspended and he took ownership of this.

Let's go back to my point about owning your mistakes. And it was so interesting during interviews just after the last series. You saw Alex Cora hug his daughter and he gave an interview on television and he said, "You know what? My family went through a lot of hard times when I suspended, but I realized I made a mistake. I made a mistake. And I own that mistake. And I was suspended for a year. So it really feels good to be here." And I was thinking of my book. I was going crazy. I was like, "This guy's got it." He served his time. Ironically, none of the Astros players under him received any penalty. And I think that really bothers a lot of baseball fans.

[00:24:31] AH: I feel like the perception amongst a lot of our listeners that it would be the opposite in the CIA, that the people that say the people that are at the top of the food chain, they would have Teflon shoulders and it would be some of the equivalent of the players that would be, "Well, you've misbehaved and you're out, or you're suspended or whatever," rather than being more like this case?

[00:24:57] ME: That's interesting that you say that, that was kind of the unique nature of the MLB's punishment. But you're right. I mean, I think that the comparison inside the agency is if somehow an entire station was caught in some cheating scandal. So I don't know if that would ever happen. But look, Alex Cora really took responsibility. And I have a lot of admiration and respect for him.

In my book, I really talk about second chances. And I talk about that in terms of the CIA officers. And so there was a whole bunch of officers I had who over the years will have made a mistake. Now, this wasn't a mistake in terms of ethics and integrity, which is really hard to come back from. But there's mistakes people make and sometimes they make bad choices. If they do their time, maybe they have to stay home for a couple years. It takes a lot of time and money to train a case officer. And so I think we have to be really careful in kind of throwing people out just if they messed up here and there. And again, it depends on what they did. But I think the idea of second chance is really important.

And I talk about this, again, my fundamental principle. I'd rather have someone who kind of screwed up and then redeem themselves. They're going to be such a better officer. They could even be a role model for others because if they explain what happened and kind of warn others, "Hey, don't do this." But I think second chances are really important, and I think that's the kind of Alex Cora story is so inspiring to me. So I'm a big Alex Cora fan.

[00:26:07] AH: One of the other things that I thought would be quite interesting to do would be help us populate the different parts of operations with their equivalent in baseball teams. For example, with the new East and South Asia division, would they be the Yankees? They've got the most World Series, but everybody loves to hate them. And Middle East would be the Red Sox. Or yeah, give us a global picture and put a baseball team in for each kind of geographical area.

[00:26:34] ME: This has been a subject on some really fun twitter stuff too. So there's a whole network of former intelligence officers, from junior officers, mid-level to senior officers from all the different 17 intelligence community members in the United States. And so there's been fun stuff like this. Okay. So who's the equivalent of the Yankees? But that would be more of is that the CIA or the FBI? Who's the equivalent of the Red Sox? And so I

would have to go back and take a look, because obviously the CIA is considered kind of the gold standard on human intelligence and espionage operations. So I think people would say the Yankees.

But then my colleagues in DIA who are very capable always had this feeling that they were kind of second-class citizens. They weren't. But they always had that kind of chip on their shoulders. So who would they be? I would have to think of who's an up-and-coming team who's good but always gets knocked down? I don't know. It's fun doing that kind of stuff.

And I like that too because I think so many people just kind of relate to baseball. Baseball is really – I was talking the other day with a correspondent from a German newspaper who actually went to a Nats game and he was going to write back for his readership, his audience in Germany why baseball was important to America. It's almost like the Ken Burns documentary. And I love it.

So he went to the Nats game, and actually I met him. And I was kind of trying to explain to him why baseball has this important psyche in the United States. And you all you have to do is go back and look at 9/11. If you recall, President George W. Bush kind of walking out and throwing that pitch. Obviously he had some kind of protective vest on at Yankee stadium. And that was kind of a defining moment for America that we're not going to be beaten by these terrorists. But it always seems to have baseball as kind of this integral part of the myth of America, and I love that.

[00:28:08] AH: I was wondering as well, going back to the Astros, they're seen as like the team that's at the forefront of analytics. And it depends on who you speak to. Some would say a bit more of a colder view towards baseball. And some people see it more as an art form. And they can be helpful, but that's not the way to go. So I just wondered if you could help us understand how analytics might be involved and the comparisons between them. And say, for example, CIA analytics, and numbers, and so forth. Help us understand some of the links.

[00:28:43] ME: Andrew, actually I have to commend you. This is another one that I didn't think of, another comparison. But actually you're 100% right. So what you're talking about

is this move which started really quite a while ago with Billy Beane and the Oakland Athletics, the Oakland A's. When he really started having a small market team who's the general manager and he was trying to just kind of piece together a team where he couldn't kind of put superstars on the team, couldn't pay them, but he used analytics, he used numbers and math to see could he take a player who might be good defensively, not so great offensively. Put that person in the lineup half the time. But you get someone else who's maybe a great offensive player, not as good defensively, but kind of piece it together, but it was all crunching numbers. Baseball is a game of numbers and percentages and hits and percentages of balls and strikes. And so the move now has just progressed to the point where baseball teams are using artificial intelligence.

And so, ultimately, you see what's called the shift in baseball. And that's where they actually position infielders differently throughout the infield. Sometimes even moving the infielder to the outfield based on the percentage of times that a player who they have all these analytics will hit the ball to the right or the left side of the infield. And that's really important to do, because the numbers frankly don't lie. But you put that up against some of the old school thinking, which is you have to have this kind of inherent intrinsic feel for the game.

So for example, if you have a pitcher who's doing really well and it hasn't given up many hits or runs. The opposing team's gone through the lineup twice, but you know analytically that the third time this pitcher is going to face the other team's best hitter, just based on numbers, they don't do well. Some managers will pull that picture. Other managers will say like, "You know what? I have a feeling just that this guy, this pitcher, is doing really well." And there was a clash within baseball on this. And there's huge debate within fans. So how do you explain this? Or how do you compare this to CIA?

So I think I'm coming up with this right now, but it's – No. But it's the advent of, for example, open source collection. So for example – Or using kind of complex targeting methodology. But ultimately, the idea is there's a lot of data out there. And so CIA has to kind of get pushed into the 21st century and be able to exploit this explosion in open source data just like baseball did with analytics.

Now an old school station chief will be like, “I don't need that. I know what we need. I know who we have to recruit. And I know if someone's recruitable or not.” Someone with a little perhaps more forward thinking will be like, “Well, there's a huge amount of data out there that can help us. Perhaps targeting, perhaps even in understanding the country.” So I think it's a perfect comparison.

And in reality, the best result is a mix of the two. So I wouldn't want to rely only on analytics. I still want to have the feel for the game. But just like in the station overseas, I would want to have a kind of a feel for what's happening rather than just relying only on kind of an explosion of data or some kind of data science program or artificial intelligence program telling me this is X, Y and Z what's going to happen. So I think it's a good mix. But, again, it's the battle of kind of old school and new school. And you have young managers or young station chiefs who really believe in one thing and some of the older folks who don't. But I think if you have a mixture of the two, you're probably going to end up in the right spot.

[00:31:41] AH: And talking about the old and new, one of the other things that I was thinking about was this sense of, say, for example, the Moscow rules. We've discussed this before. There used to be an understanding that that's what spies do. They try to steal secrets. It's part of the game. But there's this sense that the game is no longer those conventions. And those norms are no longer there. Some people see the same thing in baseball, right? Some people will say that baseball is so full of conventions and unwritten rules. There's like a whole anthropology of baseball going on.

[00:32:19] ME: There are great books on this by the way. There're some incredible books that people have written on the unwritten rules of baseball, which are fantastic.

[00:32:25] AH: Yeah, I wonder if you could compare that to what's happening in espionage. And I know that you've been a victim of people not playing by the traditional rules.

[00:32:35] ME: So I have to write another article on – After this, I have to write the comparisons of the two because you're coming up with new ones. I love this. The difference is, in baseball, the game is evolving in a positive fashion. And I'll tell you this. For example,

there're unwritten rules in terms of celebrations. There used to be in the past. So baseball is a very conservative sport. So if someone hits a home run, they're really expected to put their head down, run around the bases. Except you have this new kind of class of dynamic young players who show incredible emotion. They do backflips. There's this joy that they play. A lot of it I think is fantastic.

Old school baseball folks get really cranky with this. But I think it's changing a lot. So baseball, in essence, some of the old traditions that you're not supposed to show this emotion, that's going on the wayside. And I think that's really good, because what do fans want to see? If someone hits a home run, I want to see them do a backflip or pound their chest and do all those things. Where in the past, next time they were up, they would have gotten right in the head because they violated this old school norm of not having this incredible emotion.

So in one sense, I think baseball is evolving correctly. But in the espionage game, Andrew, clearly what you're referring to is that just traditionally over the years, and there were always anomalies. But intelligence officers, that's a case officer. That's someone who's a staff member of an intelligence service. And they generally did not hurt each other. And that was something that – And was not always the case. And there's always going to be exceptions. But while our agents, those who we recruit, if they're caught, the ultimate sanction could occur. They could be injured or certainly killed.

Generally, even with our adversaries, even with the Soviet Union during the Cold War, CIA officers and KGB officers were generally not trying to **[inaudible 00:34:08]** each other or hurt each other. And I think that norm has changed. What you're referring to is what we call – My old outfit calls now anomalous health incidents. But in the press it's called Venice Syndrome. But almost it's a form of hybrid warfare where an adversary. And I think a lot of us think it's the Russians. But ultimately they're doing things that are causing really debilitating injuries to CIA officers, to intelligence personnel overseas. And that's something we used to be you know very concerned about. And you almost put it in the context of what I actually like to write and think about now. It's called hybrid warfare, or we call gray zone operations. But ultimately it's not a shooting war, but there's things just under the surface.

But in effect, now there's an adversary that's really causing debilitating and, for me, career ending injuries where people really are getting hurt. So I think that those rules of the game, unlike in baseball where I think they've changed for the better, espionage business, they've certainly changed for the worse. And ultimately I have to find out a way to counter this, because it's something that I certainly can't stand. You've seen all the press reports particularly about attacks against staff members involved in Hanoi just before the vice president arrived. And of course in New Delhi, India during the visit of director of the CIA, Bill Burns. I think these are these are pretty serious incidents that kind of show us that our adversary has kind of upped the ante. And so something to be taken very seriously. And I think they are. I think my old outfit definitely is.

[00:35:25] AH: I was thinking as well like with the MLB and the commissioner and some of the critiques of the game recently that it's taken too long. And all of the excitement has been getting drained out of it. And the pendulums swung too far towards the pictures. And we need to write it again. So that prompted me to think. I know that there're a number of different viewpoints and tribes in the agency. And there're the young Turks and there's the old timers. And people have different points of view. But there're inevitably some people that think that it's maybe a little bit more like the baseball commission that it's struggling to keep up with the times. That the game has changed and the institutions not really reflected that. Yeah, it's just not keeping pace enough. Like what's your view on the analogy between that view of the MLB and that view of the CIA?

[00:36:21] ME: I think we both will be enduring. There's no doubt about that. And tackling baseball, it's really interesting, because there's so many criticisms of baseball earlier this year that the games were certainly too long. The strikeouts are up, home runs. Everyone wants to hit a home run. Hitting is down, that the games were boring. I don't think anyone's talking about this now after what's happening in October. And baseball has made some tweaks. And I think that ultimately we're going to see in the National League pitchers not hit anymore, which I think is a good thing. They're going to go to the designated hitter, like they do in the American League. There was the crackdown on what we call sticky stuff that pitchers were using. That seems to have worked. And so hitting is certainly up as well.

So the Major League Baseball is really trying to find ways to quicken the pace of games to make it more exciting. It's a 162 game season. It is a long, long grind. But people don't understand. For professional, professional athletes, life is demanding. For baseball players, they basically play every day for half a year and barely get a day off. So to make these games kind of fun and entertaining particularly in July in Atlanta or even in D.C. where it's like we don't go to day games. It's too damn hot. But I think that we'll come to the right. They'll tweak the game enough. They'll come to the right decisions on this. And I think that, again, this October, the baseball has been so exciting. And so if you see on Twitter, on social media, every once in a while wise asses like me will be like, "Oh, that was a boring game, wasn't it? It was 12 to 8." It wasn't. And so you know baseball kind of writes itself.

In terms of the espionage business, look, there's a very interesting debate going on amongst kind of intelligence aficionados, academics, pundits, but also certainly within the intelligence community on what's the future of human intelligence with the rise of biometrics and smart cities. And the fact is that it's frankly harder to run human operations. But I would be – Maybe I sound like I'm old school. And I've said this in the media to anybody who'll listen. And I get quoted on it a lot, is one of the proudest things – And I still stand. I'm not in the agency anymore. But policymaker would say, "Could you meet someone in X, Y, Z denied country, denied area country?" And my contention is the CIA absolutely can. So is it harder now with technology and explosion of open source data and biometrics? I mean, it's very hard for me to hide myself. But you know what? We can do it. It's just going to be harder. And there was, I guess it was a New York times piece, and I really didn't want to comment on it much. But I saw some of my other former colleagues comment on it. But it was a New York Times piece that reportedly talked about a message that went out to the CIA workforce basically about some losses of agents. I took that a little bit differently. I mean, I think that it was a good message where inevitably what we're saying is after 20 years of the war on terrorism my argument is CIA conducted in a spectacularly successful fashion because we were not attacked again and we really degraded for Al-Qaeda. It was a message to tighten up and that we have to kind of get back to basics. And that's okay. That's a good message. My contention is still that we can meet agents in person anywhere in the world. But with the advent of technology now, it's going to be a lot harder. So we got to kind of up our game. Maybe some comparisons with baseball. Things change. The

environment changes. And so you have to be able to change and adapt. Just like I don't think baseball's bit dead. I certainly don't think spying in any way is dead.

[00:39:19] AH: I wondered as well if you had any maybe espionage analogies for some things from baseball. So I'm thinking things like doctoring the baseball, grip enhancers, corking the bat. Are there little hacks or little things that you could compare them to an espionage for our listeners?

[00:39:39] ME: Yeah. Sure. I mean, right. But it goes back to what we talked about before in terms of process. So you can't cheat the game. If you want to cork your bat and you get up the plate and you might –And who is it? Sammy Sosa, I think years ago, when he played for the Cubs, he got caught doing this. And so you're going to get caught and there's going to be sanction on this.

So what's a comparison? Maybe a CIA case officer – The fundamental job, that trait, or to be fundamentally successful as a CIA case officer, you have to be able to detect surveillance. And so you do something called a surveillance detection route, which is I'm not telling anybody here anything new. Every service does this. And I've gotten all this language cleared about a hundred times from the CIA. But ultimately, it's just like a Navy SEAL has got to be able to shoot. A CIA officer has got to be able to run a surveillance detection route, which means going from point A to point B with lots of intermediate stops along the way to see if you are being followed. Can you cheat on that? Well, you could, because maybe if you're an environment where 90% of the time you don't have surveillance, maybe you could cheat on your surveillance. Maybe you don't feel like running that four-hour route. Maybe you cut it down. And no one's going to know.

But you know what? Just like corking the bat, like if you get caught, the sanction is pretty damn severe. So I would go back to the comparison is there are processes that have to be trusted and respected. And if you cheat a little bit, sometimes you get away with it, but it's going to come back and bite you. Because I always tell, the game knows. The gods of baseball, the gods of espionage are going to come back and get you if you decide to take a shortcut. That was certainly my view.

[00:41:03] AH: I don't know the answer to this, and maybe you do. Has there ever been the equivalent of a double agent in baseball? Have the Mets ever sent some kid that grew up in Queens and has always hated the Yankees and goes into their farm system and then betrays some of their secrets or their signs or something like that?

[00:41:23] ME: Yeah. Everyone's always trying – Stealing signs means the catcher is giving a sign to the pitcher and what pitch to throw. And so baseball, for perpetuity, has always tried to figure out what that sign is going to be. But yeah, for double agents, I don't know. But I'm sure it's been tried. Maybe someone gets traded to a rival team and they take with them a lot of that information. But that first team would know and they change all the signs up anyhow.

There was something I saw on TV a couple weeks ago, and I can't remember which teams was playing. What some baseball players do now, particularly catchers, they'll have the signs kind of on their wristband. And there's a play at the plate, and there's a collision. And clearly the piece of paper flew off. And you saw, it was the runner coming in, take it from the catcher from the ground and go to the dugout. And all hell broke loose. People were really upset about that. They thought that was kind of a violation of integrity. I don't know if they gave it back or not. But they just changed the signs. If the catcher would look down and say, "Oh, crap. I don't have my signs." And they would change things up right away. It is an espionage or counterintelligence business.

You'll see – When you see. And so watch when the catcher goes to the mound to talk to the pitcher. And the infielders, they'll come. They're having a conference. All of them are talking into their glove. They don't want anybody to even see what they're saying. Like we could all do reading lips. But it's incredible. They're all kind of talking into their glove. It's pretty funny.

[00:42:35] AH: Counter surveillance, right?

[00:42:38] ME: Yes.

[00:42:39] AH: I was thinking about that with – Just to go back to the Nats in 2019, with the Astros and the sign stealing thing. The Nats, I remember, because I was following this so closely when the story broke. The Nats apparently developed a really elaborate set of signs to overcome. So they were basically running a operation against the Astros' operation. This is even before the story broke. They kind of had an inkling that the Astros were up to something. So they came up with this whole thing. And I'm just thinking about here at the Spy Museum, we've got a whole gallery on codes and ciphers. And one of the ways that you can try to protect your code and cipher is like by defense and depth. They get through the first level, but then there's another level. And the Nats we're kind of constantly changing that around. So I guess it's an interesting example of covert communication.

[00:43:33] ME: Or even you can take it further. It's called denial and deception operations too. And so, yeah, of course. And so it's going to be – So as my son, who he's now in college, but as a high school catcher, even in high school, you're putting a sign down for a fastball, everyone knows that you're always thinking ahead on these things. And so even in high school they steal science and people get upset.

Now, I guess my argument would be at some point you're just like play the damn game. And if you have a pitcher, like an all-star pitcher, if Max Scherzer is out there and he's throwing 98 miles an hour and you know the fastball is coming, maybe Max is like, "I don't care. I'm going to blow up by you anyway." It's pretty funny. But you go back to the Houston Astros team. There was that famous Jose Altuve homer off of Chapman, where he seemed to know that a fastball was coming. Chapman throws 100 miles an hour. He seemed to really anticipate that. And I think that would upset a lot of people because, ordinarily, Chapman should blow it right by you. But there's some pictures even in the heat of battle, they'll yell out to the batter, "I'm going to throw you a fastball right now." And the batter's like, "Bring it. Let's go. Let's see who's going to win this." I love that stuff.

[00:44:30] AH: Do you think that the Astros should have been stripped of the World Series and even Cy Young's and MVPs? I have a good friend that's a Dodgers fan and he's – As you can imagine, the Red Sox and then the Sstros, he's like got very strong views in this, let's just say.

[00:44:47] ME: Oh yeah, there's a couple things. How you sanction individual players would have been really hard, because everyone was in on it. And then of course some of the players left. But I think, ultimately, they should have stripped the title from the Astros, because the cheating scandal was so bad. That would have been much more just.

The good thing about that not happening is that any time the Astros are on the road, it's really entertaining, because the opposing fans will have garbage cans and they're banging stuff and it's relentless. And it is kind of funny. But ultimately, I think they should have been stripped. For the integrity of the game, Alex Cora lost his job. I think the Houston general manager did as well. That's it. And so that really wasn't enough.

I mean, again, I think it shows the passion that baseball fans have towards this shows the importance of baseball in America. And I know that NFL football gets massive ratings. And I know if you go to the UK and you're watching English Premier League Football. It's fantastic. I mean, for some reason, my son is a huge Liverpool fan. Of course, Liverpool is partly owned by the Red Sox. So we watch a lot of English Premier League Soccer.

But for me, baseball has this kind of unique attachment to kind of the American people and the psyche and you know the whole field of dreams thing. And that was kind of neat when they did that this year. And so I think it's just if you want to understand America, I would say baseball is the most important sport if you want to kind of get the American people.

[00:45:59] AH: I fell in love with baseball when I found out that Bobby Thompson, the batter on the shot heard around the world, he was born in my home city, Glasgow. And then he moved to New York as a young boy. But I always hung on to that. And then I found out that they stole the signs, but yeah.

[00:46:17] ME: This is going to get kind of corny, but – So I grew up in New Jersey, but my grandparents lived in Long Island. And so the first baseball games I went to was at Shea Stadium watching the Mets and having a catch with my grandfather. I mean, these are kind of like coming-of-age rituals that people do. And then growing up and then having my son not only become a huge baseball fan, but a huge baseball player as well. And baseball has been absolutely integral to our family.

My son was nine years old when he came back from the Middle East. And this is a great story. So he goes – We're in the Middle East and he was actually started playing baseball there. But I remember when I took him to practice one time on a field there was – We were in an Arab country, and the coach was throwing underhand. And so I walked in the stands and I fired him on the spot. And I took over as a coach, because that was unacceptable to me. But we come back to the United States, and my son, the first thing he goes to a Little League Field here in Vienna, Virginia and he turns to his mom he says, "There's a lot of grass in this field. This is incredible. There's grass everywhere."

So even when he missed out on kind of those for a chunk of his early life, he became a huge baseball player. Obviously, played in high school and is now playing in college. And we played in this travel baseball program called the Richmond Braves, which is renowned travel program. And they were ranked in the top 20 in the country just like his high school team was too. And so we traveled constantly.

And so I was back from operational tours. Luckily, I spent you know years and years driving all through mostly the south, because we're in the mid-Atlantic region now, and it gave my son and I just this kind of tremendous relationship that we've had. I still have my old pickup truck. He won't let me sell the pickup truck because it has a huge number of miles on it. But he said, "Dad, that's the pickup truck that we had driving to Atlanta, and Florida, and South Carolina, and Georgia. You can never sell it." So I'm still driving it.

[00:47:54] AH: Wow! That's awesome. And just one other thing that I was thinking as well was do you think that there's an analogy between the increasing professionalization of baseball and the world of intelligence? So I'm thinking of – I'm kind of caricatured here, but back in the day, the gentleman spy, the red literature and went on to join the CIA or something. And then the more old-fashioned baseball player chewing tobacco or sunflower seeds, and now they're been asked to put their bodies through all kinds of analytics. Do you see an analogous move towards increase in professionalization in both fields?

[00:48:37] ME: Well, it should be. They're professional athletes. I mean, it's astounding. How can I say this? You take a look at locker room celebrations and all the baseball players

have their shirts off. Well, they look like Olympic athletes. Go back to the days of Babe Ruth. He didn't look like he's so much of an Olympic Athlete. A lot of players were smoking. But the training regimens of these folks are incredible, and they're also huge. I think when the Yankees made their trades at the deadline, their outfield averaged like 66 260. So ultimately these players are fantastic physical specimens.

To go through the grind of 162 game schedule, you know you got to eat right, you got to sleep. There's nutrition. But if you see these players now and they're big and they're strong and they're just as physically fit as other sports as well. It was not always the case. Now, can you make that same comparison with the intelligence game?

Well, one of the really interesting thing is, and this is – Again, Andrew, you're nailing this, because now this is just coming to me. What CIA has done, and they really have done this, is they've had much more of a focus on wellness. And you can see there's a giant gym, a professional sports equivalent gym finally being built at CIA headquarters, finally. Our gyms were small and you know crowded for years and years. And so now when you think of things such as mindfulness, or wellness, yoga meditation, I mean, that kind of stuff, nutrition, eating right, that really is being embraced more by, first of all, a more well-attuned or youthful class of officers coming in. I mean, just in terms of their age. But at the end of the day, if you're going to go serve in a war zone for a year, go even on a traditional tour for two or three years and we're going to ask you to go out every night on the streets. Taking care of yourself is really important. And CIA for a long time had a pretty poor track record of alcoholism and divorce. CIA officers did. The ability to take care of oneself is really important. So I think that the agency and the medical staff certainly are embracing that more. And I think building that new gym is a reflection of that. And even programs which really kind of focus on mindfulness and wellness is absolutely critical.

I saw this in my purchase over the last couple years as I've tried to kind of rehab myself for my injuries. I spent a lot of time at Walter Reed Hospital in Bethesda. And that kind of softer side of healing or just even taking care of yourself has been completely embraced by the special operations community. And I'll end, a one great anecdote I remember just before the end of my career and before the embassy shut down, I made a visit out to Sanaa in Yemen to the embassy. And I remember going out there and I saw at the end of the

embassy there was a kind of a little small grass field and there's a whole bunch of **[inaudible 00:50:56]** and CIA officers doing yoga. So I was thinking to myself, "Times have changed." But you know what? That's a really good thing. And so having that kind of fit mind and body is absolutely critical in both lines of work. So I like that comparison.

[00:51:08] AH: And do you see that also with the training? So I know that you mentioned previously that a senior leader in the CIA after a 24-year career might have had two weeks of leadership training. But the equivalent in the army would have had two years. I'm thinking also of on the podcast we had on Marty Peterson a while ago and he was talking about some of the training for analysts. And he was saying that when he was a young analyst, you were just kind of thrown into it and expected to figure it out. And he realized that he didn't really know what he was doing and wanted to set up a training program for people so that they didn't have to spend two or three years like he did trying to figure out what to do. Do you see that same kind of training?

[00:51:50] ME: First and foremost, my information is a little dated. I retired in July of 2019. So I might be off now as we're several years later. But I don't think things have changed all that much. And while there is some leadership training, it's not like the U.S. Military. And Andrew, you were referring to, when we spoke earlier, if you have a 20-year career and you retire as a colonel in the U.S. Military. Two of those years, two solid years, one year at a time will have been spent at going to a leadership school. CIA doesn't do that. And I think the reason has always been that because the organization is so small and we don't have the personnel to take someone what would be "offline". But I think that's a mistake. I know we do have leadership training programs, but these are just you know one or two weeks here and there as far as where I was in 2019 when I left. And I think that's a giant mistake, because the traits that made you a great case officer do not make you a great leader. Leaders are not born. Leaders are absolutely made. And in my case, my leadership skills, and I was really good at the very end of my career. Well, how does that help anybody?

I wrote a book on leadership, which it sounds really great, but I look back on my career, my first leadership jobs. And I went. So I'm like, "How did I even do that?" I wish I had more formal leadership training so I wouldn't have made those mistakes early on. And as you know in my book, very kind of self-deprecating and I really talk in a lot of humility about

kind of my failings. But I wish I had had some better leadership training along the way. If Bill Burns would ask me, and I and I do talk to him every now and then, I would suggest that they do go through that model that the U.S. Military has.

[00:53:13] AH: You said there the at the end of your career and leader. So I guess this just proves, Dave Martinez, he's saying that bumpy roads lead to beautiful places, right?

[00:53:24] ME: Baseball managers would say the same thing. I mean, it's funny, and it is good to look in the past sometimes. But I'm sure Davey Martinez, or Alex Cora, or maybe kind of some of these managers who are former players rose fairly quickly. But if they saw their first managerial stint managing the Minor Leagues, I'm sure they look back at that and they're like – But that's how you learn. You make mistakes along the way and then you kind of get better.

[00:53:44] AH: Well, I think I've went through all of the material I was hoping to go through. It's been a lot of fun.

[00:53:48] ME: You know, I could talk baseball all day. And then of course about my old life in the intelligence service. But this is great. I love this. And I hope people get a lot out of this, because I think there really are incredible comparisons between the two professions. And who would think that baseball and the CIA would be so similar But I love this chat. Thank you so much for having me.

[00:54:05] AH: Absolutely. Thank you so much. I'm really excited to release this one. Thanks, Marc.

[END]