

The Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf

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Jan Goldman

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Life in the World of Intelligence

The Cloak and Dagger Cook: A CIA Memoir by Kay Shaw Nelson

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Current Topics

Ethics of Spying: A Reader for the Intelligence Professional, Volume 2, editor Jan Goldman (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2010), 246 pp. end of chapter notes, bibliography, no index.

The first volume of this book, issued in 2006, implied intelligence professionals were unaware of their ethical and moral obligations—despite the fact that it included an appendix that reproduced an Executive Order on the subject (E.O. 12674) and copies of the codes of ethics for the principal intelligence agencies. Now there is a second volume on the subject, and it acknowledges at the outset that “government agencies have ethical training which ... makes moral and ethical decision-making compliant to judicial oversight.” (xi) It also contains a bibliography that covers all aspects of the subject. A particularly good example is James Olson’s *Fair Play*,¹ with its challenging hypothetical, though very real world, scenarios. Thus it is fair to ask, what new does *Volume 2* add to the discussion of intelligence ethics in practical terms? The short answer is not a thing.

Instead, the focus of *Volume 2* is theoretical, as the subject might be viewed by academics. This approach is necessary, the editor suggests, because “the intelligence profession is sometimes filled with moral and ethical dilemmas for which no law, policy, or regulation can assist in developing the proper response in ‘doing the right thing.’” (xi) This premise is not supported with examples, and it implies that the “ethical training” mentioned above is inadequate and that further discussion of the underlying ethical principles is required.

The book is divided into two parts: the first, we are told, is theoretical, the second, practical. But, in fact, the contributions in each part are a mix of both. Two early chapters look briefly at the historical record of covert action morality, which is found wanting. Chapter 4, the most theoretical and abstruse of the group, considers three approaches to handling morally questionable methods—idealist/deontological, realist, and consequentialist—and their relationship to just war/just intelligence theory. In the end, however, the author concludes very practically, “There is no one right answer.” (30) The final chapter in part 1 addresses “ethics through the intelligence cycle.” And although it highlights the ethical problems associated with leaks and unauthorized dissemination of state secrets, no solutions—beyond noted existing laws—are suggested. (50)

The second, “practical” part of *Volume 2* still addresses theory. One article looks at ethics “as rays of light to the human soul” (120) before considering the “deontological and consequentialist approaches” and concluding that “further investigation into ethics and intelligence is essential,” (138) but the reader gets no explanation of why this is so. Less esoteric contributions come from Michael Herman, who considers ethics and intelligence after 9/11. Academic,

¹ James M. Olson, *Fair Play: The Moral Dilemmas of Spying* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2006).

Shlomo Shpiro, discusses the Israeli view of intelligence and ethics and why it is important. John Radsan presents an interesting, scholarly examination of the inherent conflicts in espionage and international law. He also comments on the literature and the limits of international law that do “not change the reality of espionage.” (166). Steven H. Miles, MD, discusses torture and the medical profession, using Abu Ghraib as a model of evil, before reaching the dodgy conclusion that the United States is a “torturing society.” (187) A final article contains the results of a survey of army noncommissioned officer intelligence specialists conducted by Rebecca Bolton at the National Defense Intelligence College. On the subject of torture and other unethical acts, the results reinforce the view that government intelligence officers already know the difference between ethical and unethical behavior.

While *Volume 2* may be useful for students, scholars, those unfamiliar with the topic, and those seeking a theoretical basis for ethics in intelligence, it adds nothing new for the practicing professional.

Historical Dictionary of Terrorism by Sean K. Anderson with Stephen Sloan (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2009), 880 pp., no index. 3rd edition.

The first edition of this dictionary was published in 1995, with 452 pages; the expanded, 586-page, second edition followed in 2002. The current, third edition, reflects the post 9/11 spike in terrorist incidents and changes since then in the scope and techniques of intelligence. The authors have each studied the subject for more than 30 years. Sean Anderson, a professor at Idaho State University, has worked in Tehran and has published on state-sponsored terrorism and counterinsurgency in the Middle East. Stephen Sloan is the Lawrence J. Chastang Distinguished Professor of Terrorism Studies at the University of Central Florida and professor emeritus at the University of Oklahoma. He has done fieldwork in Indonesia, and he has consulted with the US Army and Air Force for many years.

The 25-page introduction to this edition deals with the terminology of the field, the basic elements of terrorist acts, and their historical underpinnings and motivations. The authors address the impact of modern technology, especially the Internet, the threat of weapons of mass destruction, and the types of terrorist groups and their goals.

The dictionary itself has 700 pages with more than 2,000 entries, presented alphabetically. Topics include key actors and organizations—mostly in the Middle East, but including the IRA, and groups in Mexico, South Africa, Japan, and the United States. In addition there are entries on principal laws, a great variety of cases and plots, techniques—data mining and terrorist weapons like ricin—and assassinations. Intelligence agencies are not included, except those that have been targets or victims of terrorist attacks.

The dictionary provides a good overview of contemporary terrorist adversaries—the way they think, their modes of operation, and the rationale for their existence. In short, it contributes toward knowing one’s enemy, a prerequisite for would-be and serving intelligence analysts. Since the topic is not

likely to decline in importance soon, a digital fourth edition would be an even more valuable contribution to the literature.

The Search for Al Qaeda: Its Leadership, Ideology, and Future by Bruce Riedel (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2008), 180 pp., endnotes, bibliography, index.

The search that former CIA Middle East specialist and NSC staffer Bruce Riedel describes is for the operational essence of al Qaeda and the means for dealing with it. From the outset Riedel makes it clear that the war on terror is really a war on al Qaeda. He explains that in order to defeat this enemy we must understand its reasons for being, what it hopes to achieve, and its strategy. For background, he reviews why al Qaeda undertook the 9/11 attacks and stresses the importance of understanding that Bin Laden's objective was to provoke the United States into a war in Afghanistan, where it could be bled to death—the same strategy that defeated the Soviets. To achieve this goal, Riedel stresses al Qaeda's need for a safe haven in Pakistan.

Having achieved the above goals, Riedel explains, al Qaeda intends to create “franchises” throughout the Muslim world that can continue to attack America's allies. In addition, he argues, al Qaeda works to acquire a nuclear weapon and to accomplish its ultimate objectives “to drive the United States from the Muslim world, destroy Israel, and create a jihadist Caliphate” similar to the Ottoman Empire. (11) An Israeli-Palestinian peace treaty is not an option, Riedel emphasizes, because for Islamists peace can only come when Israel is physically eliminated.

For Westerners, this reality may be hard to grasp. To help others understand al Qaeda's objectives, Riedel offers chapters on the thinking of four principal al Qaeda leaders: Zawahiri, Bin Laden, Mullah Omar, and Zarqawi. These chapters offer essential background about their Muslim development and attitudes. He also discusses the relationship of these leaders with other Muslim terrorist groups. Commenting on the historical enmity with the Iranian Shia, Riedel notes the irony of their shared goal with regard to Israel and its implications.

In the final chapter, “How to Defeat Al Qaeda,” Riedel presents recommendations for action by US decision makers and intelligence organizations. First, the “hunt for al Qaeda lacks a sheriff,” he notes, the DNI “does not know who is in charge—clearly he is not.” (148) Given a leader, he recommends shutting down the al Qaeda propaganda apparatus, the sanctuaries in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and South Asia, and the franchises. Whatever approaches are adopted, he underlines, they must avoid “alienating succeeding generations of Iraqis and other Muslims.” (149–53) He ends with suggestions for accomplishing this.

Despite the complex subject matter, *The Search for Al Qaeda* reads very well. As an added attraction, Riedel includes personal experiences that illuminate what a White House adviser goes through when dealing with contemporary Middle East issues. They add valuable insights. This book is a fine

introduction for those seeking to understand al Qaeda and the need for its elimination.

Historical

Cash On Delivery: CIA Special Operations During the Secret War in Laos by Thomas Leo Briggs (Rockville, MD: Rosebank Press, 2009), 311 pp., index.

In 1970, while serving in Laos as a CIA operations officer, Tom Briggs read an article in *Studies in Intelligence* and decided to submit one of his own. It appeared in the Fall 1973 issue, titled: “Cash On Delivery: How to Obtain North Vietnamese Soldiers for Intelligence in Laos.” Recently declassified, it is reproduced on pages 126–35 of his memoir of the experience. The book begins with a summary of his service in the Army as a military police officer and his tour in Vietnam. After fulfilling his military obligation he considered joining the FBI but settled on the CIA. He goes on to describe his somewhat unusual training as a special operations officer and his two-year assignment to Laos, where he handled a roadwatch program that usually monitored activity on the Ho Chi Minh Trail but which sometimes evolved into intelligence operations.

The concept behind the CIA program in Laos was to employ a few Americans skilled in special operations to train and supervise Laotians to conduct “intelligence collection and unconventional combat operations without having Americans ‘on the ground.’” (3) Briggs stresses that this concept is not outdated and recommends it as a model for many contemporary situations. To show how it can work, he gives vivid examples of how the roadwatch teams were trained and functioned. The operations were risky, and some teams found it easier to fabricate information than to actually go on missions. Briggs describes the techniques developed to validate their intelligence and encourage honesty. The chapter on the fortuitous capture of a North Vietnamese spy is a case in point.

Running the roadwatch teams required support and cooperation among several agencies and countries. *Cash On Delivery* recounts the sometimes thorny situations—often compounded by “suggestions” from Headquarters—that arose. There were occasions when events interrupted the routines. Chapters on the search for Americans missing in action and the downing of a helicopter on a close-support mission illustrate the level of cooperation required among the CIA, the Air Force, and the local nationals. On a personal level, since CIA officers were accompanied by their families, Briggs relates the rigors endured by dependents who were often integrated into supporting base operations.

The final chapter of *Cash On Delivery*, “Speaking Truth to Power: Lessons Learned,” is a memo for the record on Briggs’s career, the good and the disappointing, aimed at today’s officers. He includes advice on the role of special operations, the importance of Agency personnel practices, and the need for

management and leadership to offset overbearing bureaucracy. Given Briggs's 32 years of experience, his views are worth careful consideration.

Cold War Radio: The Dangerous History of American Broadcasting in Europe, 1950-1989 by Richard H. Cummings (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., Inc., Publishers, 2009), 309 pp., endnotes, bibliography, appendices, photos, index.

From 1950 to 1989, Radio Free Europe (RFE) broadcast news of the day to Soviet bloc countries—but not to the Soviet Union—in their respective languages. In 1953, four days before Stalin died, Radio Liberation from Bolshevism, later Radio Liberty (RL), began broadcasts in Russian to the Soviet Union. Both were secretly funded by the CIA. In 1976, nearly 10 years after the CIA covert relationship with the “radios” was revealed by *Ramparts* magazine in 1967, the CIA link was ended and the “radios” were consolidated as RFE/RL.

Richard Cummings was director of security at RFE/RL for 15 years beginning in 1980. Although *Cold War Radio* provides a short review of the radios' history, Cummings leaves to others the story of the often controversial organizational, bureaucratic and policy details.² He focuses instead on security and intelligence issues that were a direct consequence of the policy to use émigrés to broadcast information to and about nations behind the iron curtain.

The balance of the book includes lengthy case summaries involving kidnapping, assassination, poisoning, bombing, murder, and penetration of the staff by agents of communist intelligence services.³ Although some attacks are well known, for example, the Bulgarian umbrella assassination of Georgi Markov in London, most have received little publicity. The case of Romanian broadcaster Emil Georgescu is an example. Georgescu and his wife endured multiple attempts and threats on his life, including automobile “accidents” and a knife attack.

Abo Fatalibey, found murdered under a couch in his apartment, was not so fortunate. Soviet defector, Oleg Tumanov, was hired by RL only to be recruited to work in place by the KGB. He served as a long-time penetration and was exposed after his escape to the Soviet Union, where he wrote a memoir.⁴ Perhaps the most spectacular case was the bombing of RFE/RL headquarters in Munich in 1981 by Carlos the Jackal. The bombing was sponsored by the Romanian Securitate, its foreign intelligence service.

Cold War Radio is well documented and leaves no doubt about the value of the radios to the citizens of communist nations to which it broadcast. It also

² See for example, Arch Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000).

³ Appendix K lists more than 100 cases between 1952 and 1994 that could not be included in more detail because of space limits.

⁴ Oleg Tumanov, *TUMANOV: Confessions of a KGB Agent* (Chicago: Edition q, Inc., 1993).

makes clear that for the broadcasters and the management, the Cold War was anything but cold. This is valuable contribution to the literature.

Covert Action in the Cold War: US Policy, Intelligence, and CIA Operations by James Callanan (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2010), 268 pp., endnotes, bibliography, appendices, index.

In his introduction, James Callanan, who teaches at the University of Durham, refers to Sherman Kent's 1955 article in *Studies in Intelligence* citing the need for an intelligence literature.⁵ While Kent directed his attention to the CIA intelligence professionals of the day, Callanan finds that challenge suitable for academics today because of the vast amount of material made available since Kent wrote. *Covert Action in the Cold War* is his contribution toward that objective.

There is little new in this book, but it does provide a comprehensive chronological summary of the major CIA covert action operations from the mid-1940s to the end of the Cold War. He discusses three categories of operations: offensive (like the Bay of Pigs and Operation MONGOOSE), defensive (like those in the Italy in the late 1940s), and preventive (like the coup in Iran in 1953). Vietnam and Laos are treated separately. Callanan emphasizes the political consequences of these operations and discusses what they involved in general terms, but he does not dwell on operational details.

Callanan's sourcing is extensive, although most is secondary, and in some instances that gets him into difficulty. For example, his characterization of Kim Philby's impact on the Cold War draws on two notoriously unreliable books, one by E. H. Cookridge,⁶ the other by Anthony Cave Brown.⁷ Thus, Callanan's analysis of the penetration of the Albanian covert action is weakened by assuming Brown is correct when he suggests James Angleton and Frank Wisner both suspected Philby was a Soviet agent in 1950. (82) In fact, Philby did not come under suspicion until May 1951, when Burgess and Maclean defected. Finally, the comment that "the CIA is alleged to have planted a bomb on an Air India plane on which China's Zhou Enlai was scheduled to fly.... The plan was vetoed by Allen Dulles, but not in time to prevent the bomb from being placed on the plane" is not mentioned in the source cited. (253)

Covert Action in the Cold War provides a good overview, but the role of the CIA should not be accepted without further validation.

⁵ Sherman Kent, "The Need for an Intelligence Literature," *Studies in Intelligence* 1, No. 1 (1955):1-8.

⁶ E. H. Cookridge, *The Third Man* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Son's, 1968). Callanan notes that this book was published a year before Philby's memoir, when in fact they were both published in 1968. Though not totally without merit, Cookridge is careless, e.g., he gets Philby's date of birth wrong and claims his wife was an American.

⁷ Anthony Cave Brown, *Treason in the Blood* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1994).

Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies: Reconstruction of the Neo-Assyrian Intelligence Services and its Significance for 2 Kings 18-19 by Peter Dubovsky (Roma: Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 2006), 308 pp., footnotes, bibliography, appendices, index.

As the King of Judah during 715–686 BCE, Hezekiah broke the siege of Jerusalem by the Assyrian King Sennacherib in 701. His story is told in the Bible (Second Kings 18:13–16). While at Harvard Divinity School, biblical scholar Peter Dubovsky studied records of the invasion to determine the validity of the biblical account and to examine the “role of intelligence in the Neo-Assyrian Empire,” of which Assyria under Sennacherib was a part. (3) *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies* is the result.

Aside from the Bible, Dubovsky used a second source, thousands of well-preserved cuneiform tablets excavated from the archives in Niniveh (modern day Mosul in Iraq) and Nimrud (south of Niniveh). The images are now available online.⁸ The tablets reveal the existence of Assyrian intelligence networks and the espionage involved in Sennacherib’s invasion of Judah. In the tablets Dubovsky found a degree of correlation with the biblical account, but of interest here are the conclusions he draws from the tablets about Assyrian intelligence.

In general, Dubovsky found that all the functions of the so-called intelligence cycle existed, but without specific names. Furthermore, there were no intelligence services as such; all officials were, in a sense, intelligence officers and tasked as needed. Thus, in order to make descriptions of the cases he uncovered easy to grasp, Dubovsky has adopted modern terminology.⁹

After a chapter that analyzes the intelligence references in Second Kings chapters 18 and 19, Dubovsky devotes two chapters to intelligence case studies based on analysis of the tablets. These include dispatches from “field agents and instructions from the Assyrian Royal Court.” In a discussion of an intelligence network, Dubovsky has a section on source validation that explains how royal doubts were allayed and communicated. (66–70) Another case deals with the very detailed reporting on the location of the Babylonian army. (87–89)

Despite a title suggestive of a children’s book, *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies* is anything but. Those unfamiliar with the region and the history may need to resort to Wikipedia for context. But the book is extensively documented and leaves little doubt that intelligence is one of the oldest professions.

⁸ Dr. Dubovsky notes that most of the actual tablets are located in the British Museum, although some may be found in major libraries in Israel and France.

⁹ He has used several contemporary sources for his terminology, including Sherman Kent, *Strategic Intelligence for American World Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1949); Mark Lowenthal, *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy*, 2nd ed., (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2003); and Abram Shulsky and Gary Schmitt, *Silent Warfare: Understanding the World of Intelligence*, 3rd ed., (Washington, DC: Brassey’s, 2002).

Invisible Ink: Spycraft of the American Revolution by John Nagy (Yardley, PA: Westholme Publishing, LLC, 2010), 385 pp., endnotes, bibliography, appendices, photos, index.

No one has ever seen an invisible ink. But there must be such a thing; David Kahn's *Codebreakers* has many entries under the subject. In fact, what most writers, including Kahn, mean when they use the term is some form of communications whose true meaning is obscured until rendered intelligible by one process or another. In *Invisible Ink*, John Nagy tells how such communications were used during the American revolution.

His story begins with a survey of the types of secret communications, many from ancient times, that were available to intelligence officers and their spies during the Revolutionary War. For example, he describes the use of the hard-boiled egg to convey secret writing. The method involves an ink that is visible when writing on the shell, but gradually disappears, only to be revealed when the shell is removed and the message becomes visible on the solid egg white. This is a form of steganography best known today when messages are hidden in digital images using a computer program.

Invisible Ink illustrates the use of codes and ciphers, mail openings, dead drops, concealment devices, disguises, and deception in military operations. There are also chapters on the application of these techniques by Washington's Culper Ring in New York and the treason of Benedict Arnold. Nagy also includes the planting of what he calls "false returns" or misinformation about troop strengths and dispositions that are allowed to fall into enemy hands. There is a good account of Washington's deception operations—with allusions to contemporary examples—aimed at convincing the British he was about to go north when in fact he was heading for Yorktown. The frequent use of deception and forgeries to influence events in Europe through the newspapers, led to several instances after the war in which Washington was forced to write to publishers who were about to publish letters signed by him, letting them know they were spurious. The appendices contain examples of the ciphers and code books Washington and the British used. But the solution to the rebus message on the cover of the book will be found elsewhere.

Invisible Ink is based primarily on firsthand accounts and primary documents. It is a grand refresher on Revolutionary War espionage and leaves no doubt that secure communications have been an important element in the history of American national security.

Mind-Sets and Missiles: A First Hand Account of the Cuban Missile Crisis by Kenneth Michael Absher (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Army War College, 2009), 110 pp., endnotes, bibliography, index.

Mike Absher, a research fellow at the George Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M, began his career in government in 1962 as a CIA analyst of Latin America. Assigned to the Office of National Estimates (ONE), headed by Sherman Kent, he participated in drafting all the national intelligence estimates concerning the Cuban missile crisis. In this mono-

graph, Absher summarizes the familiar events of the crisis, emphasizing the mind-sets of key players as they struggled to correlate unsubstantiated agent reports, incomplete U-2 coverage, and political variables as they prepared their estimates. He describes several in which intelligence reports were discounted because they conflicted with conventional wisdom. For example, material provided by Col. Oleg Penkovsky was graded “unreliable” because it lacked independent corroboration (15)—the number of missiles Penkovsky claimed the Soviet Union had was much less than the official Air Force figure. Then there were the agent reports from Cuba that were discounted because their sources were low ranking. (50–52)

The most famous instance of mind-set influencing an estimate occurred on 19 September 1962 when ONE went on record that the Soviet Union would not place offensive missiles in Cuba because “it would be incompatible with Soviet practice to date.” (40) Of particular interest is Absher’s discussion of the all-hands meeting Kent held before that judgment was sent to the Whites House. Noting that the entire Intelligence Community had reviewed and agreed with the conclusion, the crusty, tobacco-chewing Kent asked each analyst to express an opinion. No one disagreed. But that was soon to change as photo-interpreters started using agent reports to design U-2 missions. Absher recalls that DCI John McCone applied his own intuitive judgment and was convinced the missiles were there and got U-2 coverage that finally revealed the truth.

Mind-Sets and Missiles concludes with a brief but useful discussion of lessons identified in 1962 that warn of the risks associated with the failure to collect, analyze, and coordinate all-source intelligence. The implications are tactfully left to the reader’s imagination.

Operation Mincemeat: The True Spy Story that Changed the Course of World War II by Ben Macintyre (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010), 400 pp., endnotes, bibliography, photos, maps, index.

In 1954, Ewen Montagu sent Allen Dulles an inscribed copy of his book, *The Man Who Never Was*. It told the story of Operation Mincemeat, a deception operation designed to mislead the Nazis about the site of the invasion of Southern Europe. Dulles later wrote in his own book, *The Craft of Intelligence*,¹⁰ “Perhaps the best story of deception...was called ‘Operation Mincemeat,’ and the story of its execution has been fully told by...Ewen Montagu.” Well, not quite fully it turns out. Ben Macintyre’s *Operation Mincemeat* comes much closer to that goal.

The reason is straightforward. Macintyre noticed a comment in Montagu’s memoir that referred to “some memoranda which, in very special circumstances and for a very particular reason, I was allowed to keep.” (xii) When he asked Montagu’s son what that comment meant, Macintyre was shown a trunk of his father’s that contained classified MI5, MI6 and Naval Intelligence

¹⁰ Allen Dulles, *The Craft of Intelligence* (New York: Harper & Row, Publisher, 1963), 146.

documents—some marked Top Secret. They revealed the real story of Mince-meat.

In *The Man Who Never Was*, Montagu takes much of the credit for the operation. The reality is somewhat different. The concept was conceived by Charles Cholmondeley (pronounced Chumley), called George in Montagu's book. He suggested dropping a dead officer into the sea with a dispatch box attached to him containing papers that would convince the Germans the attack everyone was expecting in the Mediterranean would occur in Greece and Sardinia. The actual target, Sicily, would be referred to as a diversion. The concept was accepted in principle by the Double Cross Committee and detailed planning begun.

Insertion by air was ruled impractical, and dispatch by submarine was the method adopted. Macintyre provides much more detail about how a body was obtained—including his real name and background, a subject omitted from Montagu's book. He also covers the bureaucratic battles fought with various military elements, as they attempted to coordinate the details, including the selection of a landing site that turned out to be off the coast of Huelva, Spain.

The fabrication of the documents intended to deceive the Germans, caused many difficulties since they were to be prepared by flag officers in their own handwriting to ensure authenticity. Of lesser magnitude, but equal importance, was the development of a legend for "Major William Martin, Royal Marines" and the pocket litter to be placed on his body. Montagu's secretary was selected to write some love letters for Martin to carry. Macintyre provides personal background for all the players not mentioned in Montagu's book.

Accounts of the operation have appeared elsewhere that claim the body was floated ashore and found by a Spaniard. In fact, he was found at sea by a teenage sardine fisherman who brought him ashore.

The biggest question for the planners was whether the Spanish would make the contents of the dispatch bag available to the Germans and, if they did, would the Germans accept them as genuine? Macintyre explains at some length the German espionage network in Spain and how it gained access to and copied the material without letting the British know. The British, on the other hand, had Spanish agents who reported everything that went on without letting the Germans know.

The crucial issue was whether the deception worked; did the Germans believe the evidence and reduce forces in Sicily before the invasion? German historian, Klaus-Jürgen Müller, wrote in 1987 that the Nazis had not been fooled and that claims by Montagu to the contrary were wrong.¹¹ But he did not factor in the ULTRA decrypts, as Macintyre shows, which proved the contrary.

¹¹ Klaus-Jürgen Müller, "A German Perspective on Allied Deception Operations in the Second World War," *Intelligence and National Security* 2, no. 3: 301–26. For a British response, see David Hunt, "Remarks on 'A German Perspective on Allied Deception Operations,'" *Intelligence and National Security* 3, no. 1: 190–94.

Operation Mincemeat is a great story, well told, and a welcome corrective to intelligence history.

The Spy Who Loved Us: The Vietnam War and Pham Xuan An's Dangerous Game by Thomas A. Bass (New York: Public Affairs, 2009), 297 pp., endnotes, photos, bibliography, index.

After acknowledging that “some would claim that journalists helped to lose the war in Vietnam,” journalist, now English professor, Thomas Bass writes proudly “I am claiming that a journalist helped win the war—for the Vietnamese.” (xviii) And he is quite right. Pham Xuan An, a North Vietnamese army officer working as a journalist for *Time* magazine did just that by, to cite just one example, giving the North Vietnamese warning of the 1971 incursion into Laos that cost 8,000 casualties. (217) Bass provides many more examples. How could this have happened? The answer is more than a tale of failed counterintelligence, and it has been told before. Professor Bass characterizes the previous account as official, explaining that An was authorized by the Vietnamese government to cooperate with author Larry Berman, implying that many particulars were withheld.¹²

Nevertheless, the basic story is the same. An fought the French, joined North Vietnam intelligence, and was sent to the United States for training as a journalist. He returned to work for Reuters and then *Time* in Saigon, where he developed close contacts with the South Vietnamese army, the CIA, and journalists. His political and cultural perspectives and language abilities were much sought after. All the while An passed whatever he could to the North Vietnamese army. After closing the *Time* bureau in Saigon in 1975, An was sent to a reeducation center. When he was released, he was refused permission to travel to the United States, but he was given many awards. He died in 2006.

Bass adds details—some provided by An and others by people Bass interviewed—and provides a broader picture of his career. But important differences exist between the Bass and Berman accounts. The two treat differently An's military career against the French and, ironically, his later service with French army intelligence. Bass's obvious political agenda also raises questions about his objectivity. This leads to inaccuracies such as the assertion that it was the Americans who “employed torture and terror, most notably the Phoenix Program, which cultivated informants and assassinated fifty thousand Communist sympathizers.” (71) He later includes a gratuitous description of a South Vietnamese prison with “Tiger cages” that he relates to Abu Ghraib but which had nothing to do with An. Bass's characterizations of An the man border on adoration. He mentions other journalists who recall An “with fondness and respect,” and to be fair some who do not—Peter Arnett, for example. (226) Finally, there

¹² Larry Berman, *Perfect Spy: The Incredible Double Life of PHAM XUAN AN, Time Magazine Reporter and Vietnamese Communist Agent* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007). See “Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf” in *Studies in Intelligence* 51, no. 4 (December 2007): 100–101.

is the documentation: Berman cited sources; Bass for the most part does not, though he names those he interviewed.

It is clear that Pham Xuan An was an effective intelligence officer. But whether he was *The Spy Who Loved Us* or just played the role as part of his cover until his death remains an enigma.

Targeting the Third Reich: Air Intelligence and the Allied Bombing Campaigns by Robert S. Ehlers, Jr. (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2009), 422 pp., endnotes, bibliography, photos, maps, index.

The successful strategic bombing campaign against Nazi Germany has been the subject of movies and books depicting the harrowing experiences of the crews and the commanders that sent them into battle. Two topics, however, received much less attention: target selection and damage assessment. *Targeting the Third Reich*, the first history to address these issues, finds aerial reconnaissance and photointerpretation to be the key elements of success.

The book's first part covers the origins of these capabilities during WW I, the men responsible, and the military-political context in which they evolved. The question of whether bombing should concentrate on destruction of cities was raised and debated. The refinement of reconnaissance and photointerpretation techniques developed during the war, and neglected briefly afterward, were soon of necessity rapidly improved. "Pioneered by the British between 1939 and 1942...expert damage-assessment capability [emerged] more than two years before RAF Bomber Command and the United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe (USSTAF) had enough bombers to do serious damage to the German war effort." (4)

Robert Ehlers, professor of military history at the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies at Maxwell Air Force Base, explains how this happened in considerable detail. It soon became obvious, he writes, that the effectiveness of an air campaign "tends to be directly proportional to the efficacy of target-selection and damage assessment," both dependent on photointerpretation. (9)

After the United States entered WW II, the Americans once again went to school on British experience, though they caught on quickly. The US 8th Air Force and the British Bomber Command had five target objectives: U-boat construction facilities, the aircraft industry, transportation, oil plants, and industrial targets. (142) Until late 1943, the shortage of resources and command competition limited effectiveness. Complicating the situation, RAF chief Air Marshal Arthur "Bomber" Harris, the principal advocate of city bombing to win the war, remained "wedded" to the concept. It might have been otherwise, writes Ehlers, had the British not made the "serious mistake" of denying him access to ULTRA. (144) Despite the controversies photoanalysis by the Combined Interpretation Unit (CIU) functioned well.

In separate chapters, Ehlers discusses the aerial campaigns against each target category, highlighting the organizations established, the key personnel

involved, and the effectiveness of air intelligence overall as determined by aerial reconnaissance. When the invasion came, the Luftwaffe was decimated and the transportation system a wreck. Surprisingly, air intelligence confirmed that “only a small percentage of the total tonnage hit vital components within oil and transportation targets sets, but it was enough to destroy both” in time for the invasion. (339) The city bombing theory was proven wrong. In the end, boots on the ground, with air support, was essential to victory.

This is a splendid book that adds much new material to the history of air intelligence.

Intelligence Services Abroad

The KGB's Poison Factory: From Lenin to Litvinenko by Boris Volodarsky (Minneapolis, MN: Zenith Press, 2010), 288 pp., endnotes, bibliography, appendix, photos, index.

In his memoir, former KGB general Pavel Sudoplatov tells how he was ordered by Stalin personally to kill Ukrainian nationalist Yevhen Konovalts in 1938. The method was left to Sudoplatov—he used a bomb in a box of chocolates.¹³ Such “wet operations,” as they are called, were not uncommon in the Stalin era, though they are said to have ended by the time the Soviet Union collapsed. In *The KGB's Poison Factory*, former GRU officer Boris Volodarsky suggests that the practice has been resurrected in post-Soviet Russia.

In the telling, Volodarsky provides some background on the origins of the laboratory that produced the KGB's assassination weapons and poisons, its key personnel, and a few operations—some familiar, others less so. But the primary thrust of the book is on the case of former KGB/FSB officer Alexander Litvinenko, who was poisoned in London with a dose of polonium and died in agony on 23 November 2006. Volodarsky describes Litvinenko's life story, how he came to be in London, his relationship with his benefactor, the expatriate oligarch Boris Berezovsky. He is also quite candid about the KGB officers thought to be responsible for the deed and the myriad other players involved. And, in order to demonstrate that this was not an isolated case, Volodarsky discusses recent unsolved assassinations of several Russian journalists and attempts on the lives of various political figures. It is hard to argue with his conclusion that the current Russian regime has reverted to practices established by its predecessors.

Unfortunately, the book has major flaws. Some may be attributed to poor editing. For example, there are numerous factual statements and quotes that are not sourced, and the few that are do not include page numbers in their citations. Another flaw is the disjointed chapter arrangement. There are three primary chapters on the Litvinenko case, titled “Operation Vladimir I,” “Vladimir II,” and “Vladimir III.” But they occur at three different points in

¹³ Anatoli Sudoplatov, et al., *Special Tasks* (New York: Back Bay Books, 1995).

the story. They are interspersed with other cases, and no sentences smooth the transition from one to the other. And finally, Volodarsky interjects himself in the narrative with gratuitous stories of TV interviews, meetings at prestigious venues, and his relationships with various personages. These digressions tend to confuse rather than elucidate and would have been better left to endnotes, if included at all.

The KGB's Poison Factory tells a tragic story but leaves to the reader the unwelcome task of separating seemingly perplexing trivia from important details. A well-sourced second edition would remove what is now just a veneer of legitimacy.

Spies in the Vatican: The Soviet Union's Cold War Against the Catholic Church by John Koehler (New York: Pegasus Books, LLC, 2009), 296 pp., footnotes, photos, index.

Spies in the Vatican begins with the execution of Monsignor Konstantin Budkiewicz in Lubyanka Prison on Easter Sunday 1923. Resisting religious persecution or “committing a counterrevolutionary act” made him the first of several thousand cleric martyrs in revolutionary Russia. (5–6) The book ends with the exposure of a number of Polish priests who had been agents of the KGB or the East Germans, some in the Vatican itself. The rest of the story tells why the KGB stopped killing and started recruiting priests to monitor the Vatican and influence its policies.

Author John Koehler explains how the papal sanctum functions, how the KGB placed its agents in key positions, and provides examples of what they supplied to the Kremlin. Typical of their results is a report of the “meeting between President Nixon and Pope Paul VI in the Vatican on September 28, 1970” that reached Moscow days later via the Polish intelligence service. (41)

As is well known, the Soviets viewed the election of the Polish-born Pope John Paul II as a most significant threat to Soviet control over its European satellites, and Koehler devotes several chapters to their response. Of almost equal concern was the “danger to socialism” created by the Solidarity movement in Poland. Koehler tells of a plot to assassinate Lech Walesa, a plot that was canceled; he concludes it would have been counter-productive. (92) When DCI William Casey visited the pope in 1981 and requested his help in smuggling material into Poland, the KGB learned of the pope's agreement to help and attempted, with partial success, to interrupt shipments of books and printing presses. Perhaps the most startling revelation in the book is his conclusion that the Soviet Union, with Bulgarian cooperation, was the force behind the attempt to assassinate Pope John Paul II. He cites several sources and views one as “an order for assassination.” He describes in considerable detail how the attempt was made. (88)

Koehler also presents several case studies of high level penetrations, based on files recovered after the collapse of the communism, that document just how the agents were controlled and what each supplied. The clerical agents

were mostly Polish, but some came from Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Bulgaria, often assisted by the East Germans.

Spies in the Vatican is a valuable contribution to the repugnant history of the Soviet Union and its attempts to control the Eastern Bloc countries and protect its communist dictatorship.

The Terminal Spy: A True Story of Espionage, Betrayal, and Murder by Alan S. Cowell (New York: Doubleday, 2008), 432 pp., bibliography, no index.

The murky chronicle of Alexander Litvinenko's poisoning with the highly toxic polonium-210 in a posh London hotel bar, has been told in at least four books, each one by an author with some involvement in the case. Alan Cowell was the *New York Times* London bureau chief when the murder occurred in 2006, and his independent account brings objectivity to the saga that the others could not.

The book's short prologue relates Litvinenko's last healthy day on earth, six years to the day after his arrival in London on 1 November 2000. Cowell devotes the rest of the book to answering the questions: why did this act of radiological terror occur and who did it? To get at the "why" he delves deep into Litvinenko's past, including his home life, first marriage, and his career with the KGB/FSB. The picture that emerges is of a complex young officer, given to conspiracy theories, intrigued by danger, with a tendency to exaggerate, and "a propensity for making enemies." This he accomplished in spades when he declined an assignment to assassinate oligarch Boris Berezovsky and then held a press conference and exposed the operation. Arrested, imprisoned, tried, and found not guilty, Litvinenko defected to England with a new wife. In London, with the support of Berezovsky, he wrote a book charging the FSB with various acts of terror and besmirching Vladimir Putin.¹⁴ The Russians Cowell interviewed concluded that if Litvinenko had "sat quietly in London they would probably have left him alone." (415) It is in these circumstances that Cowell sees an answer to the question why. (420)

As to who did it, on the surface, the perpetrator seems obvious: more than the radioactive trail from London to Moscow points a finger at the FSB. The British investigated, suspects were identified, and many were interviewed, but no conclusive evidence was obtained. Cowell narrows down the long list of candidates, recreates the events and roles each suspect played at the hotel, and then lays out the likely scenarios of the murder. He concludes that Scotland Yard believed the murder was bungled: the dose of polonium administered was too small. Litvinenko was supposed to have died quickly, minimizing the chance that the cause would be discovered. The prime suspect, Andrey Lugovoi, returned to Russia, was elected to parliament, and gained immunity. The Russian government remains in a state of emphatic denial.

¹⁴ Yuri Felshtinsky and Alexander Litvinenko, *Blowing Up Russia: Terror from Within* (New York: S.P.I. Books, 2002).

The Terminal Spy ends with a clear message: Alexander Litvinenko's death "was a cruel warning to others who might emulate him." (421)

Life in the World of Intelligence

The Cloak and Dagger Cook: A CIA Memoir by Kay Shaw Nelson (Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Co., 2009), photos, recipes, index.

This is an uncommon memoir in several respects beyond its amusing title. Kay Nelson's story begins in 1948 with her recruitment into the clandestine service of the CIA. In the days when women served mostly as secretaries, her background as a reporter with a degree in Russian studies from Syracuse University convinced Harry R., head of the Soviet Division, she had the right stuff. With a nudge from her New Hampshire senator, she reported for duty only three months after applying. After a little over two years at Headquarters, she married Wayne Nelson, a case officer, and soon realized her ambition to travel overseas, though in those days officer's wives had to resign before joining their husbands.

The next 20 years were spent traveling to more than 70 countries. And while Kay learned to adapt to cover restrictions while Wayne pursued his duties, they also became fascinated with the cuisines they found in cities throughout the world. Thus began her fascination with cooking. She was soon collecting recipes and gradually learned to prepare the dishes herself.

The Cloak and Dagger Cook is mainly about her cooking, dining, and travel experiences, although Nelson does not ignore her life with a CIA case officer and as a mother. We also learn how she began a career as a writer of cook books. Even the chapters devoted to these subjects have a favorite recipe at the ends. After the death of her husband, Kay remained active in the retired officers association and contributed to the first Agency cookbook, *Spies, Black Ties, and Mango Pies*.¹⁵

The final chapter of this unusual glimpse of Agency life is a bibliographic essay on the books written by Agency officers she has known. For cooks generally, *The Cloak and Dagger Cook* is a valuable and varied contribution. For Agency families, it will have a special attraction.



¹⁵ *Spies, Black Ties, and Mango Pies: Stories and Recipes from CIA Families All over the World* (Community Communications, Inc, 1997).