

# *Studies in Intelligence*

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**In the Service of Empire: Imperialism and the British Spy  
Thriller, 1901–1914**

**Office of Strategic Services Training During World War II**

**Claire Lee Chennault and the Problem of  
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## In the Service of Empire: Imperialism and the British Spy Thriller, 1901–1914

Dr. Christopher R. Moran and Dr. Robert Johnson

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*In the decade before the First World War, the British spy thriller was a cultural phenomenon drawing large and expectant readerships across all classes.*  
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In the decade before the First World War, the British spy thriller was a cultural phenomenon drawing large and expectant readerships across all classes and catapulting its authors to prominence as spokesmen for then widely prevalent concerns about imperial strength, national power, and foreign espionage. Three hundred is a conservative estimate of the number of spy novels that went into print between 1901 and 1914. This article reflects upon some of the seminal publications from the period, including Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (1901), the tale of a streetwise orphan who trains as a spy and becomes embroiled in the intelligence duel on India's North-West Frontier; Erskine Childers's *The Riddle of the Sands* (1903), the story of two gentleman yachtsmen who, cruising in the North Sea, stumble upon a secret German plot to invade England; and William le Queux's *Spies of the Kaiser* (1909), a dire prophecy of German espionage in advance of an invasion.

In recent years, intelligence historians have become increasingly interested in spy fiction. A

sure sign of this was a special issue of the journal, *Intelligence and National Security*, published in 2008, devoted entirely to “Spying in Film and Fiction.” Another indicator was the appearance in June 2009 of a supplemental edition of *Studies in Intelligence* in which practicing intelligence officers considered contemporary fiction in literature, film, and television.

Historiography on the subject has tended to hinge on the issue of realism or, put another way, the symbiosis between real spies and fictional spies. In keeping with the growing influence of “new literary historicism,” which seeks to demonstrate how both canonical literature and, perhaps even more so, “low” or “popular” works can be quarried for historical meaning, scholars like Allan Hepburn have scrutinized *Kim* and *The Riddle* to see whether they reconstitute the “intelligence cycle” with accuracy or even disclose tradecraft.<sup>1</sup>

In *The Great Game: The Myths and Reality of Espionage*, Fred Hitz, a former inspector general of the Cen-

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*Unashamedly patriotic, their political sensibilities “finely tuned to the cadences of imperial decline,” authors wanted to see more being done by the authorities.*

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tral Intelligence Agency, suggested that there is a clear overlap between “real” intelligence, and the fiction of Kipling and Childers.<sup>2</sup> In a recent article for the *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, Adam Svendsen proposed that the works of many spy novelists offer a near perfect window onto intelligence processes.<sup>3</sup> In a field notorious for its lack of declassified material, Svendsen continues, intelligence history would be greatly enriched if scholars invested a little more time thumbing through fictitious renderings of the sub rosa world. The fact that many authors were themselves veterans of intelligence is frequently highlighted to add credibility to this sort of approach.

We are not, however, of the opinion that the spy thriller is mimetic of real-life spying. While generally true-to-life when it comes to the “period details” of intelligence (disguises, sketch-books, etc.), spy novels are affected by commercial concerns such as the need for dramatic impact. As the best-selling spy writer Graham Greene concedes: “A novel based on life in Secret Service must necessarily contain a large element of fantasy.” As outsiders, moreover, how can we hope to distinguish, with any certainty, the authentic intrigue narratives from the apocryphal yarns dressed up as “real”? The words of Allen Dulles, former director of the

CIA, seem apposite: “The operations of an intelligence service and the plots of most spy stories part company, never to meet again.”<sup>4</sup>

Rather than appraising fin de siècle spy novels as documentation for the scholar of intelligence (and then immediately finding them wanting), we will consider the historical context within which they were produced and received. What interests us about these texts is that they reflected real geopolitical anxieties that existed at the time. Set against the backdrop of the “Great Game,” the protracted strategic conflict between Britain, France, and Tsarist Russia in Central Asia, *Kim* is dark meditation on Russian imperial expansion and intrigues toward India. Brewed within the atmosphere of national soul-searching at the end of the Boer War, *The Riddle* is a prophetic vision of the Great War, making graspable the growing capacity of Germany as an adversarial sea power. *Spies of the Kaiser*; meanwhile, ostensibly chronicled the discovery of foreign espionage networks at a time when minds were increasingly centered on the actual machinations of German intelligence. We contend in this article that early 20th century spy fiction was designed, above all else, to alert both the government and the people of England to the vulnerabilities of the British Empire.

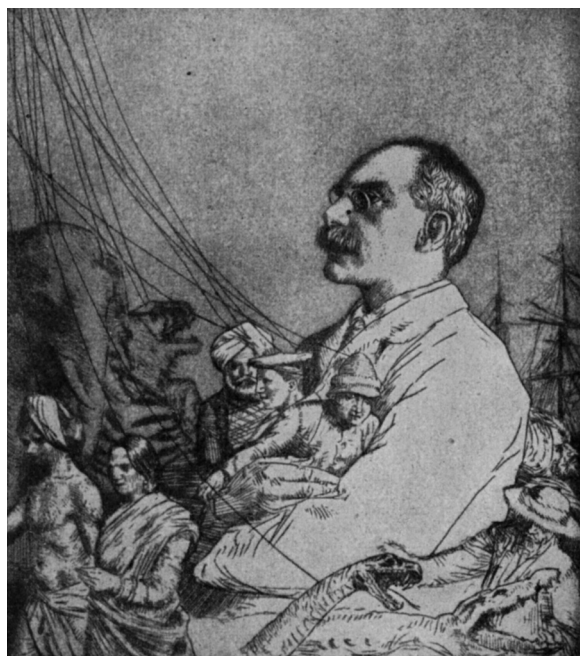
Unashamedly patriotic, their political sensibilities “finely tuned to the cadences of imperial decline,” authors wanted to see more being done by the authorities.<sup>5</sup> For example, Kipling supported Lord Roberts’s call for a more robust defense of Empire; Childers sought to garner public opinion in support of new naval bases and a rapid expansion of the fleet; and le Queux demanded the creation of a domestic intelligence service to combat the German ogre, an enemy with whom the day of reckoning was inevitable. We will also show here that certain authors quickly realized that whipping up popular concerns was a profitable enterprise. Le Queux was by far the wiliest, reaping massive financial rewards by sensationalizing the extant threats facing the nation.

Admittedly, this is not entirely new ground. In their larger histories of the British intelligence community, Christopher Andrew and Bernard Porter have both shown convincingly how popular authors from the period were implicated in the business of “scare-mongering,” giving voice to a range of public anxieties, from the vulnerability of Britain’s defensive preparations to the specter of foreign espionage.<sup>6</sup> David French, David Trotter, and Nicholas Hiley have also provided important contributions on the role of spy fiction in stirring up a hornet’s nest of tension before the First World War.<sup>7</sup>

We nevertheless feel that there are two avenues that

require further analysis. First, there is a tendency in the existing literature to suggest that the threats discussed in spy fiction had little or no grounding in reality. Authors, it is often said, were spinning mysteries out of airy nothings, so motivated were they by commercial gains. Yet such a judgment seems too conclusive: there is a difference between exaggeration and pure invention. Russia did annex strategically sensitive areas in Central Asia with the intention of putting diplomatic pressure on Britain; Germany was building a battle-fleet with which to challenge British imperial hegemony. Authors, moreover, recognized that the best and most profitable fantasy conveyed some real truth.

Secondly, we would like to show how certain spy novels



Drawing of Rudyard Kipling published in *The Bookman* in 1903. ©Lebrecht/Corbis

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*Certain spy novels carried huge weight in the defense councils of Empire, precipitating significant changes in actual policymaking.*

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carried huge weight in the defense councils of Empire, precipitating significant changes in actual policymaking. Although historically, officials demurred at giving credence to works of fiction, between 1901 and 1914, the opposite was true: intrigue narratives were taken seriously in the corridors of power.

### ***I. Kim and the External Threat to Empire***

In Kipling's enigmatic story *Kim*, the orphaned boy with mixed parentage is perfectly suited to move between the world of Europeans and the people of the colony and, as such, is by far the best asset for maintaining surveillance and gathering HUMINT.<sup>8</sup> Challenged by Colonel Creighton, the fictional head of the Intelligence Department, to join his team of trained local agents, his missions ranged from eavesdropping to the interception of seditious messages. Kipling gave moral backing to intelligence work by suggesting that it safeguarded the empire and thwarted heinous plots. Mah-bub Ali reassures Kim that his delivery of a key message ensured: "The game is well played. That war

is done now and the evil we hope nipped before the flower, thanks to me and thee."

The literature on *Kim* is voluminous and well-trodden.<sup>9</sup> Critics of colonial discourse point to a range of moral flaws in Kipling's work.<sup>10</sup> Edward Said, who in 2000 wrote an introduction to a reprinted edition, felt that orientalist values permeated the novel to the extent that it was "a masterwork of imperialism."<sup>11</sup>

Other scholars have dismissed the idea that *Kim* contains any "reality" at all. Gerald Morgan believed that it "owed practically everything to Kipling's imagination"; the only thing that was not an invention was his use of the term "The Great Game."<sup>12</sup> Morgan argued there was no secret world of intelligence throughout either northern India or Central Asia. He argued that even the Indian Survey Department, employing a number of Asian agents, was not engaged in intelligence work, stating that it was strictly limited to gathering topographical information. Morgan played down the importance of the actual Intelligence Department in India, maintaining that its tasks were only really those of "collating information," whilst the Political Service, formed in 1820, was little more than a diplomatic corps designed to send agents to neighboring states.<sup>13</sup>

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[The document's] contents revealed the activities of "a Hindu banker in Peshawar, a firm of gun makers in Belgium and an important semi-independent Mohammedan ruler."

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Agents rarely collected information on the Russians and had no powers to make treaties. Their "special duty" was carried out quite openly with letters of introduction for the rulers they visited. British officers, meanwhile, never entered Russian territory without permission. Morgan even questioned the success of the actual intelligence officers, doubting if there was anything that they really achieved, beyond gathering tidbits of geographical knowledge.<sup>14</sup>

## II. Reflections of Reality in Kipling's *Kim*

If, as we suggest, spy thrillers reflected anxieties and aspirations of the period, to what extent does *Kim* fulfill these concerns? *Kim* is portrayed as a boy familiar with intrigue. Initially, he acts as a courier even though he did not understand the contents of the messages he carried, for "what he loved was the game for its own sake."<sup>15</sup> Over time, however, he is drawn deeper into the world of espionage. He delivers a vital document to the head of British intelligence in India. Its contents revealed the activities of "a Hindu banker in Peshawar, a firm of gun makers in Belgium and an important semi-independent Mohammedan ruler."<sup>16</sup> For spy chiefs, the document highlighted a catalogue of threats: Imperial Russia, disloyal Indians in

positions of influence, and gun-runners from Europe who could supply the latest firearms to an Indian force. The reference to a Mohammedan ruler not only evoked concerns that a princely state might secretly foster sedition against the Raj in defiance of British paramountcy, but also drew on imperial Islamophobia.

In the novel's climax, *Kim* steals the plans of a Russian and a Frenchman, who are carrying out clandestine survey work on the mountain approaches to India. He passes them, at the cost of his cover—and almost his life—to Colonel Creighton back in Simla. Here, Kipling articulated a deep-seated anxiety of the period. In 1894, the Franco-Russian Alliance brought together Britain's chief colonial rivals and raised the specter that Britain might have to wage war on several fronts. Between 1894 and 1899, when the novel was written, the Russian army marched into the Pamirs and, at Somatash, clashed with the Afghans, whom Britain was pledged to protect.

Anxieties in Whitehall about a Russian threat to the landward borders of India can be traced back to the 1830s. They were magnified, however, from the 1870s onwards by the Tsarist annexation of the khanates of the old Silk Route, which brought the Russians closer to the subcontinent. Statesmen and military planners faced an

all too familiar intelligence dilemma: what were the enemy's real intentions and capabilities in the region, and what should the response be?

While some deplored alarmist reactions to Russian expansion, others pointed to evidence of more sinister designs: the discovery of secret Russian military plans (1886); border skirmishes between the Tsar's forces and Britain's Afghan allies (1885, 1892, and 1894); and the arrival of "shooting parties," "scientific explorers," and armed Cossack patrols in the mountain passes on India's northern border (1887 and 1888). Such groups seemed to suggest an intention to stir up the peoples of South Asia against British rule, perhaps as a prelude to a more serious attack through Afghanistan.

Although the British had managed to crush the Indian Mutiny in 1857, there was widespread concern that they might have to fight a border war against tribesmen and Russian forces, while trying to suppress an internal revolt at the same time. This internal dimension is often overlooked, but the mood of the Indian population was an important element in the calculations of the British authorities.

Kipling was certainly well-informed about the Great Game. As a young journalist at Simla, he read Maj. Gen. Charles MacGregor's *Defence of India* (1884), which was regarded as the handbook of the hawkish "Forward School."

He was also briefed on the Russian threat to the borders of India by Maj. Gen. (later Lord) Frederick Roberts, commander-in-chief of the Indian Army. Affectionately known as “Our Bobs,” Roberts was a national hero, celebrated in novels, paintings, and music. Kipling was in Simla with Roberts when the Penjdeh Incident occurred—a moment when war with Russia appeared to be imminent. Moreover, Kipling knew that the frequent skirmishes on the North-West Frontier were fought to pacify the tribesmen who lived astride the potential lines of communications into Afghanistan, where, according to Roberts, the British Indian Army would have to fight the Russians.

Roberts advocated a “Scientific Frontier” for India, not along the administrative line which marked the political border of India, but deep inside Afghanistan along the watershed of the Hindu Kush. Disguised as a native, Kipling emulated the Great Game agents to move among the Afghans and Pathans.<sup>17</sup> He visited Jamrud and interviewed soldiers with experience in frontier warfare. He gleaned information through the social events of Simla. Kipling also drew inspiration from hiking in the Himalayan foothills. Indeed, the climax of *Kim*’s mission is acted out in the same remote mountain setting.

Kipling’s conversations with Roberts were critical in shaping *Kim*. Roberts believed that the Russian threat to India was

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*In Kim, Kipling fused fictional British intelligence operations with the real work of the Indian Survey Department, which employed Asian agents with cryptonyms like “The Mirza” or E5.*

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the single most important feature of Imperial defense. He drafted no less than 20 reports on the defense of India between 1877 and 1893, advocated an increase in the size of the Indian Army (especially British battalions), and championed the creation of an Indian Intelligence Branch to scout beyond the frontier.<sup>18</sup> As an admirer of Roberts, Kipling naturally seized on these concerns and adapted them in his story.<sup>19</sup>

To fashion the novel’s backdrop, Kipling used his knowledge of Simla to create both atmosphere and character: the slums of Lahore provided the setting for *Kim*’s early life, whilst Lurgan Sahib was based on the Armenian Jew, A.M. Jacob, who arrived in the cantonment in 1871, and who was later ruined in 1891 after a protracted legal case with the Nizam of Hyderabad.<sup>20</sup>

In *Kim*, Kipling fused fictional British intelligence operations with the real work of the Indian Survey Department, which employed Asian agents with cryptonyms like “The Mirza” or “E5,” to create a hybrid organization deeply engaged in counterintelligence activities on the frontiers and within the Indian subcontinent. Other than Colonel Creighton (who, as “Control,” is naturally British), Kipling’s heroes are all Asian: the Afghan horse trader, Mahub

Ali; the Indian master of disguises, Hurree Babu; and the mysterious agent E23. For Kipling, it was essential that a successful intelligence organization recruited from a target region employed expert linguists and, where possible, exploited those who already worked in the enemy’s senior ranks.

The hiring of local Asian agents was common practice.<sup>21</sup> Attachés, consuls and newswriters—the name given to local spies hired by British political officers—gradually became a more permanent arrangement. There were “listening posts” at Peshawar, Gilgit, Chitral, Kandahar, Kabul, Tehran, and Meshed from where local agents could be dispatched. Ad hoc arrangements were made by more “nomadic” expeditions too, for example, by boundary commissions and by agents traversing the Hindu Kush or Pamirs.

Indian merchants could also be used as the eyes and ears of the Empire. James Onley has shown, with reference to the Persian Gulf, that Indian merchants were important in creating access to local elites and their networks, and provided a cheap and useful tool for establishing a presence and perhaps “influence.”<sup>22</sup> The “Control” at the consulate at Meshed in 1887, Colonel Charles MacLean, employed Asian per-

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*Since all empires are, ultimately, created and held by coercion, gathering intelligence about potential or actual threats was regarded as essential to the survival of Britain's Empire.*

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sonnel in dangerous work.<sup>23</sup> He reported that two messengers had been arrested in Merv, a small oasis settlement in Russian Central Asia. Agents "I" and "J" were compromised and had to be discharged. An agent in ring "C" went missing in November 1888 after being dispatched to get "photos of Russian guns, troops and barracks."<sup>24</sup>

According to MacLean's records, there were systematic searches at the border, and despite precautions such as using invisible ink in messages, more agents were going missing.<sup>25</sup> The consuls' duties in Meshed were dominated by monitoring relations between Afghanistan and Persia, but they also involved keeping a close watch on Russian Central Asia, particularly the routes that any troops destined for India would have to take.<sup>26</sup>

Asian and British agents, newswriters and attachés all sent their information either directly to the intelligence departments of London and Simla, or to the Foreign Ministry of the Government of India, the governor of the Punjab (which had responsibility for the North-West Frontier Province until 1901) or, in the case of Persia and the Gulf, to the Foreign Office.<sup>27</sup> The Indian native surveyors, the "Pundits," sent their geographical material to the Topographical and Survey Department, some

of which was subsequently published. Copies of reports containing intelligence with potential military value went to the Indian Intelligence Branch.

The need to gather intelligence on Central Asia was to assuage considerable fears of Russian capabilities and intentions and to detect any attempts by Tsarist agents to convert the natives. This was especially important in the case of the Afghans and Pathans, who, living on or near the frontiers, were beyond the full reach of the authorities. The mountainous environment made British fears about the security of the frontier even more acute.

### **III. Kipling and the "Enemy Within"**

The targets of British intelligence in the Empire were not just external enemies, but internal subversives. Since all empires are, ultimately, created and held by coercion, gathering intelligence about potential or actual threats was regarded as essential to the survival of Britain's Empire. What is striking about British leaders, even in the heyday of imperialism in the 1890s, is their consistent concern about security. Joseph Chamberlain wrote in 1898: "We are the most powerful Empire in the world, but we are not all-powerful."<sup>28</sup>

The simple fact was that the colonial administrators were so small in number they did not have the capacity to construct police states. Indeed, as Richard Popplewell points out, there was contempt for the state apparatuses of Russia and other Oriental despotisms: "A strong aversion to the use of spies was one of the alien traditions of government which the British brought to India."<sup>29</sup> Tracing numerous episodes of where the British were badly informed, he shows that they sought to avoid harassment of the people, concluding: "What they could not afford was to alienate the Indian public on a substantial scale. The maintenance of British rule in India depended upon the acquiescence and participation of the ruled."<sup>30</sup>

Kipling's India reveals the depth of concern about the threat to the Raj from the native population, which lingered beneath the surface long after the traumas of the Indian Mutiny. The police were tasked to detect subversion—they would achieve varying degrees of success—but the authorities were also eager to influence the elites, the potential leaders of revolt, and, where possible, to shape public opinion. As C.A. Bayly argues, the idea was to regulate the means of communication so as to establish an "empire of opinion."<sup>31</sup>

The settings in Kipling's work are precisely at the margins of authority in the information order, seeking out the sinister "hidden hand" of rebels and for-

eigners. More than that, the assumption of Kipling's India is that disorder itself is threatening, with no acknowledgement of the inherently undemocratic nature of British colonial rule that would make protest necessary. Indeed, there was a tendency to conflate protest and threat and to see all public expressions of anger and frustration as indicative of latent native fanaticism. The sheer size of the native population meant that public disorder had to be taken seriously, and, as a general rule, prompt coercive action was preferred. Muslims, particularly those astride the frontier, were not only well armed and numerous, but also saw the Afghan king as their natural leader or, in the extreme, the caliph of the Ottoman Empire.

When it came to the interception of nationalist agitators, who began a bombing and assassination campaign before the First World War, there was little enthusiasm to consider political reforms. There were, nevertheless, considerable efforts to track down the conspirators who were directing the terrorist campaign from outside India. As Popplewell has demonstrated, this led to the surveillance of agitating movements in Britain and Asia.<sup>32</sup>

Kipling's novel suffered too from this imperial blind spot; there is no sense that the conspirators with which Kim and his colleagues do battle have any legitimate cause, and their moral weakness is confirmed by

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their treachery toward the Empire and their dependence on foreign support. Instead, Kipling's idealized world is one where British intelligence is alert to the dangers, operates within the sub-strata of native society, and thwarts the conspirators to maintain British security.

Between 1899 and 1901, when Kipling was writing *Kim*, the Army in India was deployed to restore order no fewer than 69 times.<sup>33</sup> Concerns that the police were unreliable to the point of mutiny, not to mention the difficulties of gathering intelligence before an insurrection broke out, meant that the army was a vital instrument in maintaining order. Kipling was aware of its importance, and it is not purely coincidental that a British regiment features so prominently in *Kim*, making its presence felt by "showing the flag." Lord Roberts wrote:

*We cannot afford to let our Native troops or the people of India doubt the maintenance of our supremacy, which they certainly would if we were to allow Russia to overrun Afghanistan. We must let it be clearly seen that we do not fear Russia, and that we are determined she shall not approach near enough to India to cause us serious trouble in our rear.<sup>34</sup>*

Roberts felt that the British people supported a robust imperial defense policy.<sup>35</sup> The press and the enfranchised public could be used as tools to exert pressure on governments that did not exhibit sufficient resolve. When Roberts returned from the South African War, he was convinced that Britain's voluntary system of enlistment was no longer adequate. He set up the National Service League and asked if Kipling would "write some stirring lines to bring home to the public the danger of allowing ourselves to be a second time in the same risky position without any properly trained troops in the country."<sup>36</sup>

Kipling was an eager recruit. He was appalled by the fact that successive Liberal governments had neglected the army, given concessions to the Boers, and vacillated over Home Rule for Ireland, all of which were critical issues for the Empire. Kipling, however, did not share Roberts's faith in the British people and publicly criticized the complacency that seemed to prevail.

#### **IV. "A Yachting Story with a Purpose": Erskine Childers and The Riddle of the Sands**

The Edwardian period was a time of much anxiety and insecurity for the British Empire. Although the South African

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*In challenging the Royal Navy's dominance of the seas, the traditional linchpin of national security, the Kaiser undermined the wisdom of diplomatic isolation and provoked a state of profound unease.*

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War (1899–1902) had been won, many Britons were left wondering how the British Army, numbering almost half a million soldiers, had taken nearly three years to defeat a guerrilla force of roughly 60,000 men. Goaded into the conflict by the British, the outnumbered Boers evoked great international sympathy, especially in France and Germany, leaving the British devoid of both friends and allies. In an age increasingly influenced by the doctrine of “survival of the fittest,” as much between nations as individuals, certain voices suggested that England had somehow “gone soft” and that the nation was deteriorating physically.

Testament to the public mood, in 1905 a pamphlet entitled “The Decline and Fall of the British Empire” sold 12,000 copies in just six months.<sup>37</sup> British eyes also began to turn nervously toward Germany, which, seeking its “place in the sun” commensurate with its rising industrial strength, determined that Weltpolitik was impossible without the construction of a High Seas Fleet. In challenging the Royal Navy’s dominance of the seas, the traditional linchpin of national security, the kaiser undermined the wisdom of diplomatic isolation and provoked a state of profound unease concerning the vulnerability of

Britain’s defensive preparations.

The air thick with fear and uncertainty, the spy novel began to reproach the authorities for what it saw as a chronic lack of preparedness against potential invasion. By any yardstick, the most famous spy thriller to address this was Erskine Childers’s 1903 novel *The Riddle of the Sands*. Born into the governing class and schooled at Haileybury College, the principal Victorian training ground for Britain’s colonial elite, Childers was a staunch imperialist.<sup>38</sup> “One can set no limits to the possibilities of an alliance of the English speaking races,” he declared in a letter to Basil Williams, a close friend, in October 1903.<sup>39</sup>

The South African War deeply colored Childers’s thinking. Shocked at the ease with which British forces had met their match at the hands of guerrillas, he developed an uncomfortable feeling that the Empire was in mortal danger. Childers became particularly concerned about Germany, which had made no secret of its sympathy for the Boers (even supplying armaments against the British troops). Like most of his fellow countrymen, he had been appalled by the notorious Kruger Telegram in 1896, a message sent by Kaiser Wilhelm II to the president of the South African Republic, con-

gratulating him on repelling the Jameson Raid, a sortie on the Transvaal from the British-controlled Cape Colony. Upon his return from the Boer War, therefore, he resolved himself to write a “yachting story, with a purpose.” That purpose was to rouse the government to the German threat.

*The Riddle* occupied much of Childers’s time between spring 1901 and winter 1902. He was not, by his own admission, a naturally accomplished writer of fiction. It is clear from his correspondences that he felt constrained by the medium and hampered by the need to provide titillation and a sense of climax consistent with literary conventions. “I fear the story is beyond me,” he lamented in one letter.<sup>40</sup> “There is no sensation, only what it meant to be convincing fact,” he grieved in another.<sup>41</sup>

Having finally submitted the draft shortly before Christmas 1902, Childers’s worst fears were soon confirmed, when his publisher, Reginald Smith of Smith, Elder & Co, returned the manuscript forthwith, asking for “drastic” revisions. “My experience is that people will not take their literary publications in the close pemmican fare which you adopt,” explained Smith.<sup>42</sup> With its forensic attention to detail, particularly with respect to all things nautical, the draft had none of the “flow and glow” required of a work of fiction. While caviar to the yachting fraternity, Childers’s extensive use of cartographic materials



(see below), delineating (with exact depth indications) the tellurian sands and archipelagos of the North Sea mudflats had the potential to “frighten the [general] reader away.” “The man who reads a work of imagination, however clearly founded on fact, is in a word not energetic,” tutored Smith.<sup>43</sup>

What really troubled the publisher about the manuscript was the complete omission of women. As it stood, *The Riddle* was very much a man’s book. It is worth remembering that, by the dawn of the 20th century, women (ever more literate following advances in education provided for girls, but still largely excluded from the public sphere) had become big consumers of fiction. At Smith’s insistence, therefore, the narrative had to offer more in the way of feminine interests.

For Childers, the thought of less sailing, fewer charts and more women was anathema.

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*What really troubled the publisher about the manuscript was the complete omission of women.*

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Sailing was a school of character, saying much for the grit and hardihood of young Britons; maps demonstrated the ease with which England could be invaded; while lashings of romance undermined the serious message contained in the book. After much procrastination on both sides, a compromise was eventually reached: the maps would not be cut; the book would now have a “love interest.” “I was weak enough to spatchcock a girl into it and find her a horrible nuisance,” grumbled Erskine in a private letter.<sup>44</sup>

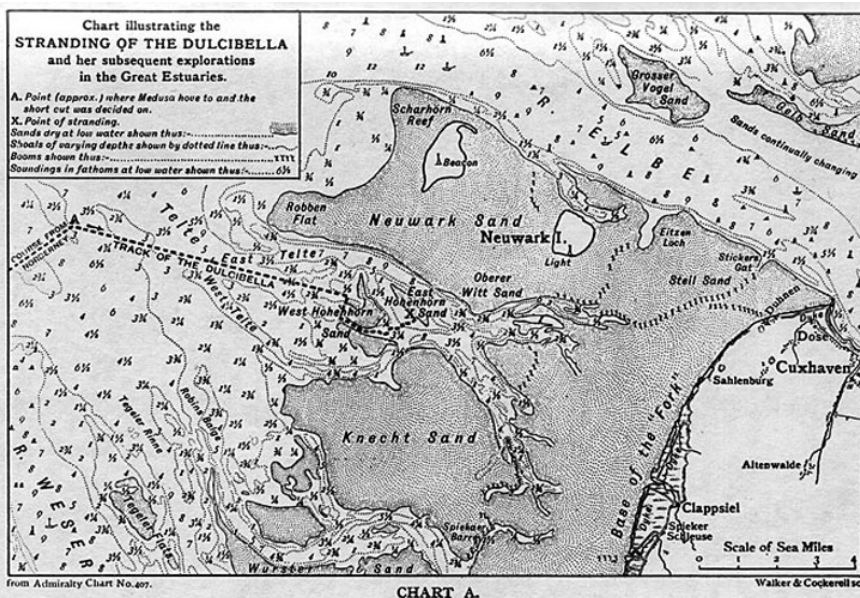
What then of the finished product? Drawing upon Childers’s own experiences of sailing along the German coast, which brought to the narrative an astonishing verisimilitude, *The Riddle* tells the story of two patriotic duffers—Messrs. Caruthers and Davies—embody-

ing all that was good about the adventurous English character, who lark about in a small seven-ton yacht—the *Dulcibella*—and explore islands in the North Sea.

When off the Frisian Islands duckshooting and incidentally fathoming the shoals and inlets thereabouts, they discover that the Germans, with the aid of an armada of shallow draft boats, plan to send troops across from the sand berms that adorn the lonely stretch of coast between Holland and Denmark. This was to be a surprise attack or, in military parlance, a coup de main.

With no shore defense on the East Anglian coast, and no British fleet permanently stationed in the North Sea, the two sailors conclude that a German D-Day, if launched, was bound to succeed. Mr. Davies points the finger of blame at Britain’s “blockheads of statesmen.”<sup>45</sup> At another point in the text, he gives the bluff declaration, “Those Admiralty chaps want waking up.”<sup>46</sup>

Thankfully for England, the mudlark and his companion foil the fiendish plot before it is too late. As if the propaganda masquerading as fiction was not enough, Childers also provided a postscript, which reminded readers about the growing capacity of Germany as a sea power — “We have no North Sea naval base, no North Sea Fleet, and no North Sea policy”—and



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*Among Childers's more distinguished admirers was Kipling, who, from the 1890s onwards, was repeatedly denouncing his countrymen in the press for failing to prepare or take a firm stand against the "shameless Hun."*

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called for the creation of a volunteer naval reserve, one that would take advantage of the unquenchable enthusiasm and untapped talents of the cruising fraternity.

The published version of *The Riddle* is less acerbic in its treatment of Germany than the draft manuscript. Whereas the draft is embroidered with Germanophobia, describing its cafés as "hostile" and referring to the "unconquered spirit" and "iron heel of Prussia," the published copy rejects nationalist stereotyping and implies that Germany is motivated by Realpolitik rather than ruthlessness.<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, the kaiser banned the book, and it is said that when Childers next went sailing in the Baltic, German spies followed his movements.

*The Riddle* was published in May 1903. Sales of the book were more than ample to justify the effort put into it. By the end of the year, it had become a best seller, going through three editions, plus a cheap "penny-packet" issue that sold more than 100,000 copies. Reviewed widely in the press, the book was greeted with widespread critical acclaim. The *Westminster Gazette*, which, as its title indicates, sought to be influential in parliamentary circles, called it a "literary accomplishment of much force and originality"; an anonymous critic of

a "Boston Newspaper" rhapsodized: "The author must be credited with an ability amounting to genius, to be compared in the minutia of his art only to Defoe and in the resources and fertility of his imagination to Robert Louis Stephenson."<sup>48</sup>

As England's newest literary sensation, Childers received many letters of congratulation. "You have written one of the most original books," gushed W.D. Howells. "Your people are wonderfully life-like. Davies is extraordinarily good, and the whole thing perfectly circumstanced."<sup>49</sup> In a particularly sycophantic letter, a Mr. K. Ward from Stanthorpe County Durham, wrote that the book had "stirred in me a fresh desire...to do a little for my country," prompting him to form a local rifle club presumably from where well-intentioned patriots could be trained to kill the "Boche."<sup>50</sup>

Among Childers's more distinguished admirers was Kipling, who, from the 1890s on, was repeatedly denouncing his countrymen in the press for failing to prepare or take a firm stand against the "shameless Hun." As well as excellent sales and reviews, *The Riddle* brought Childers, an eligible bachelor, to the front ranks of London's social scene.

The book's success was no fluke. Childers's skill as an author was to sense and to seize on glib contemporary talk about imperial collapse and foreign threats. The timing of its publication was in one sense brilliantly done to make maximum impact of the fallout from the South African War, when questions about national strength and efficiency, as well as the wisdom of diplomatic isolation, dominated both public and official discourse.

The book's release also coincided with the first wave of real public anxiety about Germany, with whom relations had soured markedly. By 1903, many island-folk were concerned that the Royal Navy was about to lose its mastery of the seas, thus increasing the possibility of invasion. Only a year earlier, in a speech to the Reichstag, Vice Admiral Livonius of the German navy had boldly pronounced:

*Carrying out a landing on the English coast has been greatly increased by the introduction of steam power. The possibility of steaming by night with lights covered in order to escape the enemy's observation, have much reduced the advantages of England's insular position.<sup>51</sup>*

Under Kaiser Wilhelm II, Germany had begun launching its pre-dreadnought fleet, some of the largest and fastest warships ever built. A popular image was that of the kaiser—

kitted out in medals, sword and polished boots—breaking champagne bottles over the bows of impressive steam-powered vessels. Convinced that Nemesis was close at hand and saddled with xenophobic paranoia, the British press did nothing to subdue tensions, beating the patriotic drum and whipping up popular enthusiasm for remedying the very strategic deficiencies of which Childers had protested.

Demands for the government to “do something” were not in fact being ignored. Weeks before *The Riddle* was due to go to press, the Admiralty announced that it had selected a site on the Firth of Forth for a new North Sea naval base, causing Childers to insert a hasty postscript to the effect. A year earlier, His Majesty’s Government had set up a Committee of Imperial Defence to consider the expanding German battlefleet and its potential intentions.

Lord Selbourne, the First Lord of the Admiralty, took great interest in *The Riddle* (“I read [it] with much pleasure”), but with reservations. In a private letter, he disputed the claim of “No North Sea Policy,” suggesting that, “like so many other writers, he [Childers] takes it for granted that nothing goes on at the Admiralty, or is done by the Admiralty, except what the public happens to know.”<sup>52</sup> Selbourne rejected the book’s emphasis on the Forth as an essential buffer against German attack as representative of a “very common delusion”; “the

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*Pressure from backbenchers, especially those representing East Coast constituencies, prompted Lord Selbourne to ask the Naval Intelligence Division for a detailed report on the feasibility of a German invasion as outlined in the book.*

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only thing which really matters,” he went on, “is ships—believe me.”<sup>53</sup>

By contrast, Hugh Arnold-Forster, then parliamentary secretary to the Admiralty, was unreservedly impressed.<sup>54</sup> As was the highly influential Victorian war hero, Lord Wolseley, formerly commander-in-chief of the British forces:

*The subjects it deals with are most interesting. Few men in England have studied the question of the invasion of these islands more closely than I have done. When men perhaps laugh at this expression of mine, I always content myself with reminding them that I attach more weight to the opinions of Napoleon, Wellington, Nelson and Collingwood, than I do to theirs.*<sup>55</sup>

For Wolseley, what made the book more than ordinarily interesting was the minuteness of detail with which the narrative was loaded, the apparent perfect familiarity with the scene of the events described. Sailing the North Sea was known to be one of the author’s hobbies, and it was clear that his personal experiences had added a semblance of truth to what was, at its core, a pretty far-fetched narrative.

Pressure from backbenchers, especially those representing

East Coast constituencies, eventually prompted Lord Selbourne to ask the Naval Intelligence Division (NID) for a detailed report on the feasibility of a German invasion as outlined in the book. The most recent inquiry, carried out in 1902 on the assumption that France represented the main threat, had concluded that invasion was “not an eventuality which we need seriously consider.”<sup>56</sup>

After sending a “couple of experts” to reconnoiter the Frisian Coast, the NID reached the same conclusion, pointing out that the “want of railways and roads, the shallowness of the water, the configuration of the coast, not to mention the terrific amount of preparation of wharves, landing-places, causeways, sheds and whatnot besides, would have rendered a secret embarkation impossible.”<sup>57</sup> “As a novel it is excellent; as war plan it rubbish,” was the assessment of Lord Louis Battenberg, director of naval intelligence.<sup>58</sup>

This was not, however, the last of establishment interest in *The Riddle*. On 27 January 1906, Childers received a letter—marked “Secret”—from Julian Corbett, who, only months before, had become the Admiralty’s unofficial strategic adviser. Corbett explained that the Admiralty was “anxious” to get some information about the

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[The Riddle] set the stage for a whole slew of fictionalized spy stories that dealt with the specter of German invasion.

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Frisian Coast but had not thought it “expedient to send anyone to get it just now.”<sup>a59</sup>

Being an expert on the North Sea, Childers was invited to lunch with Captain Charles Ottley, Battenberg’s successor as DNI. During the luncheon, Childers handed over copies of all of his nautical charts, delineating pilotage and topographical details. A few months later, Childers was contacted by Francis Gathorne-Hardy from the War Office Staff College. With a view to possible raids on the North German Coast, in the event of war, the War Office had instructed Gathorne-Hardy to collect geostrategic intelligence on the area and on the localities. During his researches, he had found that the existing War Office charts were hopelessly out of date, noting: “I find [us] rather lacking on information.”<sup>60</sup>

Having identified Borkum, Wangerooge and the Sylt Islands as possible bases from which to launch an amphibious assault upon the German main-

land, he asked Childers the following:

- Are they are defended and to what extent?
- What facilities do they possess both on harbors and on the open beaches for landing?
- What size ships can approach and lie in their harbors?
- Have the buoys been removed since the publication of your book?
- In your opinion, is there an easier landing that could be effected on any other point?<sup>61</sup>

Once again, Childers furnished the authorities with all that he could. On Gathorne-Hardy’s insistence, Childers was required to keep secret his dealings with the War Office, since it “was not considered good form in England even to think of protection, much less retaliation.”<sup>62</sup>

Over time, *The Riddle* became core reading for anyone involved in naval policy or espionage. In April 1908, the Admiralty ordered 117 copies for use in its “Fiction Libraries.”<sup>63</sup> In 1912, the War Office issued a secret handbook, entitled *The Special Military Resources of the German Empire*, which praised the “brilliant imagination of the author of ‘The Riddle of the Sands’” and implored agents to familiarize themselves with its content.<sup>64</sup>

In illustrating both the commercial rewards and political leverage that could be had from the deceptive blending of fact and fiction—or “faction”—it set the stage for a whole slew of fictionalized spy stories that dealt with the specter of German invasion. As the next section will discuss, perhaps Childers’s greatest legacy was in laying the foundation for the anti-German crusades of William le Queux, who, in concert with military careerists like Lt. Col. James Edmonds, played a part in the creation of Britain’s modern intelligence service and thus changed the course of an empire.

### ***V. The Germans are Coming!: The Fiction of William le Queux***

After *The Riddle*, as Christopher Andrew argues, an increasingly prominent feature of Edwardian spy fiction was the seditious work of German spies.<sup>65</sup> If not for literary style and grace, then certainly for success and influence, the author typically associated with the devilish intrigues of the German Secret Service was William le Queux. Averaging five novels a year until his death in 1927, he was among the highest paid fiction writers of his time, earning 12 guineas per 1,000 words (roughly \$1,000 in today’s money), the same rate as H.G. Wells and Thomas Hardy. An habitu  of London clubland and inexhaustibly well-traveled across some of the Continent’s most elite resorts, le Queux claimed to know

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<sup>a</sup> In 1910, the somewhat dilatory Admiralty did send two spies to the Frisian Islands. Unfortunately, in what became an international cause c lebre, Lt. Vivian Brandon and Capt. B.F. Trench were both detected and arrested by the Germans and pardoned by the kaiser three years later. During his trial in the imperial court at Leipzig, Brandon caused scenes of hysteria when he revealed that he had read *The Riddle* not once, but “three times.” See “British Spies Sentenced,” *Daily News*, December 1910.

everyone in Europe worth knowing, from Queen Alexandra, reputedly his biggest fan, to Emile Zola, the celebrated French writer who was instrumental in exonerating the falsely convicted army officer Alfred Dreyfus. Throughout his career, le Queux presented himself as a spymaster, who, with an intimate knowledge of foreign espionage, battled dastardly foreign nationals in the service of the British government. To this day, many of le Queux's distant relatives maintain that he was killed by Bolshevik thugs, while working as a secret agent in the Soviet Union.<sup>66</sup>

The lessons of the Boer War bit deeply into le Queux's psyche: "History tells us that an Empire which cannot defend its own possessions must inevitably perish," he would later write.<sup>67</sup> Like Childers, he set out to use fiction as a vehicle for political pamphleteering, designed to awaken the government to the uncomfortable truth that England had become idle and complacent, whereas rival nation states were fast becoming virile and purposeful.

In common with military threat assessment at the turn of the century, he had in fact started his literary career not as a Germanophobe, but as a Francophobe, predicting conflict between England and France. In 1894, he shot to fame with *The Great War in England in 1897*, which depicted an attempted French invasion. Unlike George Chesney's earlier tale of war-to-

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*Obsessed with the end of empire and fearing the encroachment of "beastly foreigners" into the United Kingdom, le Queux began to forward reports to the Foreign Office.*

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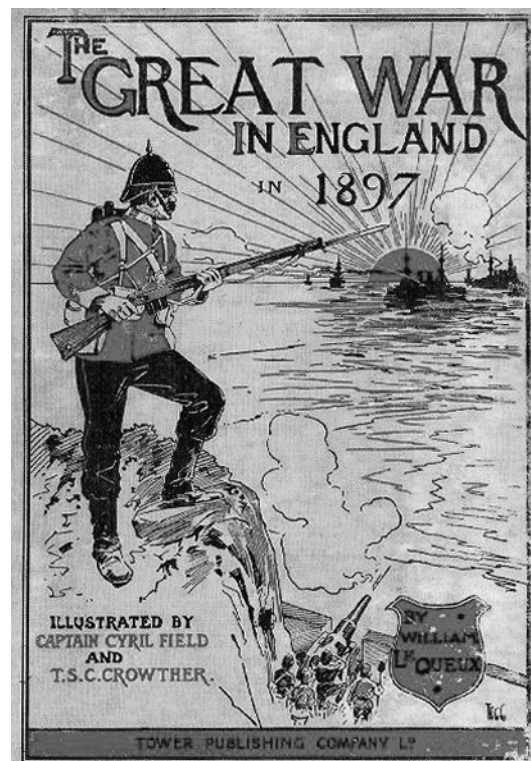
come, *The Battle of Dorking* (1871), which ended with the British being soundly defeated, *The Great War in England* concluded with English victory.

Five years later, published only months after the Fashoda Incident, the territorial dispute between Britain and France in the Sudan, *England's Peril* (1899) introduced readers to Gaston La Touche, the villainous chief of the French Secret Service. In *England's Peril*, a member of Parliament has his head blown off by, it eventually transpires, an explosive cigar. By 1906, as bad blood began to arise between Britain and the kaiser, following the start of the dreadnought race that threatened to render obsolete British battleship supremacy, Germany replaced France as the main enemy in le Queux's novels. As David Stafford argues, like any successful author, he "kept an eye on the shifting tides of public opinion."<sup>68</sup>

Obsessed with the end of empire and fearing the encroachment of "beastly foreigners" into the United Kingdom, le Queux began to forward reports to the Foreign Office, which, taken at face value, confirmed the existence of a German spy network in Britain. These reports, he claimed, came from an

informant in Berlin.<sup>69</sup> With no evidence to corroborate his allegations, however, the authorities dismissed the reports as wishful thinking.

His pleas falling on deaf ears, le Queux adopted a new approach, using his social skills and immense clubability to seek, and acquire, the friendship of senior crown servants. By early 1906, he had gained a valuable ally in Admiral Lord Charles Beresford, one of the most admired naval officers of his generation, considered by many to be a personification of John Bull. Eager to promote his views about the development of the fleet, Beresford lent his great public voice to numerous



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Northcliffe rejected the first draft. His main objection was that the invading German army avoided the major cities, and thus the majority of *Daily Mail* readers.

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articles written by le Queux on the need for preparedness.

Le Queux's most important coadjutor was Lord Roberts. Just as the famous general had assisted Kipling, he shared le Queux's anxiety about Britain's unreadiness for a major contest of arms: "My dear William, the world thinks me a lunatic also, because, after forty years service in India, I have come home and dared to tell England that she is unprepared for war."<sup>70</sup> As president and moving spirit of the National Service League, a pressure group for compulsory military training, Roberts saw an alliance with le Queux as an opportunistic way of canvassing public support for conscription, opposed by many people at the time for smacking of continental militarism.

Having secured the priceless imprimatur of Lord Roberts, le Queux began to plan for *The Invasion of 1910*, a graphic imagining of a successful invasion of England by a 40,000-strong German army. Funding for the project was provided by Lord Northcliffe, proprietor of Britain's first mass-circulation newspaper, the *Daily Mail*. As a pathological Germanophobe, with an instinctive flair for a profitable story, Northcliffe was only too willing to stump up the cash in return for exclusive serialization rights.

Striving for realism, le Queux consulted military experts like

Col. Cyril Field and Major Matson; he even spent four months touring the southeast of England in order to map out the most likely invasion route. As he wrote in the preface, the aim was to "bring home to the British public vividly and forcibly what really would occur were an enemy suddenly to appear in our midst."<sup>71</sup>

A tough taskmaster, Northcliffe rejected the first draft. His main objection was that the invading German army avoided the major cities, and thus the majority of *Daily Mail* readers. To rectify this, le Queux was required to devise a new route, one where sales took precedence over accuracy.

*The Invasion* began its serialization on 13 March 1906. In London, itinerant sandwich-board men, employed by the *Daily Mail* and dressed in spiked helmets, Prussian uniforms and bloodstained gloves, bellowed at city workers, warning them of the Hun's arrival in the nation's capital. The story was centered on German troops advancing inland, until they eventually reached London. As they went, the fierce, jack-booted soldiers despoiled farmland, looted churches, violated women, mutilated babies and bayoneted resistance fighters. Le Queux described how a hundred German spies, prior to the assault, had paralyzed Britain's defenses by cutting telephone lines and destroying

bridges, rail tracks and coal staithes.

Newspaper serialization came with a special map, illustrating the regions and towns where the Germans were to be concentrated. Just south of Cambridge, there was to be the "Great Battle"; in the fields between Loughborough and Leicester, there was to be "Considerable Fighting."<sup>72</sup> Readers were instructed to keep the map for reference—"It will be valuable."

*The Invasion* was explicit in agitating for a system of national service and in its denunciation of Britain's slumbering statesmen for failing to prepare for a possible invasion. Splashed across the top of each extract was the eye-catching headline, "WHAT LORD ROBERTS SAYS TO YOU," followed by: "The catastrophe that may happen if we still remain in our present state of unpreparedness is vividly and forcibly illustrated in Mr. le Queux's new book, which I recommend to the perusal of everyone who has the welfare of the British Empire at heart."<sup>73</sup>

*The Invasion* was a huge success, boosting the *Daily Mail's* circulation and, in book form, selling over 1 million copies in 27 languages. Although the literary cognoscenti berated the somewhat primitive composition of the writing, le Queux could not have been happier. With Roberts on his side, he established his bona fides as a serious author; with Northcliffe offering column-inches, he had a

suitable forum for his anti-German views; and with high sales, he now had ample private means to fund his counterespionage work. Encouraged by the public's response, le Queux and Roberts founded a voluntary Secret Service Department, a group of amateur spy hunters devoted to gathering information "that might be useful to our country in case of need."<sup>74</sup>

By contrast, the government was not amused. In Parliament, Prime Minister Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman said that le Queux was a "pernicious scaremonger" and suggested that the story risked inciting war between England and Germany.<sup>75</sup> This is not to say, however, that officials could ignore the invasion bogey. Public pressure to reconsider the question of overseas attack caused Campbell-Bannerman to appoint a subcommittee of Committee of Imperial Defence, which met 16 times between 27 November 1907 and 28 July 1908, and included dignitaries like David Lloyd George and Edward Grey. On the first day of the group's convening, testimony was given by none other than Lord Roberts. During his time in the spotlight, the aging military hero rehashed the invasion plan as predicted by le Queux's melodrama. To the delight of Sir John Fisher, then first sea lord and father of the ultra-modern dreadnought, the sub-committee concluded that an invasion was untenable so long as a large, technologically-advanced navy was maintained.<sup>76</sup>

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*Moreover, because they were gentlemen, they somehow made spying acceptable, even honourable, to a readership brought up to believe that espionage was a dirty trade.*

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Le Queux was, of course, not the only fiction writer transfixed with the sinister machinations of German spies. Le Queux's biggest rival was the self-styled "Prince of Storytellers," E. Phillips Oppenheim. An outspoken critic of unpreparedness, Oppenheim demanded the internment of enemy aliens and supported Lord Roberts's campaign for the introduction of compulsory national service among able-bodied men.

Central to Oppenheim's yarns, as with those of Childers and le Queux, was the importance of the gifted amateur. Typically well-born and wealthy, heroes were accidental rather than professional spies, always proving, under severe test, to be of sterling worth. In *The Great Secret* (1907), the lead character—while in London playing cricket for his county—is inadvertently drawn into defending his nation when he discovers a German spy ring operating from the Café Suisse in Soho. As both David Stafford and David Trotter have argued, ruling-class amateurs "were not only heroes in their own right but also guardians of the social hierarchy"; set apart by their gentlemanliness, they represented a "symbol of stability" in a time of increasing working-class agitation.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, because they were gentleman, they somehow made spying acceptable, even honourable, to a readership brought up to

believe that espionage was a dirty trade.

Though others had muscled in on the genre, le Queux ultimately trumped them all with *Spies of the Kaiser*. Published in 1909, and preceded by an advertising campaign in the *Weekly News* offering readers £10 for information on "Foreign Agents in Britain," *Spies* pitted Ray Raymond—"a patriot to his heart's core"—against literally thousands of German spies, most of them nestled in the English countryside, disguised as landlords, waiters, and barbers. In detailing the German hidden hand, le Queux was adamant that his novel was based on "serious facts," unearthed over a 12-month period touring the United Kingdom:

*As I write, I have before me a file of amazing documents, which plainly show the feverish activity with which this advance guard of our enemy is working to secure for their employers the most detailed information.<sup>78</sup>*

To combat this menace, the book championed the creation of a professional counterintelligence service, a message that chimed with public fears of invasion—now at "fever-pitch" with the kaiser's announcement in late 1908 of an accelerated shipbuilding program.<sup>79</sup> Frightened members of the public inundated the novelist's

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*This assessment, derived not from hard facts...but from information ascertained from amateur spycatchers, led directly to the formation of the Secret Service Bureau.*

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mailbox with alleged sightings of German spies. Letters detailed German espionage in all its forms, from the surveillance of beaches, fortifications, and shipyards to the purloining of secret treaties, war plans, and blueprints. Although the majority of these reports were pure fantasy, le Queux earnestly forwarded them to Lt.Col. James Edmonds, head of MO5, the fledgling counterintelligence section of the War Office Directorate of Military Operations.

Convinced of the existence of enemy spies ("nearly every German clerk in London spends his holidays on biking or walking tours in the eastern counties"),<sup>80</sup> but also with one eye on securing funding for his own fledgling outfit, Edmonds had long been nagging Richard Haldane, secretary of state for war, on the shortcomings of British espionage. Haldane, who still harbored hopes of a rapprochement with Germany, had hitherto demurred at this assessment, believing that enemy agents were really "the apparatus of the white slave traffic."<sup>81</sup> For Edmonds, therefore, le Queux's "evidence" was a godsend.

By early 1909, the traditionally unflappable Haldane had judged that le Queux's reported sightings, however far-fetched, had just enough plausibility to merit an investigation. In March, he set up a committee to

consider "the nature and extent of foreign espionage that is at present taking place within this country."<sup>82</sup> Edmonds, the committee's chief witness, informed members of a rapid rise in "cases of alleged German espionage": five in 1907; 47 in 1908; and 24 in the first three months of 1909.<sup>83</sup> Of the 24, le Queux had provided five—although, in the service of anonymity, he was referred to only as a "well-known author." The individuals accused by le Queux of being German spies included: a cyclist who swore in German when nearly run over by the author in his motorcar; a Portsmouth hairdresser, named Schweiger, who apparently took much interest in navy gossip and consorted with officers; and a retired captain, called Max Piper, who was believed to act as a "go-between" for German agents based in the United Kingdom.<sup>84</sup>

Astonishingly, le Queux and his associates' material was instrumental in persuading members to reach the conclusion:

*The evidence which was produced left no doubt in the minds of the committee that an extensive system of German espionage exists in this country, and that we have no organization for keeping in touch with that*

*espionage and for accurately determining its extent or objectives.*<sup>85</sup>

This assessment, derived not from hard facts reported by the police authorities, but from information ascertained from amateur spycatchers, led directly to the formation of the Secret Service Bureau, forerunner of MI5 and MI6, in late 1909.

Historical research has now proved beyond any doubt that no such "extensive system of German espionage" existed. Between August 1911 and the outbreak of the Great War, MI5 apprehended and tried only a handful of suspected spies. Although the spy ring of Gustav Steinhauer was rounded up, the German spymaster ran no more than 20 poorly trained agents, focused for the most part on rivers and beaches rather than military installations. What this underlines is the fact that in 1909 officials had been completely deceived. In successfully hoodwinking the establishment into a state of total delusion, le Queux—unbelievably—had played a key role in the creation of the modern British intelligence community.

*The Great War gave le Queux the ideal canvas on which to paint his political beliefs. In no fewer than 40 novels relating to the conflict, published between 1914 and 1918, he argued for more counterespionage, bigger ships, and a stronger stand against immigration. Convinced that every stranger with a guttural accent was a spy in*



disguise, he continued to flood government departments with reports of “German officers in mufti.”

By the war’s end, however, evidence suggests that the authorities had finally wised up to le Queux’s febrile imagination. In August 1914, paranoid that the Germans were out to get him on account of his counterintelligence work and involvement with M05, he wrote to the Metropolitan Police requesting that local “Bobbies” give him and his family special protection:

*Owing to the fact that for a number of years I have interested myself in the tracing and identification of German spies in England and in laying them before the proper authorities...threats have been conveyed to me that the gentry in question intend to do me bodily harm!*

A reply was sent to the effect that the local police would make a “short beat” near his house. Not satisfied with this, le Queux took to carrying a pistol before protesting to Edward Henry, commissioner of the Metropolitan Police: “Although I continue to be threatened and am unfortunately a ‘marked man’ by Germans, I am being afforded no special protection whatsoever.”<sup>86</sup>

Over the next few months, his tactic was to engulf the local station sergeant with reports of German intruders infiltrating his premises, only to be driven

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*Fiction is more believable when anchored in reality, and it is the case that early 20th century spy fiction was used to push genuine agendas.*

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off by guard dogs. On 17 November, he wrote, “On two occasions...strangers have been prowling about my property with evil intent, presumably to inquire about my private Wireless station, or, possibly, to make an attempt upon myself and my family.”<sup>87</sup> Henry nevertheless saw him as “not a person to be taken seriously” and refused to fulfill his request.<sup>88</sup>

In a final desperate bid to secure protection, le Queux sent a series of fawning letters to Patrick Quinn of Scotland Yard’s Special Branch, promising that, if Quinn were willing, le Queux would “urge certain influential gentlemen” to recommend that [Quinn] should be placed in supreme command of the whole department and given complete powers, with “no superior authority.”<sup>89</sup> The “influential gentlemen” whose ears the fabulist apparently had included Lord Leith of Fyvie, Lord Portsmouth, Holcombe Ingleby, and Cecil Harmsworth—men who believed that present police methods for dealing with enemy aliens were insufficient and ineffective.

By now, however, no one was going to be taken in by le Queux’s anxieties. The Metropolitan Police severed all contact with him, even issuing a circular, entitled “Mr. Le Queux,” warning officials that he should be “viewed in the proper perspective.”<sup>90</sup> According to the circular, this was a

man whose attention had been so long centered on German spies that the subject had become a “monomania with him.” Although le Queux, in his own eyes, was a “person of importance and dangerous to the enemy,” to the establishment he had now come to be seen as a charlatan.

### **Conclusion**

While it is clear that Kipling, Childers, and le Queux were prone to exaggeration, their works were based on reality and, more importantly, reflected both an idealized view of Britain’s imperial needs and a desire for greater security. The anxieties they represented were not entirely without foundation and appear all the more authentic when we remember that they were often passed on by military figures.

Fiction is more believable when anchored in reality, and it is the case that early 20th century spy fiction was used to push genuine agendas, including calls for a national service army, a larger navy, and a secret service. Though they celebrated imperialism and the qualities that built it, they also represented a tool for the mobilization of opinion and stood as clarion calls against perceived complacency in Whitehall.

In *Kim*, Kipling’s characters speak of the need to combat Russian intrigue on the North-

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*For intelligence officers in the 21st century, perhaps the most important message of this story is that popular culture, however seemingly absurd, can easily translate itself into real policy.*

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West Frontier at a time when Britain was engaged in a genuine protracted struggle for influence in Afghanistan and the Indian borderlands. In *The Riddle*, Childers's hero reveals secret German naval schemes at the precise moment when the Royal Navy was being confronted by the kaiser's menacing warship-building program. New naval technologies also inspired the anxieties of le Queux. In many of his novels, German spies are invariably found reconnoitering potential invasion beaches or attempting to pilfer important naval secrets.

For le Queux, the problem was not so much the Royal Navy's inability to destroy the German Navy, but the complacency of the British government. His lobbying, like that of Childers, was instrumental in fostering a mania for spies, but it also led to a more

sober debate in the armed forces about the true nature of the threat, which went some way to inspiring the formation of the Secret Service Bureau. Moreover, the creation of the India Political Intelligence Office, also in 1909, along with the long-standing employment of Asian agents and the activities of the Intelligence Branch in India, points to a similar reaction by the British authorities in India. In essence, then, fin de siècle spy novelists gauged public opinion and tailored their works accordingly, drawing heavily on actual events, complacency among the authorities, and fear about potential enemies—phenomena which were not fictional at all.

For intelligence officers in the 21st century, perhaps the most important message of this story is that popular culture, however seemingly absurd, can easily translate itself into real

policy. In a significant recent article, intelligence historian Rob Dover argued that television shows like *24* and *Spooks* have an important "real world impact," conditioning both public and official discourse about intelligence.<sup>91</sup> In the early 20th century, that golden evening of Empire, the real world impact of spy fiction was considerable. *The Riddle* had a profound effect on British naval policy. *Le Queux*, for all his sins, has a genuine claim to be considered the "father" of the British intelligence community. Were it not for his far-fetched tales of German espionage, it may well have been months, perhaps years, before dozing authorities woke up to the need for a professional counterintelligence service. Indeed, it is chilling to think what the consequences would have been had the authorities not been influenced by le Queux and persisted with their dilatory strategy towards the intrigues of the German Secret Service.



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# Office of Strategic Services Training During World War II

Dr. John Whiteclay Chambers II

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*Largely neglected [in histories of OSS] is the challenge OSS leaders faced in developing a program to train the “glorious amateurs” of America’s first central intelligence and covert operations agency.*

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In the histories of the Office of Strategic Services, the heralded predecessor of the Central Intelligence Agency in World War II, what has been largely neglected is the challenge OSS leaders faced in developing a program to train the “glorious amateurs” of America’s first central intelligence and covert operations agency.<sup>1</sup> OSS’s response to the challenge of preparing operatives for missions deep inside enemy-controlled territory began in 1942 with a paramilitary training program in two national parks. One of its legacies is the CIA training program today.<sup>a</sup>

In examining OSS training, this article draws on the author’s recent 600-page report to the US National Park Service on OSS training in the national parks as well as his subsequent research for a forthcoming book on OSS training and service in World War II.<sup>2</sup> The article deals primarily with the two main direct action

branches, Special Operations (SO) and Operational Groups (OG). In the process, it also refers to training in other operational branches: Secret Intelligence (SI), X-2 (Counter-intelligence), Morale Operations (MO), and the Maritime Unit (MU), plus the Communications (Commo) Branch.<sup>3</sup> Most of the organization’s other components, such as the Research and Analysis Branch, employed people who were already skilled in their fields and who did not generally require OSS training.

This essay addresses several questions. Why were the national parks chosen as training sites? How was the training program created? What were its aims and methods? How did it evolve? Most importantly, how effective was the training and what was its legacy?

## ***Origins of OSS***

The OSS engaged in new forms of warfare for the United States: centralized intelligence, “fifth column” activities, psychological or “political warfare,” and the kind of sabotage, commando raids and directed guerrilla activity now known as

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<sup>a</sup> Bibliographic references in endnotes are available in the digital version of this article, posted on the *Studies in Intelligence* site on [www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov).

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*All statements of fact, opinion, or analysis expressed in this article are those of the author. Nothing in the article should be construed as asserting or implying US government endorsement of an article’s factual statements and interpretations.*

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*In early 1942, at least a dozen American instructors for SO, and a few for SI, attended all or part of a basic four-week course the British had established at Camp-X east of Toronto, Canada.*

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irregular warfare. The British had begun such operations in 1940 through the Special Operations Executive (SOE) and the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), the former established as a result of Prime Minister Winston Churchill's order to rouse resistance against the German army in occupied countries and "set Europe ablaze."<sup>4</sup>

In the United States, William J. Donovan, a World War I hero and a Wall Street lawyer with extensive contacts on both sides of the Atlantic and a keen interest in modern warfare, sought to create a comparable organization. President Franklin D. Roosevelt named him director of the new, civilian Office of the Coordinator of Information (COI) in July 1941. Existing agencies, especially the Military Intelligence Division, the Office of Naval Intelligence, and the FBI, vigorously opposed the new and centralized intelligence agency, but the US entry into World War II in December 1941 led to a dramatic expansion for Donovan's organization.

In June 1942, Roosevelt reorganized COI as the OSS, in which military and civilian personnel had responsibilities in the fields of intelligence and counterintelligence, psychological warfare, and guerrilla operations, including sabotage and

the coordination of resistance movements. Donovan now reported to the newly formed Joint Chiefs of Staff, but he also retained direct access to the president.<sup>5</sup>

Among the units established in the new OSS were the Special Operations and the Secret Intelligence Branches. SO took the lead in obtaining instructors and recruits and setting up a substantial paramilitary training program. Its driving force was Lt. Col. Garland H. Williams, a no-nonsense character with a highly successful career in federal law enforcement and the Army Reserves. The native Louisianan had been head of the New York office of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics and a reserve major when the army called him to active duty in January 1941. That year, he created a training program for the army's new Counter-Intelligence Corps and then went on to assist at the army's infantry and chemical warfare schools. Transferring to Donovan's organization in early January 1942, Williams began recruiting and training the first SO force.<sup>6</sup>

### ***First Thoughts on Training***

In establishing the SO training program, Williams drew in part on Britain's experience in unconventional warfare since

1940. Donovan had visited the training schools SOE and SIS had set up in secluded country estates in Britain. Now he, Williams, and other senior officers inspected a new, secret SOE training camp in Canada located on 275 acres of rolling farmland on the edge of Lake Ontario, 25 miles east of Toronto. SOE's Camp-X was designed to provide secret agent and saboteur training for Canadians and for some Americans. In early 1942, at least a dozen American instructors for SO, and a few for SI, attended all or part of SOE's basic four-week course; beginning in April, they were followed by the first of several dozen American recruits who trained there.<sup>7</sup>

A typical day for trainees at Camp-X began with a five-mile run and two hours of gymnastics followed by lectures on various topics, such as personal disguise, observation, communications, and field craft. The afternoon might include training with explosives in an open field, practice with small arms at a basement firing range, parachute jumping from a 90-foot jump tower, or crawling under barbed wire while machine guns fired live rounds overhead. In the evening, students might study assignments, go out on night maneuvers, or undergo simulated interrogations by instructors or by one of the German officers from an enemy officer internment camp nearby. The course ended with the field testing of students: finding their



way back to the camp after parachuting into a forest 30 miles away or infiltrating a local defense plant.<sup>8</sup>

Garland Williams also drew on his own experience with the Federal Bureau of Narcotics and the US Army as well as Donovan's vision for the organization. Williams rejected British-style country estates as inappropriate for training saboteurs and guerrilla leaders who were known to operate from forest and mountain hideouts. The ideal special operations training camp, he wrote, would be "situated in the country and thoroughly isolated from the possible attention of unauthorized persons" with plenty of land, at least several hundred acres, located "well away from

any highway or through-roads and preferably far distant from other human habitations." But it should be within about 50 miles from OSS headquarters in Washington.<sup>9</sup> Williams found what he was looking for in two nearby national parks.

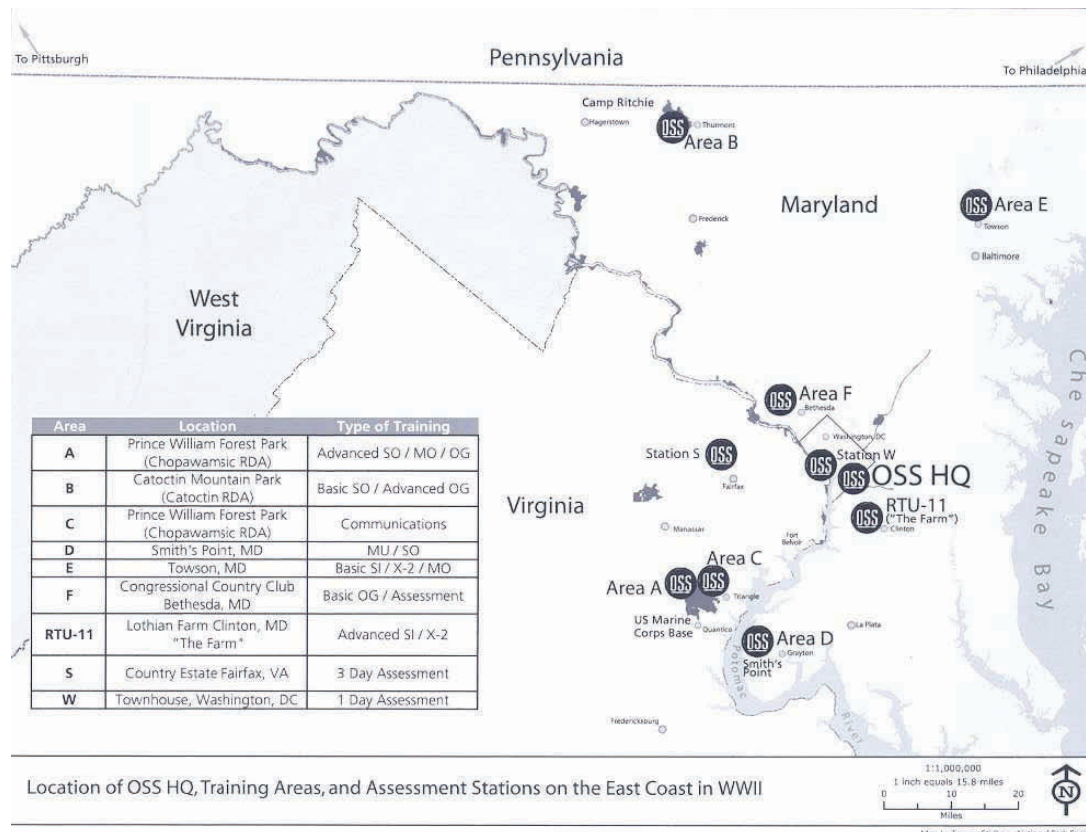
**The First Sites**

Operated by the National Park Service, the two woodland properties, then called Recreational Demonstration Areas, were located in the Catoctin Mountains near Thurmont, Maryland (where the presidential retreat called Shangri-La, now Camp David, would later be built), and in rolling woodlands in the watershed of Chopawamsic and Quantico Creeks

near Quantico, Virginia. Each park comprised more than 9,000 forested acres and contained several, recently built cabin camps. The appeal of Catoctin Mountain Park and what was later called Prince William Forest Park was their secluded yet convenient location; expansive wilderness terrain; existing, rustic accommodations; and the fact that they were already owned by the federal government.<sup>10</sup>

Neither the National Park Service nor the Department of the Interior wanted to turn the parks over to the OSS for paramilitary training camps. The Park Service's mandate was to conserve the nation's parks for the public, and its cabin camps there were used for summer

recreation by charitable organizations serving needy, urban youths from Baltimore and Washington. But the declaration of war enabled the War Department to declare their use a military necessity, and a reluctant acting secretary of the interior signed an agreement, leasing the properties for the duration, albeit with provisions that the military abide by certain conservation restrictions and restore the parks as much as



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*Throughout the war, park superintendents made regular visits and informal inspections of the properties, and they did not always like what they saw.*

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possible to their prewar condition.<sup>11</sup>

Between 1942 and 1945, the OSS pretty much did what it wanted in the two national parks. The public was excluded, the park rangers gone, and the park superintendents moved out to the nearest towns. OSS erected obstacle courses, firing ranges, and demolition areas, winterized the facilities, expanded the dining halls, constructed some classrooms and a few barracks and built armories and munitions magazines. Every SO training camp had a commanding officer and a chief instructor, each with a separate staff.

Groups of trainees began to arrive in closed army trucks to these undisclosed locations. At their peak, Catocin's two subcamps could accommodate up to 400 men, including trainees and staff members, and Prince William's six subcamps could hold 900 men (there were no women at the training camps in the parks).<sup>12</sup>

### ***The Stomach-Churning Rough House***

Throughout the war, park superintendents made regular visits and informal inspections of the properties, and they did not always like what they saw. Some abandoned farm houses were destroyed during mortar

practice and field exercises. Park rules against hunting wildlife and cutting down trees were violated. The Catocin superintendent complained to the camp commander when trainee/hunters killed a rabbit; he lodged a formal protest when a dozen large trees were cut down; and he expressed dissatisfaction when trainees shot several wild turkeys. Midway through the war, the Prince William superintendent was commissioned an officer at the adjacent Marine Base in Quantico and assigned to supervise control of brush fires there, as he did in his park. Accompanied by his dog and in his park ranger hat and uniform, the superintendent continued to inspect the park property on weekends. Appalled at the ruthlessness involved in the training of the OSS saboteurs and guerrilla leaders, he later complained of what he called "the stomach-turning roughhouse of the OSS!"<sup>13</sup>

Although SOE had considerable influence in the beginning, not only through Camp-X, but by temporarily lending instructors and providing copies of its manuals, lectures, and training materials, as well as the latest explosives and Allied and Axis weapons, OSS eventually went its own way. It never adopted the British model of two entirely separate government agencies for secret intelligence

and special operations (SIS and SOE). It rejected the class formality between officers and enlisted men and the rigid military discipline of SOE training camps. By mid-1943 only one British instructor remained with the Americans.

The OSS was a most un-military military. With little attention paid to regular army protocol and procedure, OSS training camps fostered a highly informal atmosphere. There were few distinctions between officers and enlisted men and little or no saluting or drill in the manual-of-arms or marching in ranks. Emphasis was on individual responsibility and initiative. "I'd rather have a young lieutenant with guts enough to disobey an order than a colonel too regimented to think and act for himself," Donovan declared.<sup>14</sup>

### ***Special Operations Curriculum***

The training program that Garland Williams envisioned in early 1942 consisted of a general curriculum that provided preliminary, basic, and advanced training courses to SO and SI recruits before they prepared for their different types of missions. His training plans provided elasticity and allowed for varying the instruction according to a person's previous experience, special qualifications, or assignment. Williams believed that the preliminary two-week, "toughing

up” course of demanding physical exercise, obstacles, night marches, and tryouts in close combat and weapons skills would weed out the unqualified and help to classify accepted individuals for future instruction and assignment.

Toughening up was to be followed by two weeks of basic SO training drawing on more intellectually demanding skills derived from SOE’s curriculum: identification of targets of opportunity, observation, intelligence gathering, sabotage, and so on. In addition to learning new skills, the students, Williams explained, “will also be physically and mentally conditioned during these two courses for the aggressive and ruthless action which they will be called upon to perform at later dates.”<sup>15</sup>

After completing the preliminary and basic courses, the student would go on, under Williams’s plan, to either parachute or seaborne infiltration training and then to one of the advanced schools that would be set up for intelligence work, propaganda, sabotage, or guerrilla leadership. Throughout all of the training, the focus was to be on imparting skills, building up the candidate’s physical condition and self-confidence, and developing the student’s individual initiative, personal courage, and resourcefulness. All instruction, Williams emphasized, should be practical, not theoretical. Instructors should keep lectures short, rely more

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*“The students will also be physically and mentally conditioned...for the aggressive and ruthless action which they will be called upon to perform at later dates.”*

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on the “discussion or conference method of instruction” and make good use of “interest-provoking equipment and materials.” Indeed, OSS produced hundreds of training films, several of them by Hollywood director John Ford.<sup>16</sup> Classroom instruction, Williams added, should alternate with outdoor demonstrations and practice. As he summarized his pedagogical philosophy: “Whenever possible, the system of instruction will follow the principles of explanation, demonstration, application, and examination.”<sup>17</sup>

Later, the advanced courses would include “schemes”—mock attacks on real targets. Students would be assigned, for example, to place imitation explosives under a nearby railroad bridge or radio tower, or directed to infiltrate a defense plant in Baltimore or Pittsburgh and obtain classified information or leave a dummy explosive charge. Williams continued to stress that the focus was on the individual:

*Constant thought will be given to the building of a high state of morale and a high esprit de corps. However, the military indoctrination will be so handled as to develop to the maximum extent his individual initiative, personal courage and resourcefulness. Empha-*

*sis will be constantly placed on the development of this agent as an individual and not as a fighter who is only effective when under close leadership. The guerrilla concept of warfare will be the guiding principle.*<sup>18</sup>

The first classes in basic special operations training began in early April 1942 at Catoctin National Park, which was designated Training Area B for basic OSS training. The first advanced course began a few weeks later in Prince William Forest Park’s western sector, some 5,000 acres, designated Area A for advanced training. At Area B, a dozen instructors taught about two dozen students per course in those early days. The number of instructors and students would grow into the hundreds at the peak use of the camps in the two parks during 1943–44. Because of the drive to produce substantial numbers of SO agents, this basic course lasted two to three weeks.<sup>19</sup>

During the war, the topic titles in the basic special operations curriculum remained roughly the same, but the content would change as a result of new information from overseas. Basic SO training, although initially held at Area B, came to be known as A-4 training because, for most of the war, it was cen-

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OSS jettisoned standard marksmanship in favor of practical combat shooting. With their pistols, students learned “instinctive fire.”

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tered at Area A’s subcamp A-4 in Prince William Forest Park. It included such topics as physical conditioning, close combat, weaponry, demolitions, map reading, field craft, Morse code, first aid, as well as intelligence gathering and reporting, and enemy organization and identification. Field problems included night map and compass exercises, reconnaissance and patrol, and simulated sabotage.<sup>20</sup>

Physical conditioning in Special Operations’ courses for members of SO, or SI, MO, or whoever took its paramilitary training, meant not just morning calisthenics but challenging exercises testing limits of stamina and nerve. On a giant, timbered jungle-gym more than 40 feet in the air, at Area B, Catocin Mountain Park, for example, trainees climbed poles, walked narrow planks and swung from perilous platforms, testing themselves and simulating clambering around bridge or tower beams or repelling down cliffs. They learned how to cross surging streams and rivers on a single rope while gripping two overhead lines for balance. On obstacle courses, they crawled under live machine gun fire and dodged along booby-trapped trails studied with explosive trip wires.

In 1942, William Casey, a future director of central intelli-

gence, but then a young naval officer and trainee in Secret Intelligence, did not crouch down enough on the trail at subcamp B-2. When he accidentally snagged a trip wire, it triggered a block of TNT attached to a nearby tree. The blast sent a chunk of branch hurtling through the air, striking him on the side of the face and breaking his jaw.<sup>21</sup>

Because of the OSS emphasis on prowess, self-confidence, and self-reliance on hazardous missions, instruction in close-combat techniques, armed and unarmed, was a major component of the training. Its chief instructor was a William (“Dan-



Instructors William Fairbairn (left) and Hans Tofte.

gerous Dan”) Fairbairn, legendary former head of the British Shanghai riot squad, who had taught for SOE in Britain and Canada and then for OSS from 1942 to 1945. He had fought Chinese street gangs, mastered Asian forms of martial arts, and invented a slim, razor-sharp stiletto for use on sentries. Fairbairn knew a hundred ways to disable or kill an enemy with his hands, his feet, a knife, or any instrument at hand. “Forget about fighting fair,” was Fairbairn’s mantra. “In war, it’s kill or be killed.”<sup>22</sup>

Under the direction of Fairbairn and Rex Applegate, a reservist and military police instructor from Oregon, OSS jettisoned standard marksmanship in favor of practical combat shooting. With their pistols, students learned “instinctive fire.” Instead of carefully aiming at fixed “bull’s-eye” targets, OSS trainees jerked into a crouched position and quickly squeezed off two rounds at a time. The idea was to kill or startle an armed enemy before he killed you.<sup>23</sup>

For realistic training and testing, Fairbairn created special, dimly lit structures that he called “pistol houses” or “indoor mystery ranges.” “Under varying degrees of light, darkness and shadows plus the introduction of sound effects, moving objects and various alarming surprises,” he explained, “an opportunity is afforded to test the moral fiber of the student

and to develop his courage and capacity for self control.”<sup>24</sup>

Students called it a “house of horrors,” and one remembered it this way:

*Each of us over a period of a couple of days would be awakened in the middle of the night and hauled off to carry out a special mission. When it came my time, I was told that there was a Nazi soldier holed up in a building and that it was my job to go in and kill him. I was given a .45 and two clips. The house I was sent into was a log house with long corridors and stairways. I wasn't sure whether there really was a Nazi soldier there or not. I kicked a door open with my gun at the ready. Paper targets with photographs of uniformed*

*German soldiers jumped out at me from every corner and every window and doorway. We had been taught to always fire two shots at the target. There must have been six targets because I got two bullets in each one. The last one was a dummy sitting in a chair with a lighted cigarette in his hand. If you didn't shoot him you failed the test.*<sup>25</sup>

For sabotage training, OSS instructors taught students about various forms of explosives, including the new moldable, gelatin-like “plastic” compounds, which were more stable and contained more explosive power than TNT. Trainees learned how to use various kinds of explosives, fuses, and timing devices to destroy railroad tracks, trains, bridges, tunnels, dams, radio

towers, supply depots, and industrial facilities to impede enemy operations.

In practical field exercises, students practiced escape, evasion and survival techniques, as well as tactical operations. As training progressed, the intensity increased. Lt. John K. Singlaub, SO, then a young UCLA graduate fresh from paratroop school who would soon serve in France, later wrote:

*By the end of November [1943], our training at Area B...had become a grueling marathon. We fired American, British, and German weapons almost every day. We crawled through rain-soaked oak forests at night to plant live demolition charges on floodlit sheds. We were introduced to clandestine radio procedure and practiced typing out code and encrypting messages in our few spare moments. Many mornings began with a run, followed by a passage on an increasingly sophisticated and dangerous obstacle course. The explosive charges under the rope bridges and wire catwalks no longer exploded to one side as exciting stage effects. Now they blasted directly below, a moment before or after we had passed.*<sup>26</sup>



Training in the “House of Horrors,” with Fairbairn (right) observing the student's reactions.

OSS field training exercises often culminated in mock espionage and sabotage missions.

Local bridges and dams were handy simulated targets for nighttime raiding parties, and nearby industrial facilities offered similar opportunities for practicing reconnaissance and sabotage. Most students succeeded in penetrating the plants, using cover stories and forged documents, but some were nabbed by the police or the FBI. A most embarrassing incident was the capture, “red-handed,” of the professional baseball catcher and spy Moe Berg trying to infiltrate a defense plant in Baltimore.<sup>27</sup>

### **Other Branches/Other Schools**

The other operational arms of OSS established their training programs more slowly and with fewer students than Special Operations did with its vision of the mass production of commando-like saboteurs, bold, brash gung-ho men with sub-machine guns and plastic explosives, whom other branches sometimes belittled as the “bang-bang boys.”<sup>28</sup> Secret Intelligence, which had taught a handful of agents in a room at OSS headquarters in the first four months of 1942, opened its school in May 1942 on a 100-acre country estate 20 miles south of Washington. Designated RTU-11, but known informally as “the Farm,” it began with a class of eight. It had a capacity of nine staffers and 15 SI students for its four-week course in espionage, ciphers, communications, concealment, and handling agents, as well as weapons and martial arts.

In the fall of 1942, the Communications Branch established its school in the NPS cabin camps in the eastern sector of Prince William Forest Park. Labeled Area C, it trained the radiomen who would operate the regional base stations and many of the portable field radios in Commo’s global clandestine shortwave radio network. Communications training at Area C took three months.

OSS established Area D in what may have been an old Civilian Conservation Corps camp in 1,400 isolated wooded acres on the rural eastern shore of the Potomac River some 40 miles south of Washington. Its mission was instruction and practice in waterborne raids and infiltration. After the Maritime Unit was formed in 1943, it moved its training sites for underwater demolition teams

and others first to Florida, then the Bahamas, and finally to California.<sup>29</sup>

Area E, two country estates and a former private school about 30 miles north of Baltimore, was created in November 1942 to provide basic Secret Intelligence and later X-2 training—as a result, RTU-11 became the advanced SI school. Area E could handle about 150 trainees. When the Morale Operations Branch was established to deal in disinformation or psychological warfare, “black” propaganda, men and women of the MO Branch also trained at Area E, although men from MO, SI, and X-2 often received their paramilitary training in the national parks.<sup>30</sup>

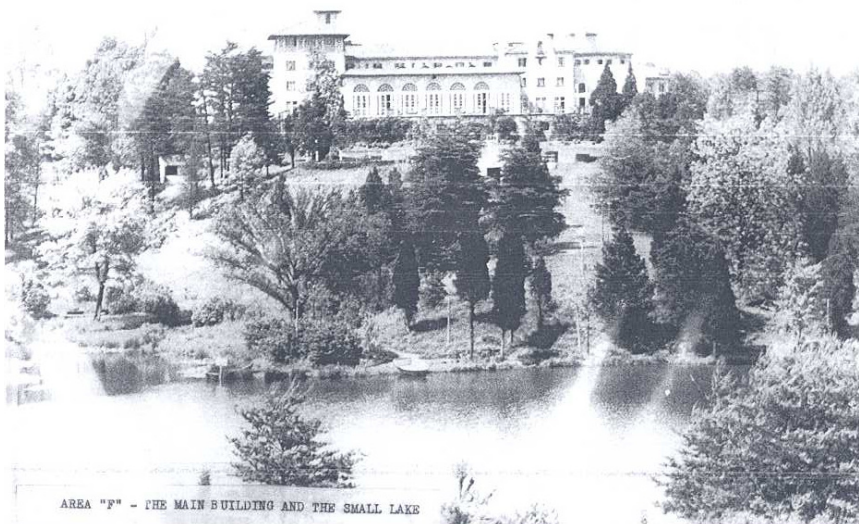


Communications school class in coded telegraphy at Training Area C.

### ***The Congressional Country Club and OG Training***

In stark contrast to the rustic cabins of the national parks, OSS's grandest training facility was the magnificent Congressional Country Club, with its palatial clubhouse, its fancy tennis courts and Olympic swimming pool, its 400 acres of manicured lawns, well-maintained fairways and greens of its acclaimed golf course, and the surrounding woods. Established in the 1920s, with Herbert Hoover as founding president, the club had been hard hit by the Great Depression and in 1943 was bankrupt and in foreclosure proceedings. Consequently, the board of directors was delighted when Donovan offered to lease the facility for the duration at a monthly rent that would more than meet the mortgage payments. In addition, the War Department agreed to restore the property to its prior condition at the end of the war.<sup>31</sup>

Designated Area F, its location in Bethesda, Maryland, made it easily accessible for dignitaries from the capital less than 20 miles away, and it provided a dramatic locale for Donovan to showcase one of his most original concepts, ethnic, commando-like Operational Groups (OGs). For their training the club was transformed—its entrance way lined with tents, fairways torn up into obstacle courses and firing ranges, and the elegant clubhouse converted into classrooms and a mess hall.



The Congressional Country Club, Training Area F, as shown in an OSS briefing board.

It was one of Donovan's great insights that he could obtain from America's multiethnic population combat guerrilla teams that could successfully infiltrate enemy-occupied countries because its members spoke the language, knew the culture, and, in fact, were often the descendants of immigrants from that country. By 1943, the Joint Chiefs of Staff accepted not only increased numbers of Special Operations teams but also Donovan's proposal for these larger ethnic, or at least foreign-speaking, OGs.<sup>32</sup>

Special Operations teams and Operational Group units had many similarities. Recruits for both had to meet the high physical standards required for parachute infiltration and wilderness survival as well as superior mental and psychological standards of uncommon stability, judgment, and

independent thinking. Both SOs and OGs were supposed to be fluent in a foreign language and both would be engaged in sabotage and irregular warfare, but SO generally worked in teams of two or three and often focused on particular acts of sabotage or subversion. The most famous SOs were the "Jedburghs"—nearly 100 multinational, three-man teams, two officers and a radio operator—most of which were composed of a Frenchman and either a Briton or an American, who received substantial extra training at SOE schools in Britain and were parachuted behind German lines in conjunction with the invasion of France.<sup>33</sup>

In contrast, OGs were organized into sections of 34 men as well as half sections of two officers and 13 NCOs, including weapons and demolitions spe-

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*Training emphasized ... that unconventional warfare behind enemy lines was a hazardous undertaking and required not only skill but a certain degree of ruthlessness.*

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cialists, a shortwave radio operator, and a medic. These uniformed units were seen as military forces capable of longer and more sustained independent action. In practice however, SOs and OGs often spent similar periods and engaged in the same kinds of missions with resistance groups.<sup>34</sup> For Europe, Donovan created OSS Operational Groups for France, Italy, Greece, Yugoslavia, and Norway. The OGs (and some other branches) received their basic OSS training at Area F.<sup>35</sup>

OGs trained as units under their own officers together with OSS instructors. To create the OG training program, a team of bright and bold young officers from the army's new airborne units was assembled under the leadership of Lt. Col. Serge Obolensky, a former Russian prince and New York socialite who had fought the Germans in World War I, the Bolsheviks in the Russian civil war, and who had gone through SO training and studied guerrilla fighting after joining the OSS at age 51.

The training curriculum for the new Operational Groups included a six-week basic training course.<sup>36</sup> It emphasized the need for trainees to achieve proficiency, self-confidence, and determination and to recognize that unconventional warfare

behind enemy lines was a hazardous undertaking and required not only skill but a certain degree of ruthlessness.<sup>37</sup>

In the OG curriculum, the Preliminary Course taught at Area F began with an hour introducing and going through the training's objectives. Over the next few weeks, it would include 22 hours of map reading, sketching, and compass work, both theoretical and field problems; 20 hours of scouting and patrolling; 14 hours of physical training; seven hours of camouflage and fieldcraft; four hours of close combat and knife fighting; six hours training on the obstacle course; four hours instruction on the .45 caliber pistol; and four hours on the submachine gun. There would be seven hours of training films. The longest amount of time, 57 hours, was devoted to tactics. That included compass runs, target approach, and day- and night-time field problems. Finally two hours were devoted to hygiene and camp sanitation; and four hours went for special subjects: enemy organization, communications, security, and current events. Total OG preliminary instruction and training was 152 hours.

Then the OG section moved on to either Area B or Area A, where the final OG course involved eight hours of physi-

cal training, 22 hours of demolitions, and 40 hours of weapons training, which included two to three hours each on the mechanics and firing of the M1 rifle, carbine, light machine gun, Browning Automatic Rifle, Colt .45 automatic pistol, British Sten gun, Thompson submachine gun, Marlin submachine gun, M1 and AT rocket launcher, 60-mm mortar, 81-mm mortar, and the .50 caliber machine gun. There was also a bit of hand grenade and antitank training. One French OG, Ellsworth ("Al") Johnson, remembered firing a bazooka at Area B, "just to get the feel of how it worked."<sup>38</sup>

Thereafter, students went through four hours on the care of clothing and equipment, four hours on hygiene and camp sanitation, and eight hours of training films. Finally, there was ground training for the parachute jumps that would be made at Fort Benning, Georgia, or more often at OSS or SOE jump schools overseas. Total advanced training was 106 hours. A grand total of 250 hours of stateside training was prescribed for an OSS Operational Group.<sup>39</sup>

The size of the Operational Groups ranged from about a hundred men in the Norwegian group to some four hundred in the French OG.<sup>40</sup> In all, there may have been up to 2,000 members of OSS Operational Groups.<sup>41</sup> Another 1,600 Special Operations personnel were sent behind enemy



lines.<sup>42</sup> The extensive destruction caused by what Donovan liked to call his “glorious amateurs” and their local partisans was accomplished by only a few thousand SOs and OGs, a number not much larger than a single army brigade.<sup>43</sup>

### ***Obtaining Recruits and Instructors***

Most of the Americans who volunteered for hazardous duty in Special Operations or the Operational Groups were recruited from high-aptitude, citizen-soldiers of the wartime armed forces. They had already undergone basic military training and often advanced training as well, but OSS demanded even higher proficiency. To weed out recruits unqualified physically or emotionally for dangerous and unpredictable situations behind enemy lines, OSS ultimately developed a highly effective psychological assessment program. Beginning in 1944 at a country estate (Assessment Station S) in Fairfax County, Virginia, candidates underwent three days of tests to determine not only their mental and physical aptitude but their judgment, independence, emotional stability and their ability to act effectively under pressure. Ranging from their capacity to withstand harsh interrogations to dealing with frustration when, for example, alleged assistants surreptitiously impeded the assembly of a complicated

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*To weed out recruits unqualified physically or emotionally ...OSS ultimately developed a highly effective psychological assessment program.*

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wooden platform, the tests were designed to provide an assessment of a person’s entire personality. Not surprisingly, the evaluation teams learned that, beyond the specific skills and training, what made an effective saboteur in France, an able spy in Germany, a successful commando in Burma, or a reliable clandestine radio operator in China was a secure, capable, intelligent and creative person who could deal effectively with uncertainty and considerable stress.<sup>44</sup>

In 1942, when Garland Williams had first sought instructors to train men for clandestine operations, he had drawn on two main sources. One was former law enforcement officers, who, like him, were experienced in undercover work and in the use of firearms and the martial arts. He recruited instructors from officers in the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, the Customs Service, and the Border Patrol, as well as state and local police.<sup>45</sup>

For other skills, Williams, who was also a reserve army officer, drew upon activated reservists: army engineers for instruction in explosives and demolition work; military police for pistol shooting and close combat techniques; and infantry officers for the use of small arms, hand grenades, machine guns, and mortars, plus map-reading,

field craft, and tactical maneuvers. Signal corpsmen often taught wireless telegraphy, coding and decoding. Paratroopers became instructors in parachute infiltration; and navy and the coast guard instructors taught small craft handling and waterborne landing.<sup>46</sup>

There were some problems in initial instruction, particularly with the use of law enforcement officers. Despite their qualifications in weaponry and undercover work, law enforcement officers were deeply imbued with a respect for the law and a belief that lawbreakers and fugitives should and would be apprehended. But the aim of the operatives behind enemy lines was to break the law and not get caught.

Some of the regular army officers who joined the OSS also proved too set in their ways for the path-breaking organization. Donovan himself recognized this by recruiting bold, risk-taking, rule-breaking individuals. In time many of the law enforcement and regular army instructors left or were reassigned, and OSS came to rely primarily upon citizen-soldiers for SO and OG instructors, rather than already established, fulltime, career professionals in the officer corps.

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*“It was the strangest job of wartime educational administration ever assigned to a former college president.”*

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Similarly for trainees, OSS also sought intelligent, independent-minded individuals. One OSS recruiter remembered looking for activists, from free-lance journalists to trade union organizers. “What seemed liked faults to rigid disciplinarians of the regular services often appealed to us as evidence of strong willpower and an independent cast of mind.”<sup>47</sup> Recruiting for Special Operations drew almost entirely from the military—not so much career military as former civilians now in the wartime armed forces.

OSS’s Personnel Procurement Branch scoured training camps and advanced schools of all the services looking for intelligent candidates knowledgeable in a foreign language who were willing to volunteer for unspecified challenging and hazardous duty behind enemy lines.<sup>48</sup> As a subsequent Special Operations field manual explained, “SO agents and operatives are selected for their intelligence, courage, and natural resourcefulness in dealing with resistance groups. In addition, they must have stamina to be able to live and move about undetected in their area of operation.”<sup>49</sup>

### **Training Overseas**

As the number of OSS personnel overseas increased dramatically and as they sought to train indigenous agents, the

overseas detachments established their own training schools. In addition to training local agents, the overseas OSS schools also provided advanced training and field exercises for graduates of the training camps in the United States and for Americans who enlisted in the OSS in the war zones. The most famous of the latter was Virginia Hall in France.<sup>50</sup>

As the war progressed, the direct action branches came to view the stateside schools as mainly providing only testing and preliminary, introductory training. The overseas training facilities offered advanced and more directly relevant training. Overseas, combat veterans provided practical and up-to-date instruction, and training, including intensive simulations in the field that usually continued until the operatives were deployed for their missions. The main OSS training camps abroad were located initially in Great Britain, French Algeria, and Egypt; later as the Allies advanced, a school was established in southern Italy. In the Far East, OSS training facilities were established in India, Ceylon, and then China.<sup>51</sup>

“It was the strangest job of wartime educational administration ever assigned to a former college president,” remarked James L. McConaughy, a former president of Wesleyan University in Con-

necticut, whom Donovan selected to oversee OSS training from 1943 to 1945.

*The campus was scattered all over the world.... The students were of almost every type and race.... The teachers were nearly as diverse.... And we taught nearly everything, too: navigation, parachute jumping, how to kill wild animals and use them as food, lock picking, hiding microscopic sized confidential data, protecting oneself from dagger attacks and using one offensively, operating a wireless set, reading code and cipher, elementary foreign languages (French, Greek, Chinese, Japanese, Korean). Name me a weird subject of instruction and I will gamble that it was taught by O.S.S., somewhere, sometime!*<sup>52</sup>

### **Trying to Coordinate Training**

When the United States entered the war, Donovan’s fledgling organization had not been prepared for the dramatic wartime expansion that would transform the COI, with somewhat more than 2,000 people, to an OSS which had a peak strength that would number at least 13,000 and perhaps several thousand more.<sup>53</sup> As missions expanded, the

organization confronted the need to send operatives into the field at the same time that it was developing its recruiting and training systems. Each of the operational branches established its own training program, although many male recruits took their basic paramilitary course in one of the national parks, at least in the first two years.

By August 1942, OSS headquarters began actively encouraging greater coordination, including some standardization, in the diverse training programs that were emerging. After several attempts at coordination, including a cooperative training directorate, Donovan in January 1943, established a Schools and Training Branch (S&T) independent of the operational branches to oversee and eventually operate the schools.

Internal difficulties within OSS as well as problems in dealing with the military caused the loss of some of the initial figures in the training programs, including Garland Williams and his successor, Kenneth H. Baker, SI, an Ohio State University psychologist and reserve army officer who had been the first head of the S&T Branch.<sup>54</sup> The branch was in disarray throughout the summer of 1943.

Not until September 1943, with McConaughy's selection—he was then president of United China Relief— would Schools

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*By August 1942, OSS headquarters began actively encouraging greater coordination, including some standardization, in the diverse training programs that were emerging.*

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and Training have a leadership team that would run the branch until the end of the war.<sup>55</sup> To do the actual work of running day-to-day operations, Donovan selected as deputy director Col. Henson Langdon Robinson, a Dartmouth graduate, reserve army officer from World War I, and successful businessman from Springfield, Illinois. Donovan had first recruited Robinson to supervise OSS headquarters. Now he gave him the task of efficiently operating the faltering Schools and Training Branch.<sup>56</sup>

Schools and Training Branch spent two years trying to coordinate the OSS training system and the numerous facilities and diverse curricula that had evolved since 1942 among the operational branches, particularly the two largest, SO and SI. Although Donovan's headquarters gave it increasing authority over all OSS schools, first in the United States and then in August 1944 over those overseas, S&T never did control them completely. Despite increasing S&T efforts at coordination and at least some standardization, the operational branches proved resistant to its control, and they continued to exert the dominant influence over their trainees through the end of the war.<sup>57</sup>

Schools and Training Branch created a common introductory

course in early 1944. A basic two-week program for all OSS operational personnel—SI, SO, MO and X-2—it was first taught at Area E, and called the “E” or “E-type” course. The operational branches, particularly SO, thought it emphasized the wrong subjects and some of them called it a waste of time. Along with SI, X-2 and MO, SO was also angered by what all considered S&T's overall inadequate curriculum and teaching methods, its seeming inability to incorporate up-to-date information from overseas, and what they believed were its inappropriate attempts to play the branches off against each other in order to consolidate S&T's control.<sup>58</sup>

With S&T under such intense criticism and plagued with problems, McConaughy apologized to the assistant director of the OSS:

*Many of our difficulties stem from the haste with which OSS was organized, the fact that the concept of training followed a program of operations (ideally, it should have preceded it). Schools and Training was the “tail” of the OSS “dog.” For a long time, it was not given strong leadership, it did not achieve Branch status until recently, etc. Not very long*

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*The number of OSS training camps in the United States increased to 16 in the last 12 months of the war as the original training areas and assessment stations in Maryland and Virginia were augmented.*

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*ago, the “chief indoor sport” of some persons in some Branches was to pick on Schools and Training—and our record probably justified their doing so.<sup>59</sup>*

Area E was closed in July 1944, but OSS headquarters still wanted a standardized E-type basic course for all new operational personnel. It was not until S&T made changes to bring training into line with field experience and the demands of the operational branches and adopted a modified version of the basic SI training course, that a new OSS basic unified course was accepted. It was approved first by SI, X-2, and MO, and—only after it had been substantially modified to meet the needs of special operations recruits—by SO.

The new basic unified course, still called the E Course, was taught beginning in July 1944 at Area A, and subsequently at RTU-11, Area F, and the new West Coast training facility on Santa Catalina Island off Los Angeles.<sup>60</sup> The aim of this introductory course was to provide a quick but intensive survey to all operational recruits of the various kinds of work done by OSS. Having been created by SI, it was heavier on the intelligence than paramilitary side.

Subjects such as agent undercover techniques, intelligence objectives and reporting, sabotage, small arms, demolitions, unarmed defense, as well as the basic elements of counterespionage and black propaganda were crammed into only two or, at most, three weeks.<sup>61</sup> At the same time, the basic SO paramilitary course (the A-4 Course) was also taught at various times not only in Area A but at Areas B, D, F, and on Catalina Island.<sup>62</sup>

During the big buildup between the summer of 1943 and the fall of 1944, the training camps had operated at a breakneck pace as OSS activities in the field expanded along with the US military effort, first in Europe and then in the Far East. Increased demands were imposed on Schools and Training Branch, which numbered some 50 men and women at headquarters and nearly 500 male instructors at stateside training facilities.<sup>63</sup>

The number of OSS training camps in the United States increased to 16 in the last 12 months of the war as the original training areas and assessment stations in Maryland and Virginia were augmented by a communications school, designated Area M, at Camp McDowell, near Naperville, Illinois, and eight relatively new

training facilities in southern California. The most prominent of these “W” areas was on Santa Catalina Island, as the focus of war effort shifted to the defeat of Japan.<sup>64</sup>

When Phillip Allen, head of West Coast schools, arrived from S&T headquarters, he was able to institute a well-coordinated program there. His success was due in part because, except for the Maritime Unit, which already had its own school there, the other operational branches did not have training facilities there, and this enabled Allen largely to start afresh. His training program began with the new basic, unified, two-week E Course. This was followed by an advanced course in SI, SO, or MO, or a combination of them.<sup>65</sup>

In the summer of 1944, Allen was able to obtain as instructors seasoned veterans who had real experience and information on current conditions in the war zones and who could provide practical advice to their students. Training concluded with extremely demanding field problems, as some of the students—Korean Americans, Japanese Americans, and some Korean prisoners of war—were preparing for infiltration into Japanese occupied Korea or Japan itself.<sup>66</sup>

Advanced SI students, accompanied by radio operators, had to infiltrate northern Mexico and obtain and relay important information. Advanced SO men

were sent on survival problems, dispatched into desolate areas with only a minimum of food, forced to live on fish they could catch or game they could shoot. Subsequently they were tested on preparing effective plans to sabotage military facilities in San Pedro harbor and the Orange County coast. Lt. Hugh Tovar, SI, a Harvard ROTC graduate, was one of those OSS trainees in the interior of rugged, windswept Santa Catalina Island in 1945. "They gave me a carbine with one bullet and told me to survive on my own out there for several days," he recalled. He did and went on afterward to China and Indochina.<sup>67</sup> In its praise of the West Coast training program, S&T concluded at the end of the war, that it was

*probably the most efficient that was given by Schools and Training, since it combined the best features of the training that had been given in the East and eliminated some of the weaknesses that experience had brought to light.*<sup>68</sup>

### **Evaluations of OSS Training**

OSS direct action training had its strengths and weaknesses; the latter, as even the Schools and Training Branch acknowledged, had been particularly evident in the early stages of its evolution. Until combat veterans began to return in the fall of 1944, few of the stateside instructors had any opera-



Schools and Training headquarters team, at its peak size, in early 1945.

tional experience. There were numerous criticisms. Some students later complained that there had not been enough instruction in how to organize and work with indigenous populations, especially non-European, native populations.<sup>69</sup> Nor was there enough training on how to handle resistance groups, particularly those with diverse factions and conflicting political agendas. Some veterans grumbled about undue emphasis on "cloak and dagger creepiness" instead of practical training that "should be more matter-of-fact."<sup>70</sup> Others carped that too much of the stateside instruction had been "a little bit of this and a little bit of that in case it might come in handy some day."<sup>71</sup>

One of the most frustrating experiences was being held stateside after graduation as a

result of the scarcity of transportation or other difficulties. Another significant criticism was that in the early training program, it had often been unclear to instructors or recruits the particular assignment for which the individual student was being prepared. Subsequently, S&T attempted to link instructors with the relevant branch desk officer so that an individual's training might be made more relevant.<sup>72</sup>

Schools and Training Branch had its own complaints, mainly that the operational branches would seldom cooperate. They declined to keep the training branch informed of their plans, and they refused to share their secret after-action reports from overseas. At the same time, they expected S&T's training camps to handle truckloads of trainees even if these new stu-

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*“Training is not spectacular work. It means doing a sound teaching job, adjusting sights to fit circumstances, and keeping right on doing it.”*

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dents suddenly arrived without warning. “Someone recently likened Schools and Training to an island of ignorance with darkness on both sides of it,” Colonel Robinson bemoaned in late 1943.

*We are trying to run a group of schools without knowing anything about the number of students we must train, the type of missions our students will have, or what happens to them after they get to their eventual destinations.<sup>73</sup>*

Despite the gripes, many members of OSS direct action units attributed much of their success to their training. Most commonly, combat veterans cited physical conditioning, specific skills, the building of confidence in themselves and the organization, as well as their sense of the importance of their mission. “The experience at Area B-2 was a great morale builder and when we departed in mid-December [1943], we were in top physical condition,” wrote Sgt. Robert R. Kehoe, SO, a decorated Jedburgh team radio operator in France.<sup>74</sup> Maj. Jerry Sage, also SO, credited the training with helping him organize and lead escapes from German prisoner-of-war camps.<sup>75</sup> Lt. Joseph Lazarsky, SO, who left Area B to become a successful guerrilla leader in Burma, recalled that “the train-

ing in weaponry and demolitions was effective. So was building self-confidence and the ability to get things done.” He used the same training methods to prepare indigenous agents in the Far East. “It was very effective,” he said.<sup>76</sup>

Sgt. Caesar J. Civitella, an Italian OG who fought in France and Italy, also believed the training was very effective; in addition, he was impressed by the use of “peer review.” He and the other enlisted men were questioned anonymously during training at Area F about their respect for others in their OG section, as a result of which one of the officers was re-assigned.<sup>77</sup> When OSS Greek OGs left the United States in December 1943, following training at Areas F, A, and B, they were in high spirits, dressed smartly in their trim, new Eisenhower jackets and paratrooper jump boots, and singing in both English and Greek. Their communications officer said later, “We looked good, acted good, and the biggest thing, we felt good. Officers from other outfits would ask me, ‘Who are you guys?’ Security told us to say that we [were] truck drivers; they knew that wasn’t the case.”<sup>78</sup>

John Singlaub reflected on that training after retiring as a major general in command of US troops in Korea.

*These were individual skills that are perhaps useful but are most important for training the state of mind or attitude, developing an aggressiveness and confidence in one’s ability to use weapons. One of the most important aspects of the training was that it gave you complete confidence....an ability to concentrate on your mission, and not worry about your personal safety. That’s really a great psychological advantage. I used that later in training my units when I was a battalion commander and later, a Battle Group commander.<sup>79</sup>*

By the end of the war, the OSS’s program of selection, evaluation, and training, and equally if not more important its successes overseas showed the importance of obtaining the right individuals and giving them the skills, equipment, and confidence to do the job.<sup>80</sup>

“Training is not spectacular work,” S&T Branch admitted in a report at the end of the war. “It means doing a sound teaching job, adjusting sights to fit circumstances, and keeping right on doing it.”<sup>81</sup> Operating like the OSS itself which was created in haste and without American precedent and which was propelled by a drive for speed, production, and results, OSS training sometimes appeared confused and indeci-

sive. Yet, training areas and programs were developed almost overnight to fit the war-time exigencies. To meet suddenly increased quotas, the capacity of training areas was sometimes doubled in size, by opening new subcamps or by erecting “tent cities.” Entirely new camps were established and instructors acquired. S&T finally obtained veterans as instructors.

S&T also set up a system of interviewing returning veterans to include their insights into the curriculum. OSS concluded that while some subjects, such as the use of small arms, demolitions, code and ciphers, could be taught by concrete example, the precise situations that agents would face in the field could not be foreseen. Therefore, as a postwar report put it, “the major goal was psychological—to develop in the student-agent an attitude of mind which would respond to an emergency in accordance with the exigencies of the particular situation.”<sup>82</sup>

Instead of learning by rote, OSS students were encouraged to use principles and examples provided in training as springboards for their own ingenuity and creativity in overcoming problems. The best training, it was believed, gave already talented, independent individuals the skills, concepts and confidence to be adaptable leaders in

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*The effectiveness of OSS training was confirmed by the adoption of much of its curriculum by its successors, the Central Intelligence Agency and the Army Special Forces.*

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an unpredictable environment. The Schools and Training Branch had come a long way since 1942, but in its postwar assessment, it admitted that “only toward the end of World War II was OSS beginning to approach the kind of training that was really adequate for the complex and hazardous operations carried out by OSS personnel.”<sup>83</sup>

### **Legacy**

OSS’s direct action operations behind enemy lines in World War II were impressive, as acknowledged by a number of Allied and Axis commanders, among them Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force, who declared in May 1945 after the defeat of Hitler’s regime, that the value of the OSS “has been so great that there should be no thought of its elimination.”<sup>84</sup> It was eliminated, of course, in October 1945 by President Harry S Truman. But recognition of its value contributed to the establishment of the Central Intelligence Agency two years later.<sup>85</sup>

The effectiveness of OSS training was confirmed by the adoption of much of its curriculum by its successors, the Central Intelligence Agency and the

Army Special Forces.<sup>85</sup> “The CIA picked it up almost 100 per cent,” explained Joseph Lazarsky, an OSS veteran whose subsequent 25-year career with the Agency included being chief of station in several Far Eastern countries. “They took the manuals, instructional materials, and put that right into the Agency. You know, the COI and the OSS started it from scratch. The Agency would have been foolish not to have adopted their training. The training in weaponry and demolitions was effective. So was building self-confidence and the ability to get things done.”<sup>86</sup>

The CIA relied in part upon the OSS model to evaluate recruits and to train them with skills, self-confidence, and adaptability. In 1951, the Agency even tried to obtain Prince William Forest Park, site of OSS’s first training camps, from the National Park Service as a training facility.<sup>87</sup> It was only after that effort failed that the CIA established its own secret, paramilitary training facility on 10,000 acres of pine forests and swamps in southern Virginia. The demanding OSS-style training continues there to the present day.<sup>88</sup>

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### Notes

1. For example, Robert Harris Smith, *OSS: The Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972); Thomas F. Troy, *Donovan and the CIA: A History of the Establishment of the Central Intelligence Agency* (Frederick, Md.: University Publications of America, 1981); Bradley F. Smith, *The Shadow Warriors: O.S.S. and the Origins of the C.I.A.* (New York: Basic Books, 1983); George C. Chalou, ed., *The Secrets War: The Office of Strategic Services in World War II* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Service, 1992); Michael Warner, *Office of Strategic Services: America's First Intelligence Agency* (Washington, D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency, 2000); Eugene Liptak, *Office of Strategic Services, 1942–45: The World War II Origins of the CIA* (New York: Osprey, 2009).
2. John Whiteclay Chambers II, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 2008), a government report posted on the NPS Web site at: [http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online\\_books/oss/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/oss/index.htm). Publication of an updated, book version is being considered by Rutgers University Press.
3. On the organizational structure of the OSS, see Office of Strategic Services, *War Report of the O.S.S. (Office of Strategic Services)*, with New Introduction by Kermit Roosevelt (New York: Walker and Co., 1976), xix–xxiii, 125–26, reprint of the original typescript report prepared by the Strategic Services Unit of the War Department in 1947 (hereinafter OSS, *War Report of the O.S.S.*); scholarly studies of particular branches, R&A and MO, include Barry M. Katz, *Foreign Intelligence: Research and Analysis in the Office of Strategic Services, 1942–1945* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989); and Clayton D. Laurie, *The Propaganda Warriors: America's Crusade Against Nazi Germany* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996).
4. M.R.D. Foot, *SOE in France: An Account of the Work of the British Special Operations Executive in France, 1940–1944* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1966), 11.
5. OSS, *War Report of the O.S.S.*, 9–27; Anthony Cave Brown, *The Last Hero: Wild Bill Donovan* (New York: Times Books, 1982) will undoubtedly be superseded by a new biography of Donovan by Douglas Waller scheduled for publication in 2010.
6. "Military Record of Garland H. Williams, Major, Infantry," attached to William J. Donovan to Secretary of War, 2 March 1942, [subject: promotion of Williams to lieutenant colonel], OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 92, Box 32, Folder 33, National Archives II, College Park, Maryland. Williams's superior in charge of SO was Lt. Col. Millard Preston Goodfellow, a newspaper publisher from New York City.
7. David Stafford, *Camp X* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1987), 81–82; Anthony Moore, British Liaison, "Notes on Co-Operations between SOE and OSS," January 1945, 1–2; OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 136, Box 158, Folder 1722, National Archives II. Camp X's official designation was Special Training School No. 103.
8. Lynn-Philip Hodgson, *Inside Camp-X*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Port Perry, Ontario: Blake Books, 2009, orig. 1999), 13, 59–86, 168–70.
9. Maj. Garland H. Williams, "Training," 5–6; an eight-page, typed memorandum, undated [but January or February 1942 before Williams was promoted to lieutenant colonel in March], located in OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 136, Box 161, Folder 1754, National Archives II.
10. Chambers, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 54–57, 85–99. Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area was redesignated Prince William Forest Park in 1948.
11. John J. Dempsey, Acting Secretary of the Interior to Secretary of War, 16 May 1942, and "Special Use Permit Authorizing Use of Land in the Catoctin Recreational Demonstration Area, Maryland, by the War Department for National Defense Purposes" and a similar Special Use Permit for Chopawamsic, 16 May 1942, with identical provisions, 16 May 1942 both in National Park Service Records (RG 79), Central Classified File, National Archives II; see also Chambers, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 100–103.



**Notes (cont.)**

12. Chambers, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 107–79. Figures on total capacity are compiled from figures on each sub-camp in each OSS training area on layout maps prepared by the Visual Presentation Branch in November 1943, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 85, Box 13, Folder 249, National Archives II. On the absence of women trainees in the parks, Elizabeth P. (“Betty”) McIntosh, former MO officer, telephone interview with the author, 12 March 2005, and the fact that none of the nearly 50 male OSS veterans of the two national parks, whom the author interviewed, remembered ever seeing any OSS women, or any women at all, at those forested training areas, except for one evening at the end of the war when a group of WAVES was bused to Area C for a dance.

13. Ira B. Lykes, interview with Susan Cary Strickland, 4 September 1984, quoted in Susan Cary Strickland, *Prince William Forest Park: An Administrative History* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1986), 26. On these and other incidents in the parks, see Chambers, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 279–86.

14. William J. Donovan quoted in Robert Alcorn, *No Banners, No Bands* (New York: Donald McKay, 1965), 182; for similar, Tom Moon, *This Grim and Savage Game: OSS and the Beginning of U.S. Covert Operations in World War II* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2000), 249.

15. Williams, “Training,” 2.

16. OSS, *War Report of the O.S.S.*, 161–62. Many of these OSS films are located in the Visual Branch of National Archives II; copies of shooting scripts and narration are in the records of various OSS branches, for example, “Gutter Fighting,” OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 133, Box 151, Folder 1258; “Short Range Intelligence,” Entry 146, Box 220, Folder 3054, National Archives II.

17. Williams, “Training,” 7.

18. Williams, “Training,” 5–6.

19. R.P. Tenney to J.R. Hayden, June 8, 1942, Subject: Area B, in OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 136, Box 158, Folder 1721, National Archives II.

20. “Area ‘B’ Training Course,” one-page, typed schedule for instruction 16 May to 13 June 1942, attached to J.R. Brown to J.R. Hayden, 14 June 1942, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 136, Box 161, Folder 1754; Kenneth H. Baker to Col. Edward Buxton, 13 March 1943, subject: Curriculum of Basic Training Course, reprinted as Exhibit A, 169–71 in Appendix II to Part One of History of the Schools and Training Office, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 136, Box 158, Folder 1721. For a later example, see *Operational Groups Field Manual—Strategic Services (Provisional)*, Strategic Services Field Manual No. 6, April 1944, Section IV, Training, 10–13, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 136, Box 140, Folder 1465. On the reference to this type of training as “A-4,” see L.B. Shallcross, deputy, Staff Training Branch/TRD, [Central Intelligence Agency], to John O’Gara, chief, Staff Training Branch, 1 February 1951, subject: Information on OSS Schools and Training Sites, p. 4, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 161, Box 7, Folder 76, National Archives II.

21. The Casey incident was recalled by former SO demolitions instructors at Area B-2, Lt. Frank A. Gleason and Lt. Joseph Lazarsky, in telephone interviews with the author, 31 January 2005 and 14 March 2005 respectively. Casey did not mention the incident in his memoir of his service with the OSS, William Casey, *The Secret War against Hitler* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway, 1988).

22. Maj. W.E. Fairbairn, script for OSS training film, “Gutter Fighting,” Part I, “The Fighting Knife,” 11 February 1944, p. 2, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 133, Box 151, Folder 1258, National Archives II. See also William E. Fairbairn, *Get Tough: How to Win in Hand-to-Hand Combat* (New York: Appleton, 1942).

23. Rex Applegate, *Kill or Get Killed* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Military Service Publishing Co., 1943); “Battle Firing: For Those Who Want to Live,” in Lt. Col. Serge Obolensky and Capt. Joseph E. Alderdice, “Outline of Training Programs at Areas ‘A’ and ‘F’ for Operational Groups, Office of Strategic Services,” typescript, n.d., [August 1943], OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 136, Box 140; Folder 1466, National Archives II.

**Notes (cont.)**

24. Lt. Col. William E. Fairbairn, British Army, to Director of Office of Strategic Services, 23 March 1945, memorandum, subject: Resumé of Service of Lt. Col. William E. Fairbairn, 1–2, in OSS Records (RG 226), Director's Office Files, Microfilm 1642, Roll 46, Frames 19–20, National Archives II.
25. Former SO member Edgar Prichard, "Address to Historical Prince William, Inc., 16 January 1991, p. 1, typescript, plus a newspaper clipping of the speech, both located in the park archives of Prince William Forest Park, Triangle, Virginia. Prichard trained first at Area B, where he went through Fairbairn's pistol house, and then at Area A before being sent to North Africa. Edgar Prichard, Personnel File, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 224, Box 620, National Archives II.
26. John K. Singlaub with Malcolm McConnell, *Hazardous Duty: An American Soldier in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Summit Books, 1991), 32–33, and similar in a telephone interview with the author, 11 December 2004.
27. Alex Flaster, Chicago-based documentary filmmaker, email to the author, 24 February 2006; see also Nicholas Dawidoff, *The Catcher was a Spy: The Mysterious Life of Moe Berg* (New York: Pantheon, 1994).
28. "Bang-bang boys," a sobriquet reported in "History of Schools and Training, OSS," p. 25, a 55-page-typescript history, undated, but attached to a memorandum by Col. E.B. Whisner, 7 January 1949, stating "Received this date from W[illiam]. J. Morgan [psychologist and a former OSS Jedburgh] the following report: History of Schools and Training, OSS, Part I thru Part VI," OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 176, Box 2, Folder 13, National Archives II.
29. OSS, *War Report of the O.S.S.*, 76–77, 241–42; for the precise locations of all OSS training sites in the USA, see L.B. Shallcross, deputy, Staff Training Branch/TRD, [Central Intelligence Agency], to John O'Gara, chief, Staff Training Branch, 1 February 1951, subject: Information on OSS Schools and Training Sites, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 161, Box 7, Folder 76, National Archives II.
30. On Area E, "History of Schools and Training Branch, OSS," p. 10, attached to W[illiam] J. Morgan to Col. E.B. Whisner, 7 January 1949, 7–8, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 176, Box 2, Folder, 13, in National Archives II.
31. Congressional Country Club, *The Congressional Country Club, 1924–1984* (n.p., n.d.; [Bethesda, Md., c. 1985]), 12, 25–33. A. William Asmuth, Jr., OSS Legal Division, to Col. Ainsworth Blogg, Schools and Training Branch, 26 April 1944, subject: Provisions of Lease with Congressional Country Club, Inc., OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 137, Box 3, Folder 24; and "History of Schools and Training Branch, OSS," p. 10, attached to W[illiam] J. Morgan to Col. E.B. Whisner, 7 January 1949, 12–13, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 176, Box 2, Folder, 13, in National Archives II. The report explained that additional factors leading to the decision to lease the club was its housing facilities, kitchen and dining room equipment, and grounds for tents or huts and the fact that a search had failed to obtain any other comparable facility available.
32. The OSS Operational Groups (OGs) were created as 13 May 1943 as a separate tactical combat units under JCS Directive 155/7/D, 4 April 1943, Article 7, relating to Operational Nuclei for Guerrilla Warfare. William J. Donovan, Special Order No. 21, issued 13 May 1943, effective, 4 May 1943; and Col. Ellery C. Huntington, Jr., C.O. Operational Groups, to Lt. Cmdr. R. Davis Halliwell, Chief of S.O., 22 June 1943, subject: Operational Groups, OSS—Organization and Functions, both in OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 136, Box 140, Folder 1460, National Archives II.
33. Will Irwin, *The Jedburghs: The Secret History of the Allied Special Forces, France 1944* (New York: Public Affairs Press, 2005), xvii; and Colin Beavan, *Operation Jedburgh* (New York: Viking, 2006), xxvii; each lists the members of the teams in an appendix.
34. Office of Strategic Services, *OG: Operational Group Command*, December 1944, p. 6. I am indebted to Caesar J. Civitella, former Italian OG and Army Special Forces, for providing me with a copy of this booklet.

**Notes (cont.)**

35. Some personnel in all of the operational branches received part of their training at Area F, particularly OSS women. Elizabeth McIntosh, in MO, for example, “learned how to handle weapons and throw grenades out on the golf course” before leaving for the Far East. Elizabeth McIntosh quoted in Russell Miller, *Behind the Lines: The Oral History of Special Operations [SOE and SO] in World War II* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2002), 59–60; and Elizabeth McIntosh, telephone interview with the author, 12 March 2005. There is, as of this writing, no overall history of the Operational Groups. A start has been made with a special OG section in *OSS Society Newsletter*, Winter 2007, 5–8; the OSS OG website [www.ossog.org](http://www.ossog.org); and Troy J. Sacquety, “The OSS: A Primer on the Special Operations Branches and Detachments of the Office of Strategic Services,” *Veritas: Journal of Army Special Operations History*, 3:4 (2007): esp. 40–41, 58–50.
36. Lt. Col. Serge Obolensky and Capt. Joseph E. Alderdice, “Outline of Training Programs at Areas ‘A’ and ‘F’ for Operational Groups, Office of Strategic Services,” typescript, n.d., [August 1943], OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 136, Box 140; Folder 1466; “Outlines of Courses at All U.S. Training Areas,” December 1943, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 136, Box 158, Folder 1723; also *Mobilization Training Programs for Officers and Enlisted Personnel Required for Special Overseas Assignments* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Strategic Services, n.d. [in compliance with JCS 155/11/D of 27 October 1943], p. 8, in OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 146, Box 223, Folder 3106, all in National Archives II. Serge Obolensky, *One Man in His Time: The Memoirs of Serge Obolensky* (New York: McDowell, Obolensky, 1958), 342–49.
37. “Close Combat,” typed lecture, December 1943, included in “Syllabus of Lectures,” February 1944, in OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 136, Box 158, Folder 1717, National Archives II.
38. Ellsworth (“Al”) Johnson, French OG, and later with the Chinese OGs, telephone interview with the author, 27 June 2008.
39. “Operational Groups Training, Preliminary Course F and Final Course B,” December 1943, in Appendix IV, Part Three of the History [of Schools and Training Branch], typescript in OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 136, Box 158, Folder 1723, National Archives II.
40. [www.ossog.org/personnel.htm](http://www.ossog.org/personnel.htm). Accessed January 31, 2010. Donovan did not use a comparable ethnic model in the Far East. OSS Detachment 101 in Burma was composed of a couple of hundred Americans who organized, supplied, and directed 10,000 Kachin tribesmen in Burma. Donovan created 10 Chinese OGs, called “Commandos” in 1945, but they were composed of 1,500 recruits from the Chinese Nationalist Army led by 200 Americans, veterans of European OGs or of Detachment 101. For SO teams against Japanese-occupied countries in the Far East, Donovan utilized Japanese Americans, Chinese Americans, Korean Americans, and Thai students in America. He also used Korean nationalists and Korean soldiers captured from the Japanese army. Troy J. Sacquety is writing the definitive history of Detachment 101.
41. “The Story of OSS OGs Worldwide,” *OSS Society Newsletter*, Winter 2007, 5. Albert Materazzi, an Italian OG veteran, concluded there may have been 2,000 OGs. Albert Materazzi, “OGs get to tell their story,” *OSS Society Digest* No. 1313, 26 March 2006, [osssociety@yahoo.com](mailto:osssociety@yahoo.com), accessed 26 March 2006.
42. Harry Howe Ransom, *The Intelligence Establishment* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970), 70.
43. For a summary of the accomplishments of the SOs and OGs and their local partisans, see Chambers, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 287–476, 582–95; OSS, *War Report of the O.S.S., Vol. 2, The Overseas Targets*, passim; and Patrick K. O’Donnell, *Operatives, Spies, and Saboteurs: The Unknown Story of the Men and Women of World War II’s OSS* (New York: Free Press, 2004), passim. For Donovan’s phrase, see most recently, Charles Pinck and Dan Pinck, “Glorious Amateurs: A New OSS,” reprint of an Op-Ed article, 24 July 2008, [www.ossreborn.com](http://www.ossreborn.com). Accessed 25 July 2008.
44. Donald W. MacKinnon, “OSS Assessment Program,” *Studies in Intelligence* 23, no. 3 (1979): 21–34. The technique was described after the war in OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men: Selection of Personnel for*

### Notes (cont.)

*the Office of Strategic Services* (New York: Rinehart & Co., 1948); Chambers, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 73–77, 566–67; OSS, *War Report of the O.S.S.*, 238–41.

45. See, for example, Maj. Garland H. Williams, COI, to Joseph Green, supervising customs agent, Seattle, Washington, 12 January 1942, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 92, Box 32, Folder 33, National Archives II.

46. Chambers, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 57–58, 147–55, 182–206; on the Navy's UDT swimmers and OSS, see Francis Douglas Fane and Don Moore, *The Naked Warriors* (New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1956); and on the role of the Coast Guard instructors with OSS, see Michael Bennett, "Guardian Spies: The US Coast Guard and OSS Maritime Operations During World War II," *Studies in Intelligence*, 52:4 (December 2008): 3–4.

47. Unidentified OSS recruiter, quoted in Miller, *Behind the Lines*, 57.

48. For uniformed personnel, OSS drew mainly from the Army, but it also obtained recruits from the Army Air Forces, Marines, Navy, and Coast Guard. Accounts of several of the Marine officers in the OSS, such as the highly decorated Maj. Peter J. Ortiz, are included in Robert E. Mattingly, *Herringbone Cloak—GI Dagger: Marines of the OSS* (Washington, D.C.: History and Museums Division, HQ, U.S. Marine Corps, 1989).

49. OSS, *Special Operations Field Manual—Strategic Services (Provisional)*, 23 February 1944, p. 5, copy in William E. Colby Papers, Box 14, Folder 7, Seeley G. Mudd Library, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey.

50. Gerald K. Haines, "Virginia Hall Goillot: Career Intelligence Officer." *Prologue* 26 (Winter 1994): 249–59; Judith L. Pearson, *Wolves at the Door: The True Story of America's First Female Spy* (Guilford, Conn.: Lyons Press, 2005); McIntosh, *Sisterhood of Spies*, 113–28. Despite the title of Pearson's book, Virginia Hall was hardly the first American female spy since they date back to at least the American Revolutionary War.

51. OSS, *War Report of the O.S.S.*, 242–43. Perhaps a majority of the SOs and OGs received their parachute training overseas, many at British SOE schools in Britain, Palestine, and India but others at OSS jump schools set up by Lucius O. Rucker in Algeria and China.

52. James L. McConaughy, untitled, typescript memoir of his service with the OSS, n.d. [c. 1946], 1–2, in James Lukens McConaughy Papers, Connecticut State Library, Hartford, Connecticut. McConaughy, 1887–1948, Columbia University Ph.D., president of Knox College, 1918–25, and Wesleyan University, 1925–43, served as lieutenant governor of Connecticut, 1939–41, president of United China Relief, 1942–46, and deputy director of OSS, Schools and Training, 1943–45. [www.wesleykan.edu/admission/admi/175/presrow/mcconaughey](http://www.wesleykan.edu/admission/admi/175/presrow/mcconaughey), accessed 2 October 2009.

53. The total number of personnel in the OSS remains subject to different estimates. The traditional figure of 13,000 at peak strength in December 1944 (with 5,500 in the United States and 7,500 overseas) is given in Office of Strategic Services, *War Report of the O.S.S. (Office of Strategic Services)*, 2 vols. (New York: Walker and Co., 1976, the declassified component of a typescript completed in 1947), vol. 1, 116 (on COI, see p. 26). A contemporary breakdown of the 12,974 personnel in December 1944, with Intelligence Branches comprising 26.8 per cent (3,477 persons) and Operations, including Special Operations, Operational Groups, and the Maritime Unit, comprising 23.7 per cent (3,075 persons) in December 1944 was reported Louis M. Ream, deputy director, administrative services [OSS] to Charles S. Cheston [second assistant director of OSS], memorandum, [no subject heading] 29 January 1945, 2–3, CIA Records (RG 263), Thomas Troy Files, Box 6, Folder 46, National Archives, II. In August 2008, the personnel files of the OSS were declassified. They included nearly 24,000 individuals, but this figure may exaggerate the core strength of the OSS, because some individuals served only briefly with the OSS on loan from the Army Air Corps or other organizations. William H. Cunliffe, archivist of OSS Records at the National Archives, interview with the author, 13 January 2009. The true size of the OSS may never be known because of the organization's secrecy; because many individuals, foreign and American, were assigned briefly and temporarily; and in part because many of the foreign nationals working secretly for the OSS may not have been included.

**Notes (cont.)**

54. Chambers, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 63–69. Williams was pushed out in August 1942 and left OSS to help the Army build its paratrooper training program. After six months, Baker was reassigned in late June 1943 and wound up serving as liaison between OSS in Algiers and the U.S. Seventh Army in southern France in late 1944. At the end of the war, Schools and Training Branch, noting that Williams had been sacrificed, praised him as having been “a year and a half ahead of his time.” OSS, *Schools and Training Branch*, typescript history of the branch prepared in August 1945, parts of which were declassified 40 years later and published as William L. Cassidy, editor, *History of the Schools and Training Branch of the Office of Strategic Services* (San Francisco: Kingfisher Press, 1983); the quotation is on p. 35.

55. After serving confidentially as deputy director of OSS for Schools and Training, 1943–45, and publicly as president of United China Relief, 1942–46, McConaughy, was elected Republican governor of Connecticut in 1946, serving from 1947 until his death from influenza in 1948. [www.wesleykan.edu/admission/admi/175/presrow/mcconaughey](http://www.wesleykan.edu/admission/admi/175/presrow/mcconaughey), accessed Oct. 2, 2009.

56. Henson Langdon (“Lang”) Robinson, obituary, (2 February 1981) and related material in Henson L. Robinson file, Alumni Records, Rauner Special Collections, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire.

57. On Donovan’s order extending S&T’s authority to training facilities overseas, see OSS, *War Report of the O.S.S.*, 242–43; and for the relationship with the operational branches, see also “History of Schools and Training Branch, OSS,” 44–50, attached to W[illiam] J. Morgan to Col. E.B. Whisner, 7 January 1949, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 176, Box 2, Folder, 13, National Archives II. A number of OSS units were excluded from S&T’s jurisdiction over training at least until late 1944. These included highly specialized technical units like the Communications Branch, the Maritime Unit, X-2, and the Services Branch (reproduction, budget and procedures, procurement and supply), although some of them drew on S&T for supplies and school administration. By 1944 a number of them such as Research and Analysis Branch also sent their personnel for the OSS Basic Course, particularly when they were being dispatched overseas. *History of Schools and Training Branch of the Office of Strategic Services*, 68–69.

58. Minutes of the [Eighth Meeting] of the [SI Advisory] Training Committee, 14 June 1944, p. 2, and Minutes of the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the [SI Advisory] Training Committee, 6 July 1944, “a joint meeting of representatives of S.I., S.O., M.O., X-2 and personnel of S & T to discuss the [operating branches]’ proposed changes in training,” OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 146, Box 229, Folder 3239, National Archives II.

59. James L. McConaughy to Col. [G. Edward (“Ned”) Buxton, 20 July 1944, subject: Report of Mr. O’Gara, 15 July [a 10-page critical analysis of Schools and Training’s program, by J[ohn]. E. O’Gara of OSS Secret Intelligence Branch], both in OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 146, Box 229, Folder 3239, National Archives II.

60. Col. H.L. Robinson, Schools and Training Branch Order No. 1, issued 21 July 1944, effective 17 July 1944, OSS Basic Course, OSS Records (RG 226), Directors Office Files, Microfilm No. 1642, Roll 102, Frames 1120–21; R. Boulton, vice chairman, S.I. Training Advisory Committee, to chief, S.I., 17 July 1944, subject: OSS Basic Two Weeks Course, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 146, Box 229, Folder 3239; R. Boulton, S.I., for the Training Representatives of SI, X-2, SO and MO Branches, to Col. H. L. Robinson [Schools and Training], 7 July 1944, subject: Meeting with Schools and Training Personnel, 6 July 1944; Training Board Meeting, 7 July 1944, “Notes on Discussion Regarding Area ‘E’ S.I., X-2, Basic Course Changes,” OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 146, Box 229, Folder 3239, all in National Archives II.

61. “Excerpts from History of Schools and Training, OSS,” p. 4, attached to L.B. Shallcross, Deputy, Staff Training Branch/TRD [CIA] to John O’Gara, 1 February 1951, subject: Information on OSS Schools and Training Sites, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 161, Box 7, Folder 76, National Archives II.

62. *Ibid.*

63. *History of Schools and Training Branch, Office of Strategic Services* 157–58.

64. Camp McDowell had been an old CCC camp taken over by the US Army Signal Corps, which allowed OSS to use part of the facility. The West Coast OSS facilities were variously located at Camp Pendleton Marine

**Notes (cont.)**

Corps Base (near San Diego), San Clemente, Newport Beach, and at several remote coves on Santa Catalina Island off Los Angeles. L.B. Shallcross, memorandum for John O'Gara, 1 February 1951, subject: "Information on OSS Schools and Training Sites," OSS Record (RG 226), Entry 161, Box 7, Folder 76, National Archives II. The Catalina Boys School on Toyon Cove, Santa Catalina Island, was leased by OSS in December 1943; training began there in June 1944; William Sanford White, *Santa Catalina Island Goes to War: World War II, 1941-1945* (Avalon, Calif.: White Limited Editions, 2002), 61-71.

65. In the one year of operation of the West Coast schools, nearly 1,000 trainees were given the Basic OSS Course, approximately 250 given Advanced SO training, 200 Advanced SI, and 100 Advanced MO. "History of Schools and Training Branch, OSS," 31-32, 52, attached to W[illiam] J. Morgan to Col. E.B. Whisner, 7 January 1949, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 176, Box 2, Folder, 13, National Archives II.

66. Thomas N. Moon and Carl Eifler, *The Deadliest Colonel* (New York: Vantage, 1975), 48-49, 215-33, 323; Chambers, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 460-65; Robert E. Carter, OG and instructor on Catalina Island, telephone interview with the author, 28 August 2008. With the Japanese surrender, the program for preparing infiltrators into Japan to aid the planned U.S. invasion was terminated.

67. Hugh Tovar, SI, interview with the author, 3 November 2009, at Symposium "Irregular Warfare and the OSS Model," sponsored by the Joint Special Operations University and the OSS Society, Tampa, Florida, 2-4 November 2009.

68. "History of Schools and Training Branch, OSS," 31-32, attached to W[illiam] J. Morgan to Col. E.B. Whisner, 7 January 1949, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 176, Box 2, Folder, 13, National Archives II.

69. "The natives being trained as operatives must be treated with friendliness and respect. There is no other way," said an instructor in Ceylon. Ray F. Kauffman, SO Ceylon, quoted in Deane W. Starrett, Chief, Training Materials and Research Section [of the CIA] to Col. [E.B.] Whisner, Deputy Chief, TRS, 16 May 1949, subject: wartime recommendations for the training of personnel in OSS, p. 17, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 161, Box 2, Folder 32, National Archives II.

70. Maj. [Albert] Peter Dewey quoted in Deane W. Starrett, Chief, Training Materials and Research Section [of the CIA] to Col. [E.B.] Whisner, Deputy Chief, TRS, 16 May 1949, subject: wartime recommendations for the training of personnel in OSS, p. 16, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 161, Box 2, Folder 32, National Archives II. After serving in France and returning briefly to the United States, Dewey was sent to French Indochina, where he was mistaken for a French officer and killed by the Viet Minh in an ambush in Saigon in September 1945.

71. Erasmus Kloman, *Assignment Algiers: With the OSS in the Mediterranean Theater* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2005), 14; and telephone interview with the author, 24 January 2005.

72. *Ibid.*, 13-14

73. Lt. Col. H.L. Robinson, Executive, Schools and Training Branch, October 1943, "Schools and Training," p. 12, a 14-page typed report, included in Appendix IV, Part Three of the History [of Schools and Training Branch], OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 136, Box 158, Folder 1723, National Archives II.

74. Robert R. Kehoe, "1944: An Allied Team with the French Resistance," *Studies in Intelligence*, OSS 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue (June 2002): 104.

75. Jerry Sage, *Sage* (Wayne, Pa.: Miles Standish Press, 1985), 207-208, 305, 327, 431.

76. Joseph Lazarsky, SO, telephone interview with the author, 11 February 2007; similar by Frank A. Gleason, Jr., SO, telephone interview with the author, 9 February 2007.

**Notes (cont.)**

77. Caesar J. Civitella, OG, comment at a session on “Historians’ Views” at a conference on “Irregular Warfare and the OSS Model,” a symposium sponsored by the Joint Special Operations University and the OSS Society, Tampa, Florida, 3 November 2009 and telephone interview with the author, 26 May 2010.

78. Theodore Russell, interview in O’Donnell, *Operatives, Spies and Saboteurs*, 110–11. The “Eisenhower jacket” adopted in 1943 was a short, waist-length jacket, popularized by General Dwight D. Eisenhower.

79. Maj. Gen. John K. Singlaub (USA, Ret.), transcript of interview with Maochun Yu and Christof Mauch, 31 October 1996, 8, 13–14, OSS Oral History Transcripts, CIA Records (RG 263), Box 4, National Archives II.

80. In the field, equipment sometimes proved problematic. The suitcase-sized portable transmitter/receivers, for example, were wonderful instruments in operation, but they often broke in the initial parachute drop. Another problem was the uncertainty resulting from OSS not having an air carrier of its own, although a squadron of black-painted B-24 bomber/transports, “the Carpetbaggers,” was assigned to OSS by the Army Air Forces in connection with the invasion of France in 1944.

81. “History of Schools and Training, OSS, Part I: Chronology and Administration, June 1942 – October 1945,” p. 53, typescript, n.d. [apparently written in 1947], copy delivered by W.J. Morgan, who had been with OSS Schools and Training Branch during World War II, to Col. E.B. Whisner, 7 January 1949, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 176, Box 2, Folder 12, National Archives II.

82. OSS, *War Report of the O.S.S.*, 243.

83. “OSS Training Branch, Chapter VI (History),” p. 1, typescript n.d. [1946–1947?], recommendations for “the Training Section of a secret intelligence agency in time of war,” OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 176, Box 2, Folder 14, National Archives II.

84. Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower to War Department, 26 May 1945, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (RG 218), Admiral Leahy’s Files, Box 9, Folder 54, quoted in Bradley F. Smith, *The Shadow Warriors: O.S.S. and the Origins of the C.I.A.* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 307. For evidence of praise by US Generals George C. Marshall, Dwight Eisenhower, Omar Bradley, George Patton, Alexander Patch and Mark Wayne Clark for the contribution of the OSS and SOE and the indigenous resistance movements they supplied and coordinated as well as for the Axis concerns about this irregular warfare expressed by German Field Marshals Gerd von Rundstedt and Albert Kesselring and General Walther Model, see Chambers, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 377.

85. On the CIA’s adoption of OSS personnel and training methods, William Colby with Peter Forbath, *Honorable Men: My Life in the CIA* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978), 85–86; Smith, *Shadow Warriors*, 414–15; Deane W. Starrett, Chief, Training Materials and Research Section [of the CIA] to Col. [E.B.] Whisner, Deputy Chief, TRS, 16 May 1949, subject: wartime recommendations for the training of personnel in OSS, p. 17, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 161, Box 2, Folder 32, National Archives II; “OSS-CIA Tactics Featured in CIA’s Afghanistan Exhibit,” *OSS Society Journal*, 2:1 (Spring-Summer 2009): 25; and telephone interviews by the author with former members of the OSS and CIA, Joseph Lazarsky, SO, 9 July 2008, Peter M.F. Sichel, SI, 9 July 2008, and Arthur F. Reinhardt, Communications Branch, 19 August 2008. On the army’s adoption of OSS organization and training methods and materials when its Special Forces were created in 1952, see Alfred H. Paddock, Jr., *U.S. Army Special Warfare, Its Origins: Psychological and Unconventional Warfare, 1941–1952* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1982), 150–56; Aaron Bank, *From OSS to Green Berets: The Birth of Special Forces* (Novato, Calif.: Presidio Press, 1986), 175–87; Ian Sutherland, “The OSS Operational Groups: Origin of the Army Special Forces,” *Special Warfare* 15, no. 2 (June 2002): 2–13; and telephone interviews with Maj. Caesar J. Civitella, OG and Special Forces, 25 and 29 April 2008.

86. Joseph Lazarsky, telephone interview with the author, 11 February 2007. William J. Morgan, SO, a Jedburgh and a Yale-educated psychologist, later served as CIA’s deputy chief of training, 1947–49, and chief of the Psychological Assessment Staff, 1949–52, Smith, *OSS*, 19. William R. (“Ray”) Peers, who as a young lieutenant had trained at Area B in spring 1942 before leaving for the jungles of Burma as one of the early lead-

**Notes (cont.)**

ers of Detachment 101, later served in Taiwan as chief of a CIA program for training Chinese agents to be infiltrated into mainland China, 1949–51, Smith, *OSS*, 265n.

87. Opposition led by local civic leaders including the editor of the *Washington Star* and the influential Representative Howard W. Smith (D-Va.), a senior member of the House Rules Committee, whose district included Prince William Forest Park, blocked the CIA's bid to take over the park and establish a training camp there. Susan Carey Strickland, *Prince William Forest Park: An Administrative History* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1986), 100, n. 110; Chambers, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 514, 548–53.

88. On comparatively recent OSS-style paramilitary training by the CIA, see, for example, Valerie Plame Wilson, *Fair Game* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007), 1–2, 11–27, 315–316.





## Claire Lee Chennault and the Problem of Intelligence in China

Bob Bergin

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**As an officer in the Army Air Corps, Claire Chennault came to realize the importance of intelligence in the early 1930s.**

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*Claire Chennault went to China in 1937 as a military adviser to Chiang Kai-shek as Japan's war on China expanded. During late 1940-41 he would organize and command the American Volunteer Group (AVG), popularly known as the "Flying Tigers," an air unit supported covertly by the United States before Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. Chennault understood the value of intelligence and wrestling with the problems of acquiring it during most of his career. Most of what has been written about Chennault has focused on his leadership of the Flying Tigers, his relationship with the Republic of China, and his service during World War II. This article draws from his memoirs and other material to specifically address Chennault's approach to intelligence.*

As an officer in the Army Air Corps, Claire Lee Chennault came to realize the importance of intelligence in the early 1930s, when he was the senior instructor in fighter tactics at the Air Corps Tactical School at Maxwell Field in Alabama. He had been trying to modernize fighter techniques and concluded that the "biggest problem of modern fighters was

intelligence. Without a continuous stream of accurate information keeping the fighters posted on exactly where the high-speed bombers were, attempts at interception were like hunting needles in a limitless haystack.”<sup>1</sup>

Fighter planes had dominated the skies and military thinking during World War I, but that changed quickly when the war ended. In 1921, Billy Mitchell showed that airplanes could sink captured German battleships and “popularity shifted from the fighter boys... to the lumbering bombers, even then growing bigger and faster.” Bomber advocates believed that the more powerful bombers would always get through and that the fighter planes sent against them would be ineffective. Advances in technology gave weight to their arguments. When the B-10 bomber appeared, it was heavily armed and capable of flying at 235 mph, faster than the P-26 “Peashooter,” the standard fighter of the US Army Air Corps. Major air maneuvers during the early 1930s seemed to prove that “due to increased speeds and limitless space it is

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*All statements of fact, opinion, or analysis expressed in this article are those of the authors. Nothing in the article should be construed as asserting or implying US government endorsement of an article's factual statements and interpretations.*

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impossible for fighters to intercept bombers.”<sup>2</sup>

Chennault was convinced that with modern tactics and timely information the bombers would be intercepted and destroyed. There was no question that interception was difficult. At that time, the only information on incoming bombers that American air defense might get was from a haphazard warning net of observers whose primary function was to alert civilians to take cover. Chennault set out to resolve the dual problems of tactics and intelligence.

To develop new tactics and demonstrate the teamwork that he believed was fundamental to modern fighter tactics, Chennault formed a three-aircraft acrobatic team that became known as “Three Men on a Flying Trapeze.” It represented the Air Corps all over the country



Chennault (middle) as a member of the Flying Trapeze in 1935. Photo © Bettmann/Corbis

and won wide praise. Chennault also tried to advance his ideas by writing articles, and by exploring what was being done elsewhere. He studied the air warning net systems developed in England and Germany and looked for ways to improve them. Among his writings was *The Role of Defensive Pursuit*, which defined the role of defensive aircraft and laid out the thinking that would be the basis for the famous air warning net he would later establish in China.<sup>3</sup>

### **Chennault as Collector**

The final performance of Chennault’s Flying Trapeze was at the Miami Air Races in December 1935. Among the spectators were representatives from the Chinese Aeronautical Affairs Commission, who were looking for Americans to help build China’s air

force. Chennault was offered a job at the Chinese flying school. It was tempting. His ideas were controversial, his career stalled, and his health not good. He stayed in touch with the Chinese and started to plan his retirement for 1937, when he would complete 20 years of service.

On 30 April 1937 Chennault retired from the US Army Air Corps; the next morning he sailed for

China on a three-month contract to make a confidential survey of the Chinese Air Force (CAF). He interrupted his journey to make a side trip through Japan that would illustrate his far-sightedness, his great interest in intelligence, and the almost natural feel he had for its acquisition.

Billy McDonald was waiting on the dock at Kobe, Japan, when the liner *President Garfield* docked. McDonald was one of the other two pilots on the Flying Trapeze. Chennault had recommended him and several others to the Chinese, and McDonald was now working at the CAF flight school at Hangchow. Had the Japanese known that, they would not have granted McDonald a visa or, as Chennault put it, “ensured the ubiquitous little fellows of the secret police on our trail.”

But McDonald somehow managed to get himself listed as an assistant manager of a troupe of acrobats that was touring Japan and passed through passport formalities unnoticed. He stayed with the acrobats while they appeared at several theaters, then left them in Osaka to be on the dock when the *President Garfield* arrived. In his passport, Chennault was identified as a farmer.

What followed was like the excellent adventure of two young operations officers on a field training exercise. They hired an open car and tried to look like tourists as they “set off to see the country through the

eyes of experienced airmen gauging potential targets." They hid cameras and binoculars under their topcoats and, with "an unhealthy interest in harbors and airfields," toured Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe, then sailed the inland sea where they tried to identify shipping routes and islands where new war industries were being established.

Chennault said nothing in his memoirs about planning for this trip, but he must have done a good deal of it. There was the matter of his identity and McDonald's "cover," and the itinerary, which took the two through industrial districts, near construction sites, and to "areas where industry seemed to be expanding with the suspicious speed of a military enterprise."

The trip was very successful, Chennault thought. They took photos of potential targets and "filled notebooks full of data." "Much to my surprise," he wrote, "I found out four years later that our notebooks and pictures contained more information on Japanese targets than the War Department Intelligence files."<sup>4</sup> This Japanese interlude gives an excellent insight into Chennault's thinking at a time when America had virtually no experience in covert collection. It showed the value he set on intelligence and its role in the Pacific war he knew would come—and that he could find ways to get it.

Chennault may have foreseen the war, but he could not have

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*They hid cameras and binoculars under their topcoats and, with "an unhealthy interest in harbors and airfields," toured Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe, then sailed the inland sea*

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imagined how close it already was. He arrived in China on 30 May 1937 and set off on a survey of the Chinese Air Force. He was at a flying school on 7 July, when the Marco Polo Bridge incident occurred. The Japanese, who had held parts of China since 1931, were on a maneuver near the Marco Polo Bridge outside Peking. When one of their soldiers disappeared, the Japanese accused the Chinese of kidnapping him and pressed demands that the Chinese could not meet. They used the Chinese refusal to occupy Peking.

Chennault immediately sent a cable to Chiang Kai-shek, offering his services "in any capacity." Chiang accepted, and sent him to the CAF's advanced flight school at Nan Chang to direct air combat training. But Chiang also had more immediate needs. On 13 August, Chennault was included in a meeting of Chiang's war council. There was no Chinese officer who could organize a large combat mission, and Chennault spent the evening planning the first Chinese air-strike on the Japanese warships that had shelled Shanghai that day. From that point on, Chennault was to have a major role in the war. At the beginning of September, Chiang gave him responsibility for all operations of the Chinese Air Force.

Intelligence was now a major concern. Within the US mili-

tary establishment, "current intelligence on the Orient just didn't exist," he wrote. He looked for ways to learn about his enemy, and what he learned he shared with the US embassy. From Japanese airplanes that crashed during the first air battles he salvaged equipment and sent the best of the materiel to the US naval attaché. With the Japanese advancing on Nanking, the attaché secured it in the safest place he knew, aboard the US gunboat *Panay*. Two days later the *Panay* was attacked by the Japanese and sent to the bottom of the Yangtze. With it went Chennault's collection of Japanese military equipment.<sup>5</sup>

Chennault continued to collect everything he could about the Japanese Air Force, but his efforts made little impression back in Washington. In 1939, the Chinese captured an intact Japanese Type 97 "Nate" fighter. Chennault had it flown in extensive tests against comparable British, American and Russian aircraft and compiled a thick dossier on the Nate's construction and performance. He believed it was one of the best acrobatic airplanes ever built—"climbs like a skyrocket and maneuvers like a squirrel"—and turned the dossier over to US military intelligence.

In time Chennault received a letter from the War Department. It said that "aeronautical experts believed it was

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*He learned much by watching early air battles over Nanking from the ground, and even more by getting in the sky with the Japanese.*

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impossible to build an airplane with such performance... with the specifications submitted." In late 1940, he visited Washington and brought with him data on the first model "Zero." That information was never disseminated. "American pilots got their first information on its performance from the Zero's 20-mm. cannon a year later over Oahu and the Philippines."<sup>6</sup>

With the air defense of Nanking his responsibility, Chennault established the first of his warning nets. All available information on enemy movements was channeled into a central control room and plotted on a map that Chennault used to control the defending Chinese fighters. He adapted the net as the situation changed and the Chinese withdrew to Hangzhou and Chungking. It would take time before the warning net became what he envisioned, "a vast spider net of people, radios, telephones, and telegraph lines that covered all of Free China accessible to enemy aircraft."<sup>7</sup>

The methodical development of that spider net began later in Yunnan Province. Four radio stations in a ring 40 kilometers outside Kunming city reported to the control center in Kunming. Each radio station was connected by telephone to eight reporting points, with each of those points responsible for a 20 kilometer square of sky. This pattern was repeated to create

additional nets as they were needed, and all the nets were interconnected until there was one vast air warning net spread over all of Free China.

The net was also used to warn civilians of bombing raids and as an aid to navigation. A lost American pilot could circle a village almost anywhere in China and in short order be told exactly where he was—by a net radio station that had received a telephone call from the village he was circling. The net was so effective that Chennault could later say: "The only time a Japanese plane bombed an American base in China unannounced was on Christmas Eve of 1944, when a lone bomber sneaked in...from the traffic pattern of (American) transports circling to land after their Hump trip."<sup>8</sup>

Japanese fighter tactics was another area Chennault avidly pursued. He learned much by watching early air battles over Nanking from the ground, and even more by getting in the sky with the Japanese. When Curtiss-Wright exhibited a P-36 "Hawk Special" at Nanking soon after his arrival in China, he got Madame Chiang, head of a newly created CAF commission, to buy it as his personal airplane. Stripped of all unnecessary equipment, the Hawk Special became "the fastest plane in China skies." With it Chennault got his "first taste of Jap flak and fighter tactics,

and...learned some of the lessons that later saved many an American pilot's life over China." Many believed that he engaged the Japanese aircraft in combat during these forays, but Chennault always denied it.<sup>9</sup>

The Hawk Special was also used extensively to search for Japanese carriers off the coast and to monitor Japanese troop movements. "We proved the value of reconnaissance so effectively that an entire Japanese fighter group near Shanghai was ordered to concentrate on destroying the Hawk Special." The Japanese never did catch the Hawk; it was destroyed on the ground while being flown by another pilot.

### ***"Civilian" Warriors: The AVG***

By the autumn of 1940 Japanese advances had made the situation in China desperate. The first of the Japanese Zero models had appeared over Chungking, "like hawks in a chicken yard," and eliminated what remained of the Chinese Air Force. The cities of east China were being bombed regularly and without opposition; a hundred or more Japanese bombers struck Chungking every day. More territory was being lost to the Japanese and even Chiang Kai-shek believed there was a limit to how much the Chinese people could take. He summoned Chennault and presented a plan to buy American airplanes and hire American pilots to fly them.

Chennault did not think it could be done. US neutrality laws stood in the way, as did the lack of aircraft. Every new airplane coming off American production lines not going to the US Army or Navy was committed to the European allies. Chiang's brother-in-law, T.V. Soong, was already in Washington lobbying China's friends. He cabled Chiang that Chennault's presence "would assist in convincing authorities here," and Chennault was on his way in October, for a homecoming that would last into the summer of 1941.

Despite his doubts, Chennault put forward a plan to the War Department that called for 200 bombers and 300 fighters that would use China as a platform to bomb Japan. So large a number of aircraft was clearly impossible. Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson thought the idea "rather half-baked," but President Roosevelt started to get interested. The idea of bombing Japan was set aside—the United States was still not at war with Japan—and the plan evolved into protection of the Burma Road with American pilots and 100 fighters. Chennault started working out the details of what would become the First American Volunteer Group (AVG), as a unit of the Chinese Air Force.

Introduction of the Lend-Lease Act after Roosevelt's reelection in November 1940 and its passage the following March made it possible for the US government to help China. Aircraft for the AVG were found

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*The matter of personnel was more complicated. By law, American citizens could not serve in the armed services of a belligerent foreign power.*

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when the British agreed to decline delivery of 100 ready-to-go P-40 fighters to get 200 P-40s of a later model.

The matter of personnel was more complicated. By law, American citizens could not serve in the armed services of a belligerent foreign power. The solution was to have the men hired by a civilian entity rather than the Chinese government. A company already operating in China fit the bill: The Central Aircraft Manufacturing Company (CAMCO), a private concern that had been assembling, operating and repairing aircraft for China. Majority shares were owned by the Chinese government; a New York company owned the rest.

Roosevelt agreed in April 1941 to let US military reserve officers and active duty enlisted men resign from their service and join the AVG. Roosevelt's agreement was strictly oral; an unpublished executive order cited in many histories appears never to have existed.<sup>10</sup> The AVG would serve the country's best interests, but it was not something that could be done openly. Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox and Acting Deputy Chief of Staff George Brett quietly arranged for CAMCO recruiters to enter bases and recruit officers and men from the US services. In July 1941, having signed one-year contracts, 99 pilots and 186 ground support personnel sailed for

Asia under passports that identified them as farmers, missionaries, acrobats, salesmen, and teachers. It was a formula the US Air Force would use nearly three decades later in Laos to man a radar station that officials could purport was not run by the US government.<sup>11</sup>

The AVG was called the "Flying Tigers" by the US press after spectacular early success against the Japanese over Rangoon after the Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor, the Philippines, Malaya and other Pacific bases. The United States and its Allies were on the defensive everywhere in Asia, and in the popular mind it seemed that only the AVG stood in the way of a quick Japanese victory in Burma and China.

When the AVG was disbanded after the contracts ended on 4 July 1942, it had been in combat for less than seven months. In that time the AVG was credited with destroying 297 enemy aircraft in aerial combat and another 153 probably destroyed. On the ground, AVG pilots destroyed 200 enemy aircraft and great quantities of Japanese supplies and equipment.<sup>12</sup> The pilots attributed their victories to the tactics that Chennault taught them.<sup>13</sup> It was what he had learned from his years of observing the Japanese Air Force in the skies over China.

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*The intelligence Chennault had to depend on came from the Chinese War Ministry via Stilwell's headquarters in Chungking.*

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### ***Back in the Army: The Intelligence Options***

Chennault was brought back into the US Army, given a brigadier's star and made the ranking American air officer in China. As the China Air Task Force that replaced the AVG grew into the Fourteenth Air Force, Chennault started to receive at least some of the men and airplanes he needed. The effectiveness of the Fourteenth would depend on the accuracy of the intelligence it had to target its bombers.

The intelligence Chennault's force was getting was not up to the job. "Stilwell exhibited a striking lack of interest in the intelligence problems of the China sector of his command," Chennault wrote in his memoir, *Way of a Fighter*. Lt. Gen. Joseph W. Stilwell was the top-ranking American officer in China and, by Chennault's account, was entirely satisfied with the intelligence the Chi-

nese provided, although it was outdated, inaccurate, and useless to the bombers Chennault commanded. But worse than his lack of interest, "Stilwell specifically prohibited the Fourteenth from any attempts to gather intelligence. Since the Fourteenth Air Force was the only American combat organization in China and needed fresh and accurate intelligence...I was again faced with the choice of obeying Stilwell's orders literally...or finding some other method of getting the information so essential to our operations."<sup>15</sup>

The intelligence Chennault had to depend on came from the Chinese War Ministry via Stilwell's headquarters in Chungking. By the time it reached the Fourteenth, the information was "third hand... generally three to six weeks old," and useless for targeting the bombers. There was another Chinese intelligence source that Chennault had rejected, the Chinese

Secret Service:

"I avoided a proffered alliance with Tai Li's notorious KMT secret police. It might have been useful, but since Tai's men were engaged in a ruthless manhunt for Communists, it would have meant the end of

our intelligence and rescue relations with Communist armies in the field."<sup>14</sup>

For the same reason, Chennault had few dealings with the Sino-American Cooperative Organization (SACO), a US Navy group under Captain Milton "Mary" Miles that worked jointly with Tai Li's organization. A group of SACO navy officers worked in Fourteenth Air Force headquarters under Chennault's command. The officers maintained contact with the Pacific fleet and provided shipping intelligence and photo interpretation. "This effective liaison paid enormous dividends in attacks on enemy shipping." But the intelligence gap on the Japanese Army in China remained. Chennault needed to know what was going on behind the enemy lines, inside Japanese-held territory.<sup>16</sup>

"I solved this problem by organizing the Fourteenth's radio-intelligence teams within the framework of our air-raid-warning control network and continued to depend officially on Stilwell's stale, third-hand Chinese intelligence...."<sup>17</sup> The air warning net would support the new effort and serve as its cover. Fourteenth Air Force warning net personnel were already out in the field, living in villages, temples and caves. Chennault's new field intelligence officers would blend into the mix and appear to be part of it until they went beyond the last American outpost and crossed into enemy territory.



Chennault (r) with Chiang Kai-shek and another US Army officer. Undated photo © Bettmann/Corbis

It required men who could pass through the lines and operate in Japanese-occupied territory for extended periods of time. They would report their own observations and recruit agents who would report in a timely manner and on a regular basis the information needed to target the bombers effectively.

“Most of our field intelligence officers were old China hands. I tried to pick men who had lived in China before the war, spoke the language, knew the customs, and could live in the field on Chinese food.” The first one was John Birch, “led into our fold by Jimmy Doolittle after Birch had guided Jimmy and his raiders out of East China.” The famous Doolittle Tokyo Raiders had dropped out of the sky in east China where the young Georgia Baptist had been serving as a missionary. It brought Birch into Chungking where he met Chennault. He wanted to serve God and his country. He was exactly what Chennault was looking for.<sup>18</sup>

Chennault sent Birch back to East China to survey secret airfields and gasoline caches, then sent him to work with the guerrillas along the Yangtze River. He recruited agents to report on Japanese shipping by radio and developed target information on his own. Once, when the bombers could not find a huge munitions dump hidden inside a village, Birch passed back through the Japanese line, joined the bombers and rode in the nose of the lead aircraft to guide them directly to the tar-

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*“Most of our field intelligence officers were old China hands. I tried to pick men who had lived in China before the war, spoke the language, knew the customs, and could live in the field on Chinese food.”*

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get. Birch pioneered the techniques to provide close air support to ground troops. He served as a forward air controller and with a hand-cranked radio talked aircraft down on their targets.

Birch was adept at moving through Japanese lines and became the example for those who followed. He dyed his hair black, dressed as a farmer and learned how to walk like one. He carried names of Chinese Christians to contact in areas he operated in. Church groups became his infrastructure behind the lines, providing food, helpers and safe places to stay. He remained in the field for three years, refusing any leave until the war was over, he said.

John Birch was the pioneer field intelligence officer, and Chennault came to look on him almost as a son.<sup>a</sup> Others followed: Paul Frillmann was a Lutheran missionary who first met Chennault in 1938, at a baseball game at Hangzhou. He later served as chaplain for the AVG. After the Japanese surrender he was put in charge of the OSS office in Beijing.<sup>19</sup> Wilfred Smith, the son of a missionary born in China and raised on the Yangtze was a professor of Oriental history; Sam West, a long-time cosmetics salesman in Asia. They

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<sup>a</sup> Birch was killed in 1945. The John Birch Society would be named after him.

operated alone, or as two man teams, the second man sometimes Chinese. Chennault's agent network eventually spread through many areas of Japanese-occupied China.

In November 1943, OSS chief William Donovan visited China. OSS in China was linked to SACO and entangled with Tai Li's secret police. Donovan came with the intention of splitting OSS off from SACO and operating unilaterally, but it quickly became evident that Tai would not tolerate unilateral OSS operations.<sup>20</sup>

Donovan looked for a way to work around this and found Chennault willing to help. He agreed to let OSS use the Fourteenth Air Force as cover for its unilateral operations behind Japanese lines. The result was the 5329th Air and Ground Forces Resources and Technical Staff (AGFRTS—or Agfarts, as it became known).<sup>21</sup> The organization combined OSS and the Fourteenth's field intelligence staff, added OSS Research and Analysis personnel and assumed all intelligence duties of the Fourteenth Air Force.

The arrangement was a happy and very effective marriage. The number of intelligence officers operating inside Japanese-held territory increased greatly, and intelligence broadened to include requirements

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*Chennault provided the model for the use of proprietary commercial arrangements that would be used by the newly-formed CIA in the post-war period.*

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beyond the specific needs of the air force. Chennault was pleased with the results—the Fourteenth now had more intelligence than ever—but his interest in the operation started to wane. In time the entire operation would be managed by OSS.

During his years in China, Claire Chennault set precedents in the way intelligence was acquired and used, long before America had an intelligence service. He was an innovative thinker, unconventional in his views of air warfare and intelligence. He set clear objectives and used intelligence to

reach his goals with the resources available—be it a Chinese villager with a telephone or an “old China hand” who could dye his hair black, speak Chinese and walk like one.

The AVG was largely Chennault’s creation, the product of his planning and leadership. The air tactics he taught his men were the result of intelligence he gained by his study of the Japanese Air Force, acquired over the years as he combed through wrecked Japanese airplanes and observed Japanese pilots maneuvering in the sky. As a result, the AVG was one of the most effective units in the history of aerial warfare.<sup>22</sup>

Chennault provided the model for the use of proprietary commercial arrangements that would be used by the newly formed CIA in the postwar period. Chennault returned to China after the war to create Civil Air Transport (CAT), an airline that became of great use to the CIA as it started to assist the anticommunist forces in China. CIA subsidized the airline, and in August 1950 bought it outright as Air America.<sup>23</sup>

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Chennault inspecting a Civil Air Transport aircraft and embarked soldiers of the army of the Chinese Nationalists being evacuated from China in 1948. Photo © Bettmann/Corbis



**Notes**

1. Claire Lee Chennault, *Way of a Fighter*, ed. Robert Holtz (New York: GP Putnam's Sons, 1949), 21.
2. Chennault, 22. The quoted statement is that of Maj. Gen. Walter Frank, official umpire during 1931 Air Corps maneuvers.
3. Claire Lee Chennault, *The Role of Defensive Pursuit*, available Washington, DC: Library of Congress Photoduplication Service, Call number UG630.C486, 39 pages/microfilm 85/6093 (1985).
4. Chennault, 32–33.
5. The Panay was sunk on 12 December 1937. Roy M. Stanley, *Prelude to Pearl Harbor: War in China, 1937–41* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, no date), fn on 106. Stanley notes that Chennault's "intelligence treasure" on the Panay included key parts recovered from the newest Japanese aircraft, "a fact probably known to the Japanese."
6. Chennault, 94.
7. *Ibid.*, 82.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Martha Byrd, *Chennault: Giving Wings to the Tiger* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1987). Byrd suggests Chennault had good reason for saying little about his actions, "then or later." A violation of US statutes and War Department regulations, combat would render its practitioners liable to prosecution, possibly including loss of retired officer status and pay.
10. Byrd, 117. She notes, "Although it is generally accepted (and stated by Chennault in his own memoir) that Roosevelt signed an unpublished executive order giving authority for American reserve officers and active duty enlisted men to withdraw from US service and join the AVG, no such order was signed by the president. His consent was verbal; specifics were handled by [Lauchlin] Currie, [John] Marshall, and [Frank] Knox."
11. See Timothy Castle, *One Day Too Long: Top Secret Site 85 and the Bombing of North Vietnam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).
12. Charles R. Bond, Jr. and Terry H. Anderson, *A Flying Tiger's Diary* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1984), 214. Daniel Ford, *Flying Tigers: Claire Chennault and the American Volunteer Group* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991). Ford notes that CAMCO evidently paid \$500 bonuses to AVG pilots for 294 planes destroyed and that victories attributed to the AVG ranges from 293 to 298.
13. Edward F. Rector (AVG pilot) interview with author in *Military History*, February 2001. "The tactics Chennault taught us were what made the AVG the famous Flying Tigers." The same sentiment was voiced by the dozen or more AVG pilots the author has interviewed over the years.
14. Chennault, 257.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*, 258.
18. *Ibid.*, 259.
19. See Paul Frillmann and Graham Peck, *China: The Remembered Life* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1968).
20. Frederic Wakeman Jr., *Spymaster: Dai Li and the Chinese Secret Service* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003). Wakeman notes that during Dai Li's (the pinyin rendering of Tai Li) meeting with Donovan in Chungking on 2 December 1943 "Donovan said ... if OSS could not secure Dai Li's cooperation, then it

**Notes (cont.)**

would work on its own in China.” Dai Li responded by saying “he would kill any OSS agents operating outside SACO on Chinese soil.” The next day, Chiang Kai-shek reportedly told Donovan, “We Chinese object to a foreign secret service or intelligence service coming into China and working without the knowledge of the Chinese. Remember that this is a sovereign country and please conduct yourself accordingly.”

21. Maochun Yu, *OSS in China: Prelude to Cold War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 155. Yu writes that the name was created by Donovan aide Maj. Carl Hoffman to avoid implying any link to OSS. Hoffman told Donovan, “It was the most confused title I could think of at the moment.”

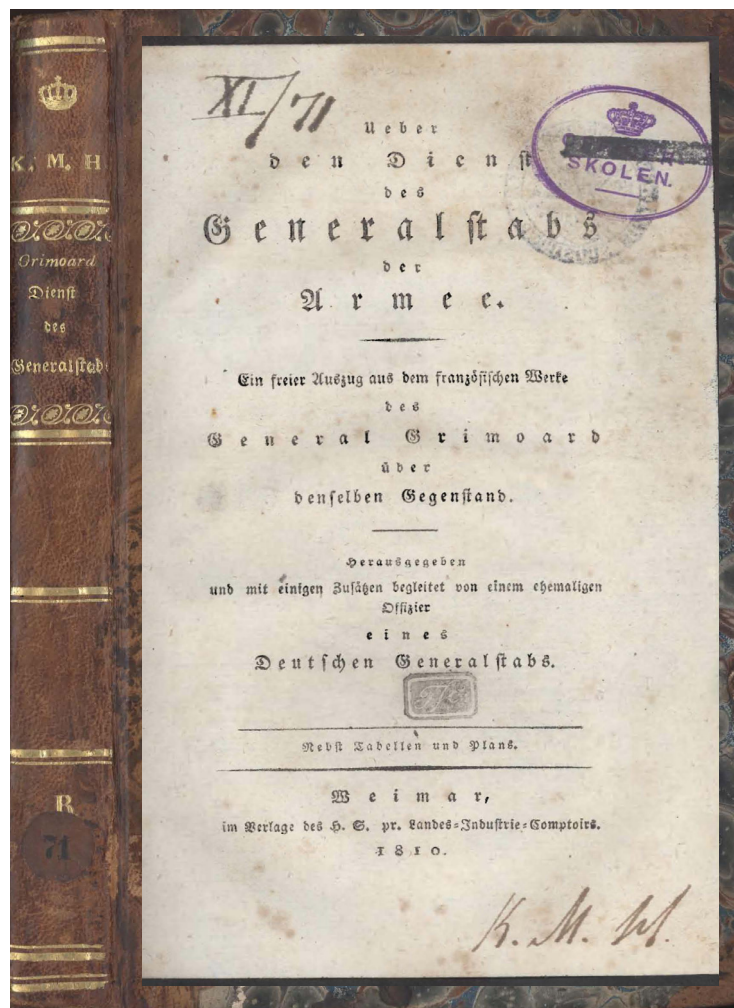
22. Byrd, 152: “The men had destroyed 297 enemy aircraft and lost only 14 of their own planes in combat.... The cost in men was four prisoners and twenty-two dead.... The cost in money was \$3 million to recruit and operate, \$8 million for planes. The US Army purchased 54 surviving planes for a credit against Lend-Lease of \$3.5 million. When the books were cleared, Chennault turned over to the Madame a remainder of \$7,990 to apply to war charity.”

23. For information about the origins of Air America and its uses after World War II see “Air America: Upholding the Airmen’s Bond” at [www.foia.cia.gov/airAmerica.asp](http://www.foia.cia.gov/airAmerica.asp). On the site is a collection of documents revealing the role that Air America, the Agency’s proprietary airline, played in the search and rescue of pilots and personnel during the Vietnam War.



## The French Napoleonic Staff View of HUMINT

As translated from German by Rick Sanders



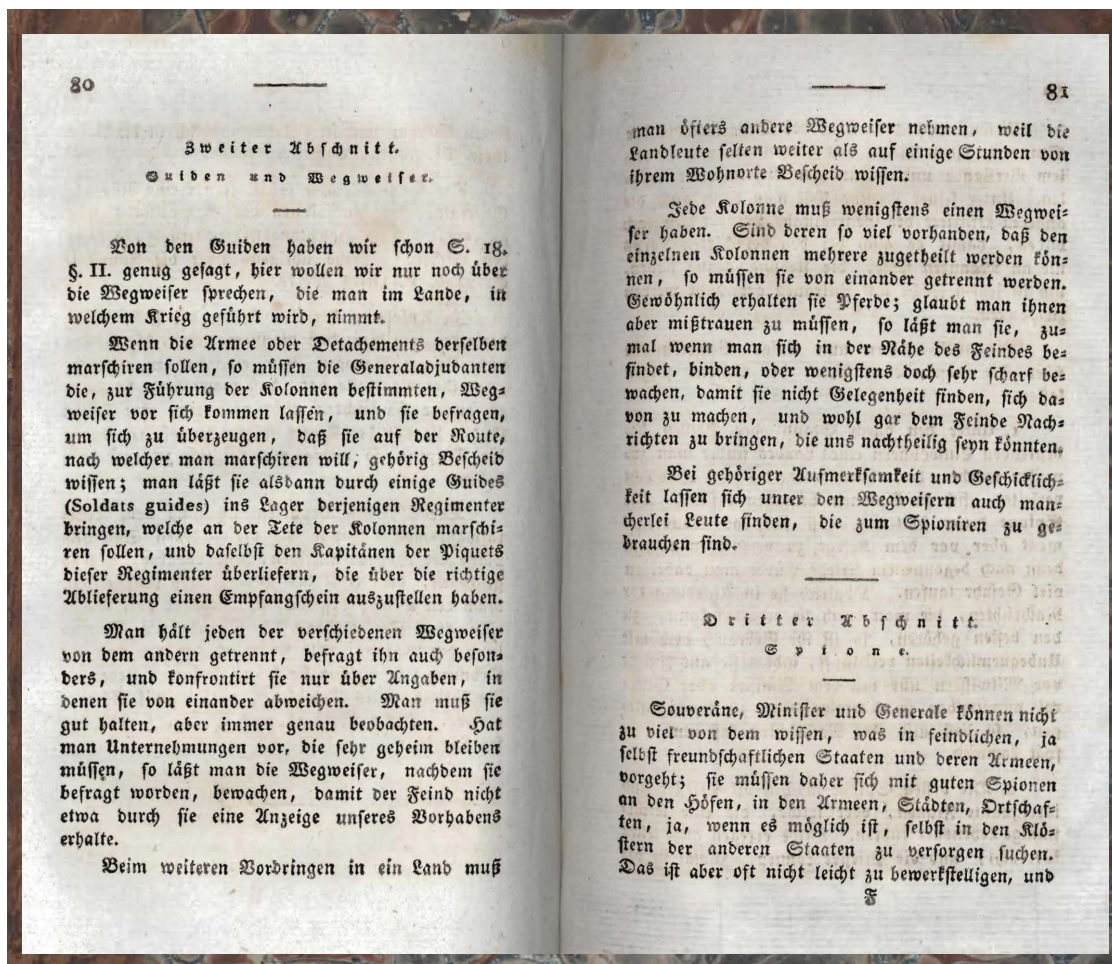
Translated in the following pages is a chapter from a book first published in Paris in 1809. Written by one of Napoleon's generals, Philippe Henri de Grimoard, the book is about service on the general staff and is entitled *Traité sur le service de l'état major général des armées: contenant son objet, son organisation et ses fonctions, sous les rapports administratifs et militaires* [*Treatise on Service in the Army General Staff: Reflections on its Organization and Functions, in Administrative and Military Respects*].

The book was translated into German in 1810 by a former officer of a German General Staff and published in Weimar, Prussia. The German title translated into English reads *About Service on the General Staff of the Army: a Liberal Extract from the French Work by General Grimoard on the Same Subject*.<sup>1</sup> The following English translation is of the third chapter, "Spies," from the German version. In 1810, Prussia had been conquered by Napoleon, and its army subordinated to that of France. During the past 200 years, language and terminology have changed, but many of the principles of human intelligence, HUMINT,

seem to have remained constant. The translator, however, does not advocate any particular aspect of Grimoard's advice on espionage and asks readers to bear in mind how prevailing

<sup>1</sup> Ueber den Dienst des Generalstabs der Armee—Ein freier Auszug aus dem französischen Werke von General Grimoard über denselben Gegenstand, herausgegeben und mit eigenen Zusätzen begleitet von einem ehemaligen Offizier eines Deutschen Generalstabs, Weimar, im Verlag des H. G. pr. Landes-Industrie-Comptoirs, 1810, pages 81–85.

All statements of fact, opinion, or analysis expressed in this article are those of the author. Nothing in the article should be construed as asserting or implying US government endorsement of its factual statements and interpretations.



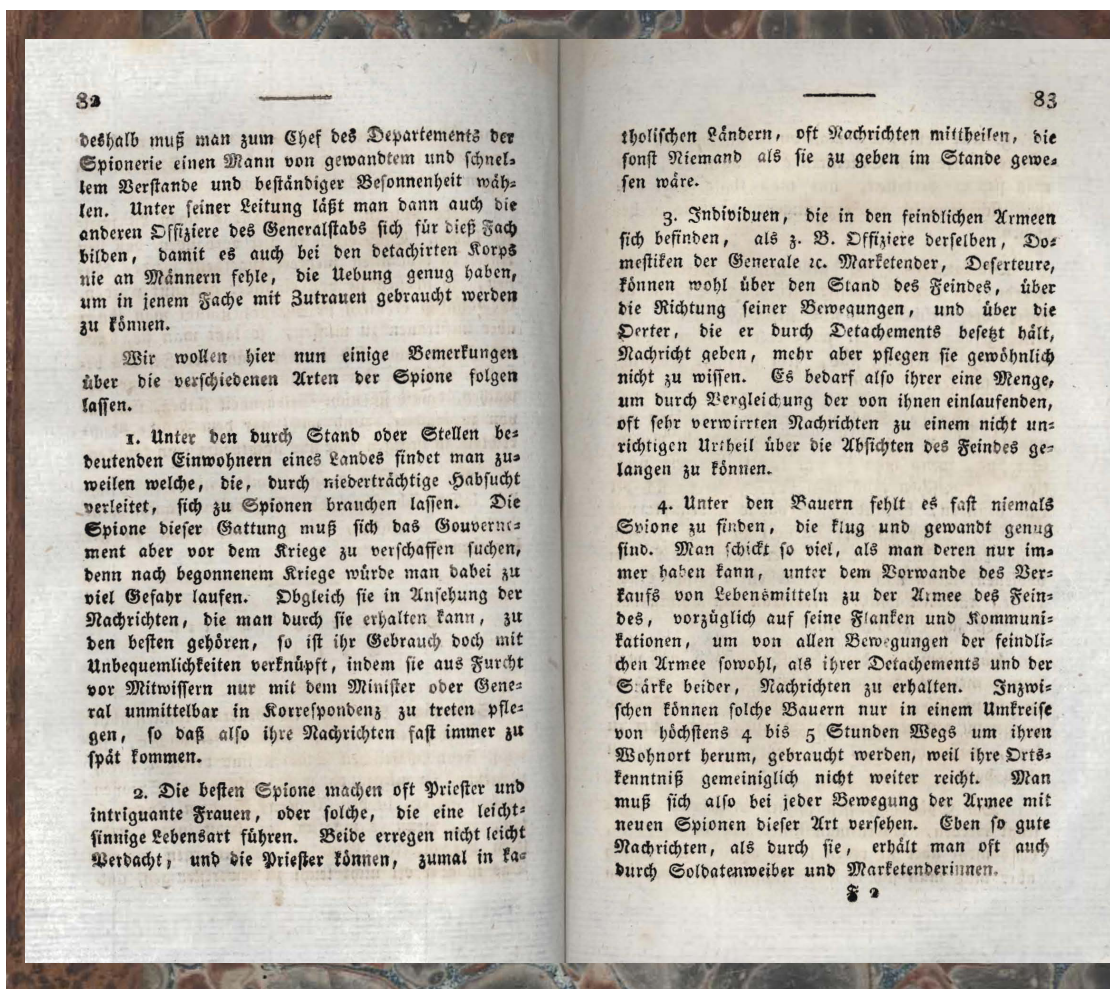
European views on religion and gender in the early 19th century differ from today. The original German translation is in CIA's Historical Intelligence Collection. The whereabouts of the French original is unknown.—R.S.

### Third Chapter—Spies

Sovereigns, ministers and generals can never know too much about what is going on in enemy and even friendly states and their armies. They must therefore try to equip themselves with good spies in the courts [of the nobility], in the armies, cities, towns, and if possible, even in the cloisters of the other states. But that is often not easy to bring about, and therefore, one must choose as the chief of the espionage department, a man who is clever and understands quickly and who has steady level-headedness. Under his leadership, one can then train other officers of the General Staff on this subject. Then there will never be a lack of men in the detached corps who have enough practice to be used with confidence in the subject.

Now we want to make a few comments about the various kinds of spies.

1. Among the most important inhabitants of a country (because of rank or position), one can find some who suffer from base greed and can be used as spies. The government has to try to obtain spies of this type before a war because there is much danger involved once war has started. Even if it appears that the information they can provide is among the best, their use also has drawbacks because, out of fear of exposure, they can only be in direct correspondence with the Minister or general, so their information almost always comes too late.

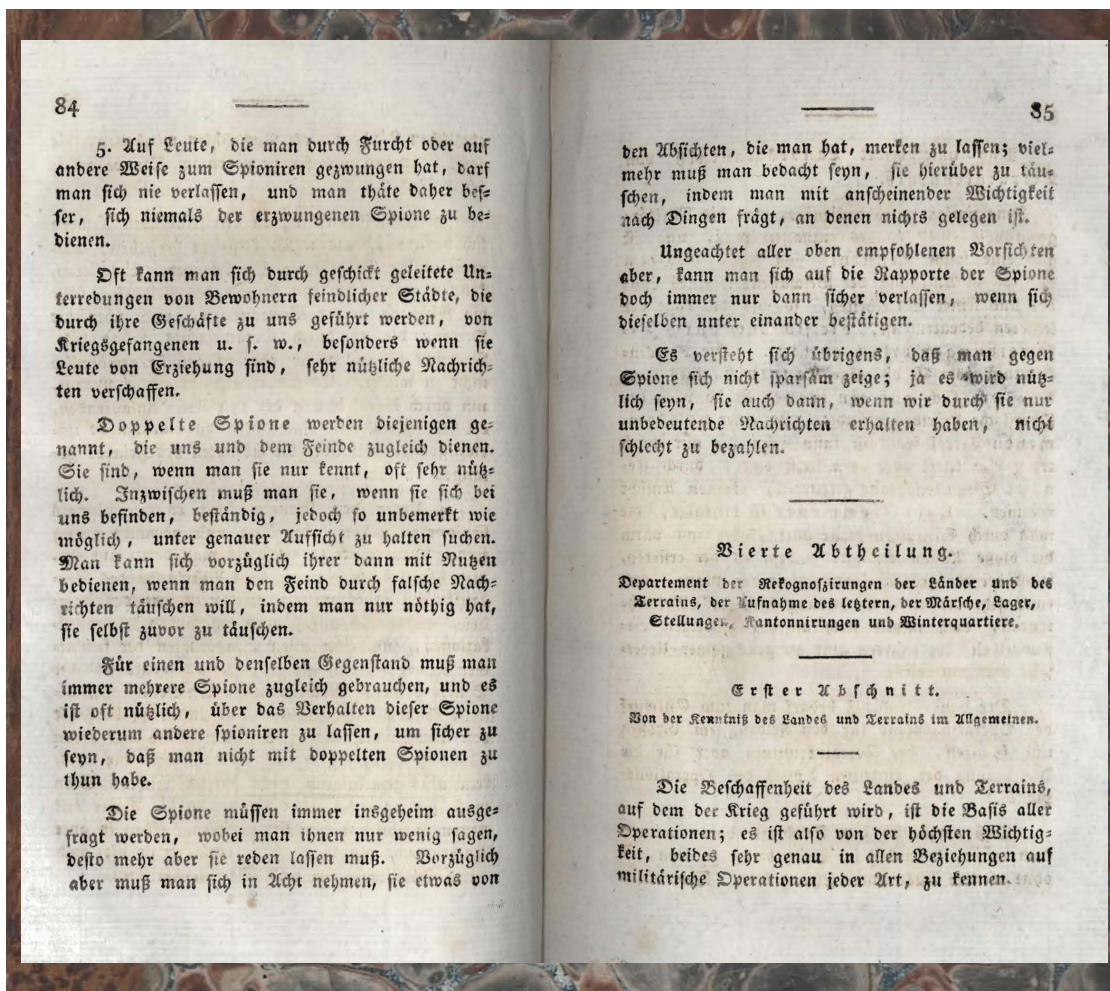


2. The best potential spies are often priests and intriguing women, or those who have a frivolous lifestyle. These people do not easily draw suspicion and the priests can, especially in Catholic countries, often provide information which no one else can provide.

3. Individuals who are in the enemy army, such as its officers, officers' servants, marketers, and deserters, can indeed provide information on the condition of the enemy, on the direction of its movements, and on the places its detachments are occupying, but usually they won't know more. One therefore needs a lot of them so one can compare the incoming and often very confusing information so that one can come to the right conclusion about the enemy's intentions.

4. One can almost always obtain spies among the peasants who are intelligent and clever enough. One sends as many of them as one can have under the pretext of selling provisions to the enemy's army, especially on its flanks and lines of communications to obtain information above all on enemy movements as well as its detachments and the strengths of both. However, such peasants can only be used in an area of only four to five hours away from their homes because their knowledge generally does not extend farther. One must therefore obtain new spies of this sort with each movement of the army. One can also obtain equally good information as they can provide, from soldiers' wives and camp followers.

5. One can never rely on people who are forced to spy out of fear or other means, and one would be better off to never use coerced spies.



One can often obtain very useful information by carefully led conversations with residents of enemy cities, who come to us because of their business, from prisoners of war, etc., especially if they are educated people.

Doubled spies [double agents] are those who serve both us and the enemy. They, when recognized, are often very useful. In the meantime, one must constantly and as discreetly as possible keep them under close observation when they are among us. They can then be especially useful when one wants to deceive the enemy with false information, in that one only needs to deceive them.

For the same reason, one should use several spies at the same time, and it is often useful to have other spies to spy on the actions of them to ensure one is not dealing with double agents.

Spies must always be questioned in secret, whereby one should tell them little and let them talk a lot. One must be especially careful to let them notice something of one's intentions; one must be more careful to deceive them by asking about things of seeming importance which are not important.

In spite of all of the previously suggested cautions, one can indeed only safely rely on the reports of the spies if they can confirm one another's information.

Also it is evident that one should not be too thrifty with spies; thus it would be useful to not pay them poorly even when we receive only insignificant information from them.



## A Conversation with Former CIA Director Michael Hayden

Mark Mansfield

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*Former CIA Director Michael Hayden—known for making good, efficient use of his time—has kept a brisk schedule since leaving office in February 2009 after a nearly three-year tenure at the CIA. In addition to being a principal at the Chertoff Group, a security consulting firm founded by former Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff, he serves as distinguished visiting professor at George Mason University’s School of Public Policy, writes and speaks publicly about intelligence and national security, travels frequently, and still finds the time—and marshals the energy—to train for 10K runs with his wife Jeanine.*

*Now that he has been out of government for well over a year, I wanted to ask him to reflect on his years at CIA—the accomplishments, the challenges he faced, and the positions he took on some controversial issues, including the detention and interrogation program.*

*On the morning of 6 May, I had the opportunity to get together for breakfast with Hayden at the Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami Beach, where he had just arrived to address a large group of corporate executives about leadership. (I am currently serving as the CIA’s officer-in residence at the nearby University of Miami.)*

*Hayden spent the better part of an hour discussing his years at CIA. Following are excerpts from our discussion.—MM*

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*Mansfield: You had a different mission, and had other equities to consider, when you moved from principal deputy director of national intelligence to becoming director of CIA in May 2006. How easy or difficult a transition was that to make?*

**Hayden:** It was actually a fairly easy transition. Here’s how I handled it. There were a couple of issues that were up in the air when I got there. The “lanes in the

road” between CIA’s CounterTerrorism Center (CTC) and the National CounterTerrorism Center (NCTC), and the question of moving analysts up Route 123, to Liberty Crossing. And once I was at the Agency, I came in and said, “Guys, we’re done talking about this, and I’m handling this by fiat. Here are the lanes in the road, here’s the number of people going up Route 123, and we’re done. We’re *done*.” That’s off the table, now let’s focus on CIA.

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*All statements of fact, opinion, or analysis expressed in this article are those of the authors. Nothing in the article should be construed as asserting or implying US government endorsement of an article’s factual statements and interpretations.*

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*What was the most surprising thing to you about CIA, once you took the helm there?*

Actually, I was pretty familiar with it, but there was one thing that struck me. I kind of expected it but didn't understand how deeply important it was. And that was the fact that there were multiple cultures inside CIA. I frequently talk about when looking at the Agency from Route 123, you think it's a singular noun. But on most days, at best, it's a collective noun, and on some bad days it's a plural. Each of the four big directorates has its own culture. But I respected the cultures; they were there for a reason. And I didn't want to destroy them or threaten them, but I wanted to overlay them with a stronger Agency culture. You could have the kind of "fighter pilot" mystique in the National Clandestine Service (NCS), or the "tenured faculty" mystique in the Directorate of Intelligence (DI), but there were still some unifying themes that made you a CIA officer. And we set about to do that, fairly gently, but I thought it was important.

*What do you think was the CIA's greatest achievement or achievements during your tenure? What are you proudest of?*

I am most proud of taking the fight to the nation's enemies. Classification concerns prevent a lot of fine print on that, but I've said publicly, we gave President Bush a list of people we were most mad at, in the tribal

region of Pakistan, in July 2008. By the time I left office, more than a dozen of those people were dead. There's a reason why the country has been protected, and the Agency doesn't get enough credit for it. I mean, you have to acknowledge the outstanding work of America's armed forces and law enforcement itself. But what the Agency did to dismantle the al-Qai'da leadership ... I'm most proud of that.

*What would you like to have accomplished at CIA, that you didn't get done?*

We set in motion, the strengthening of a common Agency culture. And just to elaborate on that, we did it with our longer on-boarding time, a longer communal on-boarding time before people went into the directorates. We did it by strengthening some corporate-level functions, namely CIO [Chief Information Officer], CFO [Chief Financial Officer], and HR [Human Resources]. We did it by having a strategy that we asked everyone to contribute to—we put it on the internal Web site and asked for comments. That overall effort probably needed more time. Frankly, I've gotten the impression that if you don't give that sort of thing energy from the front office, there are enough impediments so that it just doesn't move. So I just wish I had a little more time to get that irreversible.

*Are there certain experiences that former CIA directors had, or situations they handled, that affected the way you ran the Agency?*

I always said—and it was politically correct but also very true—that I was standing on the shoulders of the people who served before me. You won't find a whisper or comment—let alone a criticism—about those who held the job before. Because it's not right and, frankly, I don't think it would be accurate. I know George Tenet well. I have said publicly that I thank God that George made some incredibly difficult decisions. I don't know how I would have decided them, but I thank God George made them, because, since George did, I didn't have to.

Let me elaborate. There should be other people thanking God that George Tenet made those decisions. I'm talking about political leadership. Because if George hadn't done that, we would not be in as good a position as we are in today. These things that are easy to criticize in hindsight would not be in the rear-view mirror, but in the windscreen. And they would have to be making these decisions now.

*If you could have a "do over" for something that happened when you headed CIA, what would it be?*

On the question of the destruction of the [interrogation] videotapes, which, frankly, weren't created on my watch or



destroyed on my watch, I didn't realize how big a deal people could construct. I think inherently it isn't as big a deal as it has been made out to be, but I should have been more sensitive that people would have made it as big a deal as they did. And rather than just kind of handle it routinely, and just kind of let the information go forward, I probably, in retrospect, would have called a little more attention to it to the Congress—put a little more of a bell and whistle on it when we informed them—so that when the press finally got it, we could point to a more clear track record of how we did indeed share that with Congress and others. That was a misstep on my part.

*What got you through the most challenging times?*

When I met Director Panetta for the first time, my notes were on a 3 by 5 card. One of the things I told him was, "Leon, you're inheriting the best leadership team in the federal government. If you give them half a chance, they will not let you fail, the way they would not let me fail." The people that I had at the Agency were the best support system I've ever had.

*What was the best personnel decision you made?*

Bringing two people back to the Agency—Steve Kappes [from retirement] and Michael Morell [from brief service at NCTC].

Keep in mind that when I got to the Agency, my instinct was that the Agency didn't need a hell of a lot of change. If anything, the Agency needed to be settled down, not shaken up. So one of my themes was continuity, but I did bring several folks in.

When I was told the president was going to nominate me for the job, I asked Mary Jane, my executive assistant as PDDNI, to find Steve Kappes. She tracked him down, at a cell phone. He was on a train platform in London, with [his wife] Kathleen. I said, "Steve, would you ever consider being deputy director of CIA?" He said, "It depends a little bit on who is the director, Mike." And I said, "Well, I'm not at liberty to discuss that, but I am the one making this phone call." He said, "I'll get back to you." He called me about two hours later, and said if the president would have him, he would serve.

*So that was the best personnel decision?*

Yes. For lots of reasons: decent man, wonderful operational experience, and a nice message to the workforce. This just wasn't the "DNI guy" coming to somehow interfere with the strong track record and autonomy of the Agency.

*Some observers have been surprised at how ardently you defended—and continue to defend—CIA's detention and interrogation program. Particularly, considering that the most aggressive and*

*controversial enhanced interrogation technique—waterboarding—was last used more than three years before you became CIA director. Why did you take this approach, when you easily could have taken a different tack?*

A couple of thoughts. And clarity here is very important. I didn't quite defend all the [enhanced interrogation] techniques. I certainly didn't defend waterboarding. Remember, I said earlier that George Tenet made the tough decisions that I thank God I didn't have to make. People ask me, "Well, what would you have done?" and I say, "I thank God I didn't have to make that decision," and that's as far as I go. What I did was point out that whatever you may think of this, it worked and we did indeed get life-saving intelligence out of it.

So the point I would make to folks who say, "I don't want you doing this, and it doesn't work anyway," I would point out, "Whoa. Stop. The front half of that sentence, you can say; that's yours, you own that, 'I don't want you doing it.' The back half of that sentence is not yours. That's mine. And the fact is it *did* work. So here is the sentence you have to give. 'Even though it may have worked, I still don't want you doing it.' That requires courage. That requires you going out to the American people and saying, 'We're looking at a tradeoff here folks, and I want you to understand the tradeoff.'" I can live with that tradeoff. I can live with the per-

son who makes that tradeoff. Either way. That's an honorable position. But I felt duty-bound to be true to the facts.

There's a second element. I felt morally obligated to the people in the Agency not to allow them to feel as if they had been abandoned by the senior leadership. What they did was done out of duty, not enthusiasm. They weren't volunteers; they were thrown into the breach. The republic asked them to do things that were very difficult, and they did them. And they did them frankly knowing that there would be a day—after the republic felt safe again—that some people would begin to question their actions.

I often say the reality of the intelligence world is an element of the political leadership that wants to be free to criticize us when they feel endangered, for not doing enough, and they want to be free to criticize us for doing too much when they no longer feel in danger. That's not just unfair and unjust, it's inefficient. It's no way to backstop an intelligence agency. So, you know, most of this didn't happen on my watch, and I've been somewhat identified with it because of the positions I've taken publicly. But I couldn't see myself doing it any other way.

*It has been reported that you wanted to stay on as CIA director, for a period of six months or so into the new administration. What was your reaction when President Obama decided to go in a different direction?*

I wasn't surprised. The reason for staying on was to try to create the reality that the D/CIA job is not a political job, that the D/CIA job is a professional job. I was put into it as a professional intelligence officer. Keep in mind that this was the first presidential transition after the creation of the DNI. One would expect then that the DNI, as the DCIs, mostly but not exclusively, had "changed out," that it would be the DNI position that would "change out." My prime reason for wanting to stay on for a short period of time was to kind of drive home the point, that this wasn't a political post. The president decided to go in another direction. When the president gave me a phone call one evening and said that was what he was doing, that was fine. But again, my view was for the broader message that it wasn't a political position.

*On that score, do you think there should be a fixed term for the CIA director, as there is for the FBI director?*

You know, that's one way of fixing it. But I'm a little reluctant to vote for that. The president has got to be very comfortable, there has to be good personal chemistry, between the president and the

D/CIA. And locking in an incumbent for a period of time, well, that actually might be a formula for other problems.

*There has been a lot of talk about "risk taking" at CIA. Did you sense or encounter a risk-averse mindset while you were at the Agency?*

I'm familiar with the accusation about the Agency being risk-averse. Frankly, I didn't find it while I was there. I have told people that when the history of the Agency during this period is written, Americans will be very proud of what the Agency did, in terms of taking risks. Now I will say that the events of the past year don't help. When you have a previous president's covert action program made so public, so much a part of discourse. With field officers, they think they've got a social contract, not with the president, but with the government ... that the government has their backs—politically, legally, morally. And so, if that social contract is torn, I don't mean to exaggerate here, it's a little bit like an infidelity in a marriage. I mean, you can get back to it, you can have reconciliation, but it's never going to be the same.

*How can CIA's relations with Congress be improved?*

When I was leaving CIA, I talked to Director Panetta. I said, "Frankly Leon, I am leaving you an organization that on most days, hits most gears and is chugging away. Except one thing, and that is the relation-

ship with the Hill. So in answer to your question about what can be done to improve the relationship with Congress, I obviously don't know. Because if I did, I would have done it. But that's a relationship that has got to work. That's the oversight the American people need to have, because we can't tell the American people everything we're doing. We have to tell Congress that. And it has gotten very caustic and very political. The only advice I can give is go down there, tell them the way it is, and tell them the way it is as often as you can.

*Do you think the CIA is too reliant on foreign liaison services?*

No. I know that's an accusation that's out there. But there's a reason all those [foreign intelligence] people come visit us at CIA Headquarters. We're big, powerful, technologically savvy, global, and we have a broad global context into which we can put events. Our liaison partners are local, focused, and culturally nimble. That's good partnership. Those things complement one another. We are an espionage service. We conduct espionage, and we have friends who can help us.

*As mentioned earlier, you served as PDDNI as well as director of CIA. Some say the ODNI is just another level of bureaucracy—that it is duplicative and unnecessary. What is your view now?*

Unfortunately the DNI has two jobs, either of which would

overwhelm a person. One is senior intelligence adviser to the president, the other is smooth functioning of the Intelligence Community. It's very hard for a DNI not to focus on the first, largely because the president insists that he does. If you do that, that means the smooth functioning of the community, by default, tends to drift to the DNI staff. That is not a formula for success. Staffs don't run other staffs; staffs support principals. So to the degree the DNI can free up some of his time and energy—and personally help govern the community—to that degree I think it helps. In the military, we talk about commanders talking to commanders. I guess in the IC, it would be directors talking to directors. So that CIA's HR is not being tasked by DNI's HR ... that the CIA director may be tasked by the DNI, and the director may use his HR to respond to that tasking. When you're able to establish that kind of relationship, then I think we're more likely to succeed.

*You said during your CIA confirmation hearing that the Agency needed to be out of the news as source or subject, but you did lengthy interviews on Meet the Press, Charlie Rose, and C-SPAN. Why?*

It sounds a little bit contradictory, and on one level it is. On another level, it's not. What I learned at NSA is that people are going to write about you. I take the point—out of the news as source or subject. But you need to be out there talking,

and creating an identity of and for the Agency, during times when people are not criticizing you. If you are only out there in response to accusations, they are defining the dialogue, or the accusations define the dialogue. Go out there and fill up that space with some reality about CIA. Because if you don't go out and fill up the space, then CIA is like a vacuum. And the first negative story about CIA is like a gas. And that negative story acts like a gas in a vacuum. It fills it up. And so in one way it's contradictory, but in another way, it was at least trying to create an identity for the Agency, so that Americans had some sense of reality before the next storm hits. And as you know, the next storm is going to hit.

*Do you think the media acted responsibly in reporting on intelligence matters during your tenure? I know that's a very general question. Where did they do well, and where did they fall short?*

It is a general question, and it's a mixed bag. They returned my calls when I said, "I really don't think you should go with that story," and they asked why and you would then have to have an adult conversation with them. You would have to explain why, and very often they would act responsibly. I think the [December 2005] *New York Times* story on the terrorist surveillance program was irresponsible. Even the *New York Times'* public editor thought their [June 2006] story on the SWIFT program [for

accessing international financial data] was irresponsible.

There were other incidents like that. It's a difficult question. I've got a lot of friends in journalism. I still maintain contact with them. I think I have an appropriate role to play in trying to articulate American intelligence in an unclassified way to an audience that finds it very difficult to understand. So I would just leave it at that; it was a mixed bag.

*You strongly advocated publicly disclosing the role intelligence played in detecting the nuclear reactor in Syria. Why did you advocate this?*

It was a very complex political problem. First of all, when we became aware of it, it became very important to keep it secret. Arguably secret, because it had to be dealt with in a way that didn't create a war in the Middle East. And the more public it became, the more difficult it would be for the Syrians to act responsibly. So no question that it needed to be kept secret.

But after a time, after the facility had been destroyed, there were two lines working—because you had two bad actors here, the Syrians and the North Koreans. With the Syrians, you needed to keep it secret, otherwise they might do something stupid if they were publicly embarrassed. With the North Koreans on the other hand, we were moving in the direction of a new arrangement with regard to things “nuclear,” including

proliferation. And so, the fact that we knew the North Koreans had done this very egregious thing, I felt would undercut the confidence in the treaty when, sooner or later, it became more visible, more known, more public. So we had this line with the Syrians where you've got to keep it secret, but that was fading over time. Conversely, with the North Koreans, the imperative to make it public was growing over time, as we were getting to a firm agreement. I think the lines crossed about the first of the year—remember it was discovered largely in April [2007] and destroyed in September [2007]. By about December or January [2008], I think that's when it's crossed. So we at the Agency became very strong advocates for making it public. But in an intelligence process way, we knew that we had only told a few members of Congress, and the legitimacy for keeping it closely held was eroding as we got further away from the destruction of the facility, and therefore from any likely Syrian reaction. We had an additional impulse to tell Congress.

*On a lighter note, what are some of the funniest things that happened during your time as CIA director?*

Oh, there were more than a few. It was a common occurrence that we would have a senior-level meeting—it would be very serious, it would be very important. Most of the folks would leave the room afterward. Three senior leaders—

me, Kappes, and Morell...and maybe [former Chief of Staff] Larry [Pfeiffer]—were still in the room. We all come from similar backgrounds. We all come from industrial towns. We all come from blue-collar families. We all went to the same kinds of colleges. We had a sense of kinship. And, more than once, one or the other would look at the other two or three of us and say, “Do you even believe we're talking about this stuff? ((laughter)) We're actually involved in making this decision?” ((laughter))

*On the subject of sports for a moment, why do you use sports metaphors so frequently?*

I grew up playing sports. There's a reason why the ancient Greeks emphasized athletics—to create the whole person. They are a mirror of life. There's hardly a circumstance I've met in my professional life that I can't feel echoes of something that happened on a baseball field or a football field, with me personally. That's probably why we have our kids play sports.

*Are you glad that you are not CIA director any more, or do you miss it?*

Yes and yes. I'm very happy doing what I'm doing now. I enjoy the freedoms—freedom to say some things, freedom to pick what it is I want to do. I miss the people. I miss the mission. But you can't do any of this forever, and it was probably a good time for me to move on.

*Would you ever consider returning to government service in some capacity?*

“Not bloody likely” would be the way I would put that. Obviously, you should never say never. Intelligence officers never use those adverbs like “all” or “never.” But I’m very happy where I am. Shortly after leaving government, someone whom I really trust in the private sector gave me counsel along the lines of, “Now be careful about what kinds of jobs you accept and what you do, because when you come up for confirmation again.” I said, “Look, look. Stop. OK? I don’t anticipate that ever happening.” (laughter) And that’s how I still feel.

*How do you think history will judge your tenure as CIA director?*

It’s a very good agency. I got an opportunity to allow the Agency to be itself. And it really did a lot of things to make America safe. There are so many phony urban legends out there about the Agency—from Jack Bauer and Jack Ryan all the way to Jason Bourne, to criticism that we constantly undercut presidential policy by cooking intelligence estimates and then leaking them. They’re all outrageous. I’m fond of saying that these [Agency] people are just like your friends and neighbors, and if you live in northern Virginia or Maryland or DC, they probably are. They’re just solid Americans who are very talented, doing things no one else is asked to do, and no one else is allowed to do. That’s a special vocation. And I mean that in the religious sense of the word. It’s a vocation.



## Lessons for Intelligence Support to Policymaking during Crises

Paul D. Miller

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*During my two years in the NSC, I came to see both strengths and weaknesses in Intelligence Community support to policymaking.*  
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In the spring of 2007, President George W. Bush named Army Lt. Gen. Douglas Lute to serve as his assistant and deputy national security advisor for Iraq and Afghanistan to bring greater attention and coherence to US policymaking in those areas. Lute, who would be popularly referred to as the “war advisor” or the “war czar,” served through the end of the Bush administration, and like Secretary of Defense Bob Gates, he continued working in the Obama administration, although with some changes to his title and portfolio.

I worked for General Lute from September 2007 through September 2009 as director for Afghanistan on the National Security Council staff. I was detailed from the Central Intelligence Agency’s Directorate for Intelligence (DI), where I served as a political analyst on the Afghanistan Branch from 2003 to 2007. Prior to that, in 2002, I served as an intelligence analyst in the US Army, deployed to the Combined Joint Task Force-180 Intelligence Support Element in Bagram, Afghanistan.

During my two years in the NSC, I came to see both

strengths and weaknesses in Intelligence Community (IC) support to policymaking. In this article, after an overview of the NSC and my role in it, I will offer what I consider to be the lessons of my experience and suggest ways in which the IC might be able to improve its support to the NSC, especially in high-profile crisis situations.

### ***The National Security Council: Background and Development***

The NSC’s core purposes are to advise the president and foster interagency cooperation. According to the National Security Act of 1947 (Section 101(a)), the NSC exists to

*advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and*



Lt. Gen. Douglas Lute during his confirmation hearing, June 2007. Photo © Matthew Cavanaugh/epa/Corbis

*All statements of fact, opinion, or analysis expressed in this article are those of the author. Nothing in the article should be construed as asserting or implying US government endorsement of an article’s factual statements and interpretations. This article is unclassified in its entirety.*

*military policies relating to the national security so as to enable the military services and the other departments and agencies of the Government to cooperate more effectively in matters involving the national security.*

The council itself only consists of the president, vice president, the secretaries of state and defense, and other officials at the president's discretion. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and the director of national intelligence (DNI) are statutory advisers on military and intelligence issues, respectively.

The NSC gradually acquired a permanent staff to help prepare for NSC meetings, ensure decisions and guidance from the president were communicated to all levels of the bureaucracy (not just to the cabinet secretaries), and make certain the president's guidance was reflected in departmental and agency programs. Gradually, presidents began to rely on the principal officer of the NSC staff for policy advice and high-level bureaucratic umpiring. This official became known as the national security advisor (a job that is nowhere mentioned in the National Security Act of 1947). The evolution of the national security advisor enhanced the role of the NSC staff in the policymaking process, which sometimes supplanted the State Department as the principal foreign policy-

making body in the US government.

The NSC system was reorganized in the 1990s, when President George H.W. Bush developed a series of lower-level meetings through which policy issues passed before submission to the president. Bush's reorganization endures today. Below the full NSC, cabinet-level officials meet without the president in a Principals Committee (PC) meeting. Beneath them is the Deputies Committee (DC) meeting, which is supposed to be a meeting at the deputy secretary level. (In practice, attendance varies widely and often includes assistant secretaries and sometimes deputy assistant secretaries).

Beneath the deputies is a range of meetings at the assistant secretary level and below, variously called Interagency Policy Committees (IPCs) or Policy Coordination Committees (PCCs)—depending on the administration—supported by staff-level working-group meetings. The purpose of the lower-level groups is to vet issues, conduct research, explore and flesh out policy options, and ensure policy papers are ready for higher-level consideration. Just as the DNI is an adviser to NSC meetings, IC officials play advisory roles at meetings at every level of the interagency policy process.

### ***The National Security Council Today: An NSC Director's View***

When I took the job of NSC director in late 2007, I was told that I would have three principal tasks:

*Provide staff support to the president, the national security advisor, and other administration officials.* We prepared memorandums, background papers, and talking points for the president to prepare him for meetings, phone calls, and video teleconferences with US and foreign officials about Afghanistan.

The IC supported our work principally by providing assessments of foreign leaders and officials with whom the president, the national security advisor, or General Lute were scheduled to meet. These assessments were among the most popular and widely disseminated intelligence products at the White House because they provided unique intelligence, generally unavailable elsewhere, which senior US officials found helpful. On occasion, the IC would also produce papers to be published in time for an event or meeting, such as an NSC meeting or a bilateral head-of-state meeting.

*Participate in Policy Development.* We brainstormed policy initiatives and circulated our best ideas in the interagency community to get feedback and generate interest. In



the other direction, we acted as a first check on ideas coming from agencies and departments, ensuring that their initiatives were consistent with the president's intent and with the programs of other agencies. During the 2008 and 2009 strategic reviews on Afghanistan and Pakistan (see below) we wrote think pieces, policy proposals, discussion papers, and options memorandums.

The IC supported policy development indirectly by feeding the policymakers a steady stream of analysis. Of particular use were analyses of the long-term strategic outlook of Afghanistan or of the region, pieces that incorporated sophisticated opportunity analyses, and work that identified new and emerging trends. The IC cannot recommend policy, but it can provoke thought, present scenarios, and explore implications for US interests under different assumptions. While some methods of unconventional analysis approach the line of recommending policy, I never heard a White House official complain that intelligence had crossed the line. If anything, White House officials tended to want more of such analysis from the community, not less.

*Oversee Policy Implementation.* This was the most difficult aspect of the job. Officially, NSC officers, from Lute down to the directors were supposed to chair or cochair interagency meetings, including DCs, IPCs, and staff-level

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*While some methods of unconventional analysis approach the line of recommending policy, I never heard a White House official complain that intelligence had crossed the line.*

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working group meetings. In these meetings, and more broadly in all of our interactions with counterparts in the departments and agencies, we were supposed to determine if departments and agencies were implementing the president's policies, foster interagency cooperation, and hold agencies accountable for their performance.

In practice, the NSC had few formal tools with which to influence the behavior of government agencies. The State and Defense Departments, with the greatest bureaucratic and budgetary stakes in the region, were the biggest challenges. USAID—in some ways more important than the State Department because of its large role in funding reconstruction projects—was unaccustomed to interagency coordination. Many staff-level workers in the agencies and departments were simply unaware of the president's policy and strategy in Afghanistan and sometimes seemed uninterested in what other agencies and departments were doing. Nonetheless, we were able to positively influence interagency work on Afghanistan.

### ***The War Czar***

General Lute's newly created position involved several innovations in the NSC structure

and changed the working dynamic between the NSC's Directorate for Iraq and Afghanistan and the other agencies and departments.

Lute's clout derived from his direct access to the president and his authority to chair DC meetings, assets that no other NSC directorate head had. Lute attended a morning staff meeting with the president, the national security advisor, and other senior officials. He interacted with the president directly, often without the mediation of National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley. He chaired DC meetings on Iraq and Afghanistan, a role reserved for Deputy National Security Advisor James Jeffrey for every other country in the world. Lute acted almost as a co-national security advisor, but with a narrower portfolio.

Because of the prominence of Iraq and Afghanistan in the White House, Lute headed the largest directorate of the NSC—about 20 people, counting directors, senior directors, and administrative staff—and by far the busiest. The directorate regularly produced more papers, more quickly, for the president and the national security advisor than any other directorate in 2008.

Lute's unique position had several effects on the policy-

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*The Intelligence Community gave regular and direct support to General Lute and his staff.*

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making process, on dynamics within the NSC and among agencies, and on the US-Afghan relationship. First, Lute demonstrably increased the pace of interagency work on Afghanistan. The table to the right shows the number of NSC, PC and DC meetings held on Afghanistan from 2004 to 2008, with a sharp increase in NSC and DC meetings beginning in the fall of 2007, shortly after Lute assumed his duties.

In addition to the regular policy meetings, an increasing number of Afghan officials visited the White House during 2007–08, including at different times the ministers of finance, defense, foreign affairs, water and power, and reconstruction and rural development, the director of the Independent Directorate for Local Governance, the speaker of the National Assembly, the vice president, and President Karzai. This represented a significant increase in direct high-level contact between the White House and the Afghan government.

Second, Lute’s position had the unintended effect of reducing the relative position of other NSC staff members working on war issues. Brought in to bring the president closer to the policymaking and implementation process involving two wars, Lute occupied a more senior position than the senior NSC

director for Afghanistan, who became relatively less important. As a result, the senior director and several directors below him had comparatively less clout within the interagency policy community than NSC directors covering other countries. This may have made interagency coordination at lower levels more cumbersome.

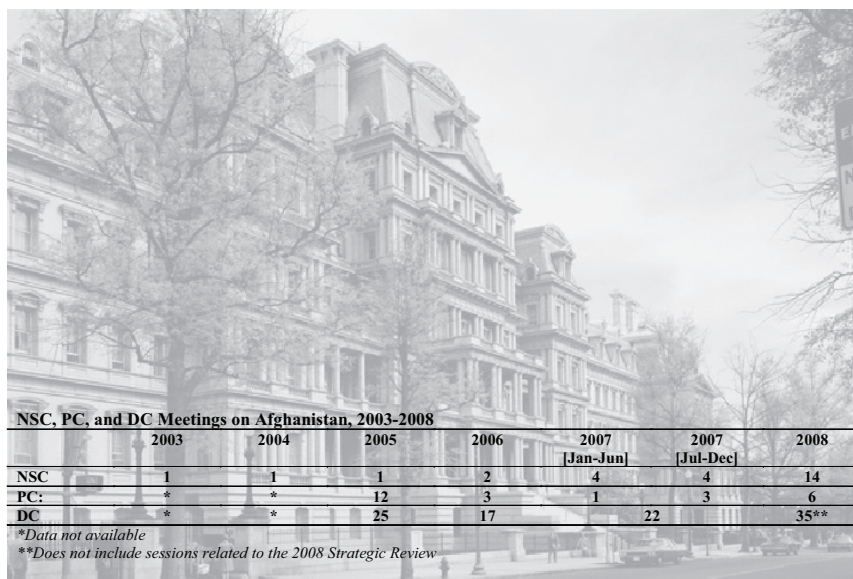
Third—on the plus side—the prominence of Iraq and Afghanistan gave the directors for these countries unparalleled opportunities to see the policy-making process in action, particularly during the Afghanistan-Pakistan strategic reviews of 2008 and 2009—as we will describe below.

The IC gave regular and direct support to General Lute and his staff. The CIA compiled a book—later an e-mail—three times a week containing the

most important pieces of raw intelligence and latest analytical production on Afghanistan and South Asia. An NSA officer in the White House Situation Room compiled a digest of relevant signals intelligence. DIA sent a representative to the office each week to drop hardcopies of its latest analytical products on our desks. We set up a regular weekly briefing at which representatives from CIA, DIA, and INR could discuss either their latest analysis or a topic of our choosing.

***Challenges and Intelligence Community Support***

From 2007 through 2009, we faced three major challenges: refocusing policymaker attention on Afghanistan, conducting a complete review of US policy there, and dealing with the arrival of a new administration.



**NSC, PC, and DC Meetings on Afghanistan, 2003-2008**

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007 [Jan-Jun]	2007 [Jul-Dec]	2008
NSC	1	1	1	2	4	4	14
PC:	*	*	12	3	1	3	6
DC	*	*	25	17		22	35**

\*Data not available  
\*\*Does not include sessions related to the 2008 Strategic Review

### **Getting Attention**

The first problem we had to grapple with was the relative lack of attention then being paid to Afghanistan. Some policymakers were not aware of the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan. Others were aware, but chose to give more attention and resources to Iraq because they judged it to be a higher strategic priority or in greater danger of outright failure—which likely was indeed the case through mid-2007.

In late 2007 and early 2008 the NSC staff saw the decline of violence in Iraq and the rapidly worsening violence in Afghanistan. We tried to refocus attention and resources on Afghanistan because we judged that our policy there would soon be in greater danger of failure—if it wasn't already—than it was in Iraq. (In January 2008 I made a bet with a colleague that by the end of 2009 the incidence of violence in Afghanistan would be greater than in Iraq. We were both surprised when I won the bet in August of 2008).

The IC's regular production on Afghanistan's political and military situation was invaluable to our efforts to increase the policy focus on Afghanistan. Because the IC provided an impartial, nonpartisan voice, its warnings and its opportunities analysis were more credible than many of the other opinions that were circulating in Washington, particularly during the 2008 presidential elec-

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*The IC provided an impartial, non-partisan voice...its warnings and opportunities analysis were more credible than many of the other opinions that were circulating in [late 2008].*

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tion campaign. Policymakers especially appreciated papers that did not simply describe failure or warn of impending danger, but highlighted opportunities for improvement.

### **Strategic Review**

We succeeded in winning the spotlight in the waning months of the Bush administration, which ushered in our second principal challenge: the 2008 Afghanistan-Pakistan Strategic Review. The security gains in Iraq made in 2007 were sustained well into 2008, while the situation in Afghanistan was markedly worse. It was clear that Afghanistan required a rethink; it was also the first time in years that even the officials who believed Iraq was the strategic priority felt they could afford the time and attention to focus on Afghanistan. The Principals Committee decided on 12 September 2008 to recommend a comprehensive review of US policy and strategy toward Afghanistan and Pakistan. President Bush ordered the review a few days later.

Over the next several weeks and months, Lute chaired 16 two- to four-hour meetings of the deputies. In addition to the normal attendees, he included in different sessions US Ambassador to Afghanistan Bill Wood, ISAF Commander David McKiernan, Commander of Central Command Gen. David Petraeus,

outside experts, academics, Afghan officials, CIA briefers, and former US military and diplomatic personnel who had served in Afghanistan. It was the most comprehensive and thoughtful exercise in policy development on Afghanistan since 2001.<sup>1</sup>

The NSC staff produced a deluge of discussion papers and options memorandums to support the review and helped produce the final paper, which was presented to the principals and the president in November and December. The paper recommended that the president adopt a fully resourced counterinsurgency campaign to defeat the Taliban, stabilize Afghanistan, and prevent al-Qa'ida's return to the country. "Fully resourcing" the effort was the most important recommendation.

IC support for the strategic review was robust. The national intelligence officer for South Asia or one of his deputies participated in every session of the review. They provided an advance copy of a National Intelligence Estimate on Afghanistan to establish a com-

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<sup>1</sup> Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad led an effort called "Accelerating Success" in 2003 to increase attention and resources for Afghanistan, and State and NSC conducted a strategic review in 2006 that was less wide-ranging and smaller in scale than the 2008 review.

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*By law, papers and records of the NSC belong to the president....By 15 January our offices were empty of all paper.*

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mon reference point for the participants. General Lute invited specialists from the community to brief on high-profile topics. Intelligence assessments on strategic issues—sometimes written months and even years before—were recirculated to the deputies so they could reestablish their knowledge base. We hung graphical products from the community—e.g., on the Afghan economy, the cabinet, and violence trends—on the walls for easy reference.

The review's recommendations begged the question: What could be accomplished with the president leaving office in a matter of weeks? There was little he could do to order implementation of all of the review's recommendations, many of which required additional congressional appropriations, years of work by the State Department and USAID, or troops who would not be available until after the drawdown from Iraq had begun. The strategic review became, in effect, our principal transition document for the incoming Obama administration.

### ***Presidential Transition***

By law, the papers and records of the National Security Council—and all the other offices within the Executive Office of the President—belong to the president. At the end of an administration, they are archived in a presidential

library—in our case, the Bush Library that was to be opened at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. Shortly after the election on 4 November 2008—while we were still finishing the strategic review—the NSC Legal Affairs Directorate sent word around that we should begin archiving.

By 15 January 2009, our offices were literally empty of all paper. On the 16th, we handed in our Blackberries. During the 17th through the 20th, the White House computer systems were shut down, and our hard drives removed and handed over to the Bush Library. We came back to work on the 21st with almost no record of anything we had worked on or done for the past year and a half. We were allowed to make copies of a small number of “continuity files” on ongoing projects, but we had no depth in our files. The IC helped smooth the transition by making its older products available after the transition and by resending some of the more important pieces published in the weeks before.

Our challenges did not end there. President Obama called for another strategic review of Afghanistan and Pakistan, this one chaired by CIA veteran Bruce Riedel, then at the Brookings Institute. Riedel's work echoed many of the rec-

ommendations from the 2008 review in a paper that the new administration could embrace as its own. The president also appointed Richard Holbrooke as the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan (SRAP) at the State Department. Holbrooke's position helped increase the bureaucratic focus on Afghanistan, but it complicated the interagency coordination process. However, these and other challenges belong to the Obama administration, which is beyond the scope of this paper.

### ***Lessons Learned<sup>2</sup>***

Could the Intelligence Community have done better in supporting the NSC on Afghanistan during this period? I believe the experience did offer lessons IC leaders should consider in providing support to policymaking during crises.

#### ***IC components must be capable of responding rapidly to policymakers' needs.***

Perfect analysis delivered on the morning of a PC or DC meeting is too late and will have limited influence because there will be no time to allow analytic conclusions, warning, or opportunity analysis to be worked into an agenda or to be shaped into policy options. IC

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<sup>2</sup> I am especially indebted to DI analyst Christopher C., who also served an NSC director, for his contributions to this section.

managers should aim to get products to key PC and DC attendees the week before a meeting.

During my tour in the NSC, the IC missed many opportunities to inform policy discussions because it took the time to put forward highly polished products in response to every question. IC producers should consider accepting a tradeoff: give up polish for faster dissemination and more direct policymaker support. We should not let the perfect be the enemy of the good in these situations.

Delays caused by multiple layers of review, or anticipation of new information, or a sluggish clearance process risk causing a product to be irrelevant and wasted.

Policymakers need the ability to reach out for basic fact-checking, rapid analysis, and short “gut-check” pieces. The IC as a whole moves too slowly to support policymakers’ everyday needs, leaving them to rely on the media, their staff, and their gut, all of which can be wildly inaccurate.

Senior analysts and managers should be allowed to e-mail quick replies and analyses directly to their policy counterparts. This may not be appropriate for every account but in crisis policymaking, it is indispensable.

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*Intelligence we received repeated conventional wisdom or duplicated news media. Such analysis is worse than harmless.*

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***IC producers must avoid “duh” reports and analysis***

Some of the intelligence we received repeated conventional wisdom or duplicated news media. Such analysis is worse than harmless: it desensitizes policymakers to quality intelligence products, causing them to develop a habit of glancing over intelligence quickly with little thought or critical engagement. If policymakers begin asking “Why did I need the IC to tell me this?” we have hurt our credibility and our future access to the policymaker.

The exception is when policymakers look to the IC for the facts of some high-profile or contested event, like an insurgent attack that received heavy media coverage, reports of civilian casualties, or a national election. In these cases, IC components can serve as a sort of classified news media outlet and give policymakers exactly what they need. A spot report or situation report—or a simple email—is the most appropriate way to fill this need. This may not be a function IC components want to regularize, but it should be a key part of IC support to crisis policymaking.

***IC managers need to stay better informed about the policymaking process.***

IC representatives are members of each DC and PC, and schedules of meetings for the coming two to three weeks are

disseminated to members of the interagency community, including the IC, every business day. While schedules may change, the calendar is a clear roadmap for meeting specific policymaker interests and should serve as a guide to the substance, and more importantly, the timing of analytic production.

In addition, intelligence analysts can and should participate in regular working group meetings and form ties to their NSC director counterparts. These directors typically are the focal points for setting up PC or DC meetings. With most portfolios, a vigorous interagency process, always involving NSC directors, functions at all levels to implement the president’s policy objectives. In some cases, NSC directors will use working groups to formulate and vet options for senior policymakers. Intelligence analysts with deep knowledge and strong briefing skills are valued members of these teams and usually learn early on the issues that will surface in DC and PC sessions.

***Analytic components should provide more opportunities analysis.***

Analysis intended to support the policymaking process should highlight “opportunities for action.” Such “opportunity analysis” may be a close cousin to “policy prescription” but it

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*Agencies should make serious attempts to make e-mail distribution systems their primary approach to dissemination.*

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was not considered that by anyone in my experience at the NSC. While it is critical for IC analysts to maintain their policy neutrality, analytic products that highlight the possibilities in various courses of action, that flag the potential pitfalls of options under consideration, or that draw attention to historically analogous situations in current challenges are usually welcome, provided they are not delivered with a prescriptive or directive tone.

***The DNI may want to reevaluate the size and mission of the National Intelligence Council or revisit how the NIC supports the interagency policymaking process.***

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) was just over two years old and still establishing its role in the IC when General Lute joined the NSC. The NIC, then newly attached to the ODNI, is supposed to be the central point of contact between IC components and the policy community. The individual NIC officers we worked with did heroic work, but the NIC as a whole appeared to be understaffed and poorly postured for

the duties it assumed as a staff for the DNI. As a result, the NSC had to work partly through the NIC and partly through a patchwork of contacts in intelligence agencies to communicate taskings and receive information. In 2007, the IC was understandably still working through the implementation of the 2004 intelligence reform legislation. But by now it may wish to reassess its approach to policy support.

***The IC needs to fix its dissemination systems.***

The IC dissemination system resembles a stack of sliced Swiss cheese in which the slices haphazardly cover up the holes in the cheese. The IC has many dissemination systems, all of which have gaping holes. At the NSC, we simply hoped that one system would cover the holes in another. In practice, I had no idea if I was receiving the right papers.

I've already mentioned the tailored packages prepared for us by CIA, NSA, and DIA. However, those packages focused overwhelmingly on current production, not longer term analysis. Agencies send hardcopy papers to customers, but I found that dissemination lists

tended to be out of date, and I would get papers months after they were published. Papers were generally available online, but most policymakers will not take the trouble to sign up for an account, install a Web certificate, or regularly go to a Web site to look for new products.

E-mail, which policymakers actually read, was my easiest and most effective dissemination system. Agencies should make serious attempts to make e-mail distribution systems their primary approach to dissemination.

The last lesson about intelligence support to policymaking is that intelligence does not drive policy. Policymakers drive policy. Intelligence forms a crucial part of their intellectual background, but competing with intelligence are their prejudices and opinions formed over lifetimes of thinking about politics and history. These influences may include an undergraduate professor of political science, personal experience, the headlines of the *New York Times*, domestic political pressures, and a host of other factors. The job of intelligence is to offer insights that are profound and useful enough to break through those influences.

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## ***Operation Hotel California: The Clandestine War Inside Iraq***

Mike Tucker and Charles Faddis. (Guilford, Ct: The Lyons Press, 2009), 216 pp., index.

**Matthew P.**

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“What is the point of even having an intelligence service, since no one is listening to the field intelligence?” This rhetorical question from former CIA officer Charles “Sam” Faddis is one of two themes of *Operation Hotel California*, an account of the CIA–US Special Forces teams in Iraqi Kurdistan in advance of the opening of the Iraq War in 2003. The other theme is that these teams and their Kurdish counterparts amassed an impressive record, something most works on the war have missed. Tucker is author of several books on the conflict, including *Among Warriors in Iraq: True Grit, Special Ops, and Raiding in Mosul and Fallujah* (The Lyons Press, 2005) and *RONIN: A Marine Scout/Sniper Platoon in Iraq* (Stackpole Books, 2008). Faddis was the leader of the CIA team that went into Iraq in the summer of 2002, eight months before the US military entered in force. In addition to providing insight into a little-known aspect of the US involvement in Iraq, the book weighs in on current debates about wartime intelligence. These debates tend to focus on the efficacy of the Intelligence Community, but this book shows that also worthy of consideration is the extent to which the strategists and policymakers are willing to listen.

The text is essentially an edited and annotated oral history that Tucker conducted with Faddis, who provides a litany of alleged US strategic mistakes in the preamble to the war. In Iraqi Kurdistan during 2002–2003, the US Intelligence Community had the advantage of experienced, handpicked teams of CIA and US Special Forces personnel who knew the terrain, culture, language, and people. Yet, when the teams submitted their intelligence, the customers often disregarded it. For example, the CIA teams challenged the notion that certain Iraqi expatriates enjoyed backing inside Iraq and refuted the idea that Turkey would cooperate with US war plans. An example of intelligence not reaching its customers came in March 2003, when CIA found that the US Army Airborne Brigade Combat Team assigned to Iraqi Kurdistan had not seen the information CIA and Special Forces had been collecting for months. Similarly in Mosul, after *Operation Iraqi Freedom* began, the CIA team encountered a US military checkpoint that had apparently not received even the most basic intelligence about the operating environment or posture of the Iraqi army (IA). Faddis is also crudely critical of the Scorpions, the CIA-trained Iraqi-Arab force charged with conducting sabotage inside regime-controlled Iraq. “Basically everything that Tenet says

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about the Scorpions in his book is a crock of [profanity],” Faddis says. “The Scorpions were just a colossal [profanity] waste of time.” (34, 44)<sup>1</sup>

The tone echoes that of Gary Berntsen’s *JAWBREAKER* in the assertion that senior commanders prevented field teams from delivering the enemy a decisive blow.<sup>2</sup> When the CIA teams arrived in Iraq in 2002, they found that Kurdish claims that there were Afghanistan-trained jihadists in the rugged mountains of northeastern Iraq were true and not just an exaggeration. CIA amassed evidence on groups of Islamists that had been gathering in the region since even before 9/11 and that al-Qa’ida fighters fleeing Afghanistan in 2002 were arriving in Iraq. The Islamists who sought refuge there—a harsh mountainous terrain beyond the control of the Iraqi regime or the nearby Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK)—were gathering under the banner of Ansar al-Islam, which the United States considered an al-Qa’ida affiliate. By not attacking the Ansar al-Islam positions, the book asserts, the United States allowed the group to grow and its leaders to escape, a hesitance akin to that of Tora Bora in early December 2001. Another lost opportunity, Tucker and Faddis, claim was the US mismanagement of the city of Mosul during OIF, including inadequate consideration of Mosul in war plans and a bungled negotiation to accept the surrender of the IA’s Northern Corps. In both instances, according to Faddis, senior US officials disregarded what the CIA and Special Forces teams were telling them about the realities on the ground.

Faddis was also frustrated by CIA risk-aversion, highlighted best by one tragicomic episode involving a railway demolition. Reminiscent of T. E. Lawrence in the Arab Revolt, a CIA-trained Kurdish sabotage team infiltrated regime territory to destroy a railway and 90-car train that supplied the Iraqi V Corps. But just before the operation, CIA Headquarters ordered Faddis’s team to inform the IA of the coming detonation because “when you blow up the rail line, people on the train might get hurt.” (127). To Faddis this incident underscored the disconnect between the possible incidental damage from one train derailment and the guaranteed (and far more massive) loss of innocent life that would occur in a military invasion of Iraq. Further, it sent a message to the allied Kurds that the United States was willing to compromise their teams—read: torture and death at the hands of the regime—for the sake of avoiding possible collateral damage in one operation.

This book has limitations. The interviews with Faddis reflect one point of view, sometimes leaving the book thin on context. Readers may feel as though Tucker took too much of a back seat. His contributions are brief and rare after the first chapter, and he misses opportunities to put Faddis’s insights into perspective. For example, the reader sees the team’s frustration over not being allowed to assault the Ansar al-Islam camps in mid-2002, but there is little discussion of the equities involved in a US-led war inside Iraq’s borders at that early point. The book also isn’t clear why the absence of a 2002 assault was tantamount to letting the Ansar al-Islam leaders walk. The camps were on the porous Iraq-Iran border, and

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<sup>1</sup> See George Tenet, *At the Center of the Storm: My Years at the CIA* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), 388–89.

<sup>2</sup> Gary Berntsen, *JAWBREAKER: The Attack on bin Laden and Al Qaeda: A Personal Account by the CIA’s Key Field Commander* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2005).



the leaders could easily have slipped into Iran. In fact, that is what happened in March 2003, when the CIA-led war against Ansar *did* occur—an episode the book dismisses in one sentence. And contrary to the book's implication, it is difficult to share its certitude that a capitulation of the Iraqi V Corps would have avoided the insurgent course that Mosul and other Sunni areas of Iraq took thereafter. US Iraq policy after the invasion (de-Ba'athification, the disbanding of the IA, candidate list models that favored the Shia, marginalization of the Sunni tribes) had as much to do with the rise of the Sunni insurgency as the conduct of the groundwar itself. Also absent is sophisticated discussion of why the intelligence wasn't reaching the customer, a breakdown that could have transpired at any of several points inside and outside CIA. Another issue that merited more consideration is the US relationship with Turkey. In the book Turkey appears as an incessant spoiler—which it was—of CIA's agenda in northern Iraq, but with little appreciation of the complexities of the US-Turkish or Turkish-Iraqi relationship. This is not to say that the teams' feelings were unjustified, but rather that the reader will not get a fully drawn picture.

A notable gap is the lack of discussion of the CIA team in Qalah Chulan, which by chain of command fell under Faddis's authority at least for part of the time covered in this book. Faddis was the chief of the overall CIA team in Iraqi Kurdistan, split into a branch under himself in Salahaddin, whose Kurdish liaison service was the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the other under his deputy in Qalah Chulan, whose Kurdish liaison service was the PUK. Though it is understandable that Faddis would lend the bulk of his narrative to his own side of the team, the paucity of information on the Qalah Chulan branch and the PUK is conspicuous. Even a few more general statements on the work of the Qalah Chulan team would have balanced the account and clarified the course CIA eventually took in northern Iraq, such as the Qalah Chulan team's involvement in the assault on the Ansar al-Islam camps on the eve of OIF. By sparse discussion of Qalah Chulan and the PUK, *Operation Hotel California* is forced into the awkward position of chiding the US government for lack of action against the Ansar al-Islam camps, even though it did eventually act.

A list of recommendations follows the main text. Some are reasonable subjects for debate. For example, Congress should declare war on al-Qa'ida; the United States should draw down from Iraq in favor of Afghanistan; and CIA should become a less bureaucratic, OSS-like organization. Some will find bizarre the authors' nomination of Richard Marcinko—the former Seal team leader and author of *Rogue Warrior* and numerous novels—to head the organization. Other recommendations just seem out of place: Al Gore should be named the US global-warming czar, the US should recognize Cuba, and compulsory military service for all American males should be adopted.

The book's bibliography is odd. Exactly half the entries are works by Tucker himself, Ernest Hemmingway, or from antiquity. The other half includes studies on Iraq and counterterrorism but it also makes room for fine books such as Henri Charrière's *Papillon*, Robert Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, Elie Wiesel's *Night*, and Jack Newfield's biography of Robert Kennedy. Considering the apparently broad intellectual base for Tucker's portion of the book, read-

ers may feel even greater regret that the text is little more than an edited interview with one former CIA officer.

Despite the above faults, *Operation Hotel California* is an important offering to the debates on intelligence. The reader sees the extent to which US strategists and policymakers failed to ask the tough questions about how Iraq would respond to a post-Saddam order. This book also shows that if intelligence is only marginally relevant to strategy in a given country, it may just as easily be the fault of the strategists as that of intelligence. Highlighting that truth, aside from the insights into CIA's prewar work in northern Iraq, makes this book a relevant addition to intelligence discourse.



## ***Deciphering the Rising Sun: Navy and Marine Corps Codebreakers, Translators, and Interpreters in the Pacific War***

Roger Dingman. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2009. xx, 340 pp., photos, maps, bibliography, index.

**Stephen C. Mercado**

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Men and women who studied what seemed an impenetrable language in Colorado and Oklahoma contributed to victory over the Japanese Empire in the Second World War and to alliance with Japan during the Cold War. Roger Dingman, professor emeritus of history at the University of Southern California, tells in this book the story of the naval and Marine intelligence officers from the US Navy Japanese Language School at the University of Colorado at Boulder and at Oklahoma A&M College in Stillwater.<sup>1</sup> Dingman, who served for a time in the Navy before embarking on an academic career in Japanese history, describes with enthusiasm and in detail the lives of these language officers.

The heroes of Dingman's story at its outset are Lt. Cmdr. Arthur McCollum, chief of the Far East Section in the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI); ONI's Lt. Cmdr. Albert Hindmarsh; and Berkeley professor Florence Walne. McCollum early experienced what Dingman describes as a "divorce" with Harvard and a "honeymoon" at the University of California, Berkeley, in his first attempts in 1941—even before Pearl Harbor—to start crash programs to develop language officers for a Navy and Marine Corps that had no such specialists. The adept administration of Dr. Walne, the recruitment of such teachers as Berkeley's Dr. Chitoshi Yanaga, and the enrollment of top students made for a good start in California.<sup>2</sup> Washington's removal of Japanese immigrants and their families from the West Coast in 1942 forced the Berkeley program to relocate that year to Boulder.

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<sup>1</sup> Students began studying at Boulder in 1942. The Navy opened the Stillwater campus shortly before the war's end, in 1945. By then, with the addition of Chinese, Malay, and Russian, the school was renamed the Navy School of Oriental Languages.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Yanaga also served in the war at the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). See Mercado, "FBIS Against the Axis, 1941-1945," *Studies in Intelligence*, Fall-Winter 2001. As for Boulder's students, whereas the US Army recruited mostly Japanese Americans as language students for military intelligence, the Navy enrolled only European American students with top grades, many of whom were also born and raised in Japan. See Mercado's review of James C. McNaughton's *Nisei Linguists: Japanese Americans in the Military Intelligence Service During World War II* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 2006), *Studies in Intelligence* 52, no. 4 (December 2008).

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In Colorado hundreds of men and women in waves struggled together week after week for a year or more over Japanese grammar and vocabulary in morning classes, then on their own during afternoons and evenings in preparation for dreaded Saturday examinations and the war looming beyond graduation. Leaving Boulder, the young language officers served in combat on Pacific islands and in the alphabet soup of intelligence offices in Honolulu and Washington. They interrogated prisoners, exploited captured documents, and deciphered coded communications. On Saipan, Griffith Way came across the complete order of battle for Japanese forces on the island, which Marine artillerymen used to pound enemy positions. In Washington, Boulder men broke codes at the Navy's Op-20-GY and Op-20-GZ units; Frank Mallory, for example, used a captured code book to recover and read cables of the Japanese naval attaché office in Berlin. Many Boulder women in Washington culled intelligence from captured material at ONI's translation section (OP-16-FE).

Challenged to prove their worth in the war's first years, Boulder's language officers hit their stride in the final actions against Japan. Increasingly numerous graduates gleaned ever more intelligence as Japanese combatants and civilians on the outskirts of the empire began surrendering in greater numbers and the early piles of captured documents grew to mountains as the US Navy advanced ever closer to the home islands. During April–June 1945, over 100 Boulder men served in the battle for Okinawa, the final major campaign against the Japanese Empire. Frank Gibney was one of the intelligence officers who interrogated the captured Colonel Yahara Hiromichi,<sup>3</sup> chief of staff of the Japanese 32nd Army tasked with holding Okinawa.<sup>4</sup> Other officers risked their lives, crawling into caves to coax frightened civilians and armed soldiers to surrender rather than kill themselves.

After 15 August 1945, when Tokyo broadcast its decision to cease fighting, language officers participated in surrender ceremonies throughout the Asia-Pacific region, worked in the repatriation of several million Japanese combatants and emigrants from Pacific islands and the Asian continent, joined in the investigation and prosecution of Japanese war crimes, and otherwise contributed to laying in occupied Japan the foundation for postwar ties between Washington and Tokyo. Their ability to communicate directly with the Japanese people helped to establish the occupation by easing local anxieties about the occupying forces. Many in turn found their battle-hardened images of their wartime enemy reversed. Edward Seidensticker found the behavior of Japanese in the rubble of Sasebo, where he served briefly in the occupation, so “beautiful” that he decided to put Japan at the center of his future career.

During the war and in the decades thereafter, Dingman explains, the US Navy's language officers constituted an extraordinary pool of talent in and out of government. Some continued careers in military intelligence. Others, “at least 20

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<sup>3</sup> Names of Japanese nationals in this review appear in their traditional order, surname preceding given name.

<sup>4</sup> Gibney would later write an introduction and commentary for the translation of Colonel Yahara's account of the campaign, *The Battle for Okinawa* (New York: J. Wiley, 1995). Roger Pineau, one of the book's two translators, was another Boulder alumnus.

Boulder graduates,” worked in the Central Intelligence Agency or a predecessor organization. Roughly 60 served in the Department of State or one of its “ancillary organs.”<sup>5</sup> Bryan Battey worked in the CIA before directing the American Cultural Center in Tokyo for the US Information Agency during most of the 1950s. Frank Gibney became a prominent journalist and writer, serving as vice president of the Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan and writing insightful books on Japan.<sup>6</sup> Edward Seidensticker turned into a scholar and translator of Japanese literature, giving the world in 1976 a modern translation of the 11th century *The Tale of Genji* and influencing the awarding of the first Nobel Prize in Literature to a Japanese, the novelist Kawabata Yasunari.<sup>7</sup> In history, political science, and sociology, too, former language students dominated their nascent fields to the point that Dingman calls them the “godfathers of Japanese studies.”<sup>8</sup>

As impressive as the text are the book’s photographs: a Boulder student up late at night, his copy of Ueda’s *Daijiten* dictionary before him; a Marine intelligence officer interrogating a prisoner on Guadalcanal; and Gibney and Seidensticker flanking Kawabata at a postwar party. Clear in these images is the contrast between the extraordinary talent developed in Boulder and its dearth before 1941. On the eve of Pearl Harbor, no American correspondent in Tokyo could read Japanese. Before the signing of the 1951 peace treaty in San Francisco, Gibney interviewed Prime Minister Yoshida in Japanese and drew on the insights to write a major article for *Life* magazine. Such talented alumni served the United States well in postwar relations with Japan until roughly the end of the Cold War, by which time most of their generation had passed away or retired.

Dingman’s intelligence history of the Second World War is a moving and relevant one for today’s readers. Today, to my knowledge, American correspondents in Tokyo cannot read Japanese. With the relative decline of language study in colleges since the late 1960s, Washington more than ever must maintain and expand programs similar to that of the Boulder school to meet the challenges of war and peace.<sup>9</sup>



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<sup>5</sup> Dingman counts six ambassadors and two assistant secretaries of state among the Navy’s former language students.

<sup>6</sup> Among Gibney’s books are *Five Gentlemen of Japan* (1953) and *Japan: The Fragile Superpower* (1975).

<sup>7</sup> Before awarding the prize to Kawabata in 1968, the jurists most likely read Seidensticker’s translations of three of the novelist’s works: *Snow Country* (1956), *Thousand Cranes* (1959), and *The Izu Dancer* (1965). Seidensticker then won a National Book Award in 1971 for his translation the previous year of Kawabata’s *The Sound of the Mountain*. Another giant in literary studies who graduated from Boulder was Donald Keene, who won recognition as arguably the foremost scholar of Japanese literature in the United States. Still another was Helen Craig McCullough, who became a prominent scholar of classical literature, known for such works as her 1988 translation of *The Tale of the Heike*.

<sup>8</sup> Among such “godfathers” were John W. Hall, James Morley, Robert Scalapino, and Robert E. Ward.

<sup>9</sup> Surveys of the Modern Language Association ([www.mla.org](http://www.mla.org)) point to a fall in college language requirements after the 1960s. See also a recent study of the Center for Applied Linguists on the lagging efforts in US primary and secondary schools to teach foreign languages: [http://www.cal.org/resources/pubs/fl\\_teaching.html](http://www.cal.org/resources/pubs/fl_teaching.html)



## ***Securing the City: Inside America's Best Counterterror Force—The NYPD***

By Christopher Dickey. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2009. xi, 321 pp., including endnotes, bibliography and index.

***Reviewed by Stephen J. Garber***

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A surprise in reading this book is that it isn't really a study of a ground breaking organization per se, as one might be led to believe by the title. Rather, it is a book that glorifies its two protagonists: the New York Police Department (NYPD) Commissioner Ray Kelly and David Cohen, a rough-hewn CIA veteran who Kelly tapped to run the NYPD's Intelligence Division.

Setting the scene, Dickey describes how CIA personnel who worked with David Cohen often referred to him with an epithet instead of his first name. Dickey also relates a story of how an FBI veteran Cohen had lured to join the NYPD quit—before he ever formally started working for Cohen—after Cohen unleashed an excessively profane tirade. Yet Dickey's version of Cohen comes across as an irascible, heroic rebel who is rough around the edges but knows what's best for the security of New Yorkers and Americans.

In 1995, David Cohen was pulled from leadership of the Directorate of Intelligence and put in charge of the Directorate of Operations (DO). Dickey notes that under Cohen's watch at the DO in 1996, the CIA established its Alec Station to hunt down Osama bin Laden. In 1997, Cohen left the DO to represent the Agency in New York. There he met Kelly. Cohen retired from the CIA in 2000. Shortly after the 11 September 2001 attacks, Kelly recruited Cohen to lead the NYPD's fledgling Intelligence Division. While Cohen certainly could be very abrasive, Kelly recognized his worth.

Dickey stresses the innovative thinking of both Kelly and Cohen. The author notes that while the NYPD was vastly larger than any other local police force, it was sailing in uncharted waters by trying to establish its own international intelligence network. *Securing the City* is engaging and edifying when describing details of how this unique expansion of a local law enforcement agency was envisioned and carried out. Unfortunately, Dickey doesn't do that often enough.

While Cohen and Kelly's efforts to expand the NYPD's presence overseas may seem remarkable, Dickey explains that over a century ago, when Theodore Roosevelt was police commissioner, a New York cop named Giuseppe Petrosino was actually the first to be posted abroad. He was also the only one killed abroad in the line of duty. There was also history in the NYPD's blurring of jurisdictional lines to

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combat terrorism. In 1914, the NYPD went across the Hudson River to conduct undercover operations amid anarchists in New Jersey. As is well known, anarchist terrorists struck in downtown Manhattan as early as 1920.

Dickey draws out an interesting facet of the NYPD in recent times, its foreign language capability. Cohen wisely tapped into New York's cultural richness by hiring cops of many ethnic and national backgrounds. While it is very difficult for somebody who was born abroad to get a Federal security clearance, local law enforcement has been a traditional bastion for immigrant labor. Going a step beyond this tradition, Cohen and Kelly view foreign nationals as invaluable tools in acquiring ground-level intelligence among tight-knit immigrant communities and thus were eager to hire immigrants.

The major inadequacy of *Securing the City* is that Dickey virtually omits treatment of the deep-seated conflicts between the NYPD's Intelligence Division and its Counter Terrorism Bureau. In fact, one has to be a rather careful reader of the book even to understand that these are two separate organizations—even the book's subtitle obscures this critical point. One of the reasons Kelly wanted to establish counterterrorism and intelligence units is because the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) had dominated the NYPD's efforts in these areas, even though the JTTF included NYPD personnel. Yet two succinct *New York Times* articles explain the deep rifts between the NYPD's own intelligence and counterterrorism units much more clearly than Dickey does.<sup>1</sup>

Other problems with the book include its language, which at times veers toward the hackneyed. Dickey begins his first chapter with "He had seen war, Ray Kelly." (9) A few chapters later, he writes that "You have to be a real aficionado of Muslim Bad Guys in America" to know certain details. (56) The chapter titles and subtitles read too much like tantalizing headlines (e.g., "Cops on Dots," "Surges and Scuba," "Red Cells," and "Green Clouds") without providing much information.

Dickey, a journalist who has worked for *Newsweek* and *The Washington Post*, obviously set out to write a popular, mass-market book. While his writing is clear, this book has no apparent organizational scheme. In addition, the sparse endnotes are employed virtually randomly. Much of Dickey's source material apparently came from subjective discussions with Cohen and Kelly, and from anonymous interviewees.

Overall, this flawed book addresses a fascinating topic with potential implications for readers interested in law enforcement, intelligence, and homeland security. Perhaps Dickey's work will inspire another, more analytical treatment of this topic.

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<sup>1</sup> William K. Rashbaum and Al Baker, "How Using Imam in Terror Inquiry Backfired on New York Police," *The New York Times*, 23 September 2009 and Rashbaum and Baker, "Police Official in Terror Unit is Removed," *The New York Times*, 24 September 2009. The latter article cites a blog, [www.nypdconfidential.com](http://www.nypdconfidential.com), <http://www.nypdconfidential.com/print/2009/090209p.html>, for more information on this topic. The blog also contains a somewhat critical review of Dickey's book entitled "'Securing the City' Secures Kelly's Reputation" (accessed 30 December 2009). *The New York Times* published two reviews of this book that were somewhat more positive; see Jonathan Mahler, "Cops and Bombers," 1 February 2009 and Dwight Garner, "How to Beat Terrorists: Use Big Stick and Brains," February 4, 2009.



## **The Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf**

***Compiled and Reviewed by Hayden B. Peake***

### ***Current Topics***

***Ethics of Spying: A Reader for the Intelligence Professional, Volume 2***, editor  
Jan Goldman

***Historical Dictionary of Terrorism*** by Sean K. Anderson with Stephen Sloan

***The Search for Al Qaeda: Its Leadership, Ideology, and Future*** by Bruce Riedel

### ***Historical***

***Cash On Delivery: CIA Special Operations during the Secret War in Laos*** by  
Thomas Leo Briggs

***Cold War Radio: The Dangerous History of American Broadcasting in Europe, 1950–1989*** by Richard H. Cummings

***Covert Action in the Cold War: US Policy, Intelligence, and CIA Operations*** by  
James Callanan

***Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies: Reconstruction of the Neo-Assyrian Intelligence Services and its Significance for 2 Kings 18–19*** by Peter Dubovsky

***Invisible Ink: Spycraft of the American Revolution*** by John Nagy

***Mind-Sets and Missiles: A First Hand Account of the Cuban Missile Crisis*** by  
Kenneth Michael Absher

***Operation Mincemeat: The True Spy Story that Changed the Course of World War II*** by Ben Macintyre

***The Spy Who Loved Us: The Vietnam War and Pham Xuan An's Dangerous Game*** by Thomas A. Bass

***Targeting the Third Reich: Air Intelligence and the Allied Bombing Campaigns*** by Robert S. Ehlers, Jr.

### ***Intelligence Services Abroad***

***The KGB's Poison Factory: From Lenin to Litvinenko*** by Boris Volodarsky

***Spies in the Vatican: The Soviet Union's Cold War Against the Catholic Church*** by John Koehler

***The Terminal Spy: A True Story of Espionage, Betrayal, and Murder*** by Alan S. Cowell

### ***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*,<sup>1</sup> 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,

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<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> See for example, Arch Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000).

<sup>2</sup> Appendix K lists more than 100 cases between 1952 and 1994 that could not be included in more detail because of space limits.

<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>1</sup> 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,<sup>2</sup> the other by Anthony Cave Brown.<sup>3</sup> 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.

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

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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*,<sup>1</sup> “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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>1</sup> But he did not factor in the ULTRA decrypts, as Macintyre shows, which proved the contrary.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>1</sup>

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>1</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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*.<sup>1</sup>

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.




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<sup>1</sup> *Spies, Black Ties, and Mango Pies: Stories and Recipes from CIA Families All over the World* (Community Communications, Inc, 1997).

