

# Studies in Intelligence

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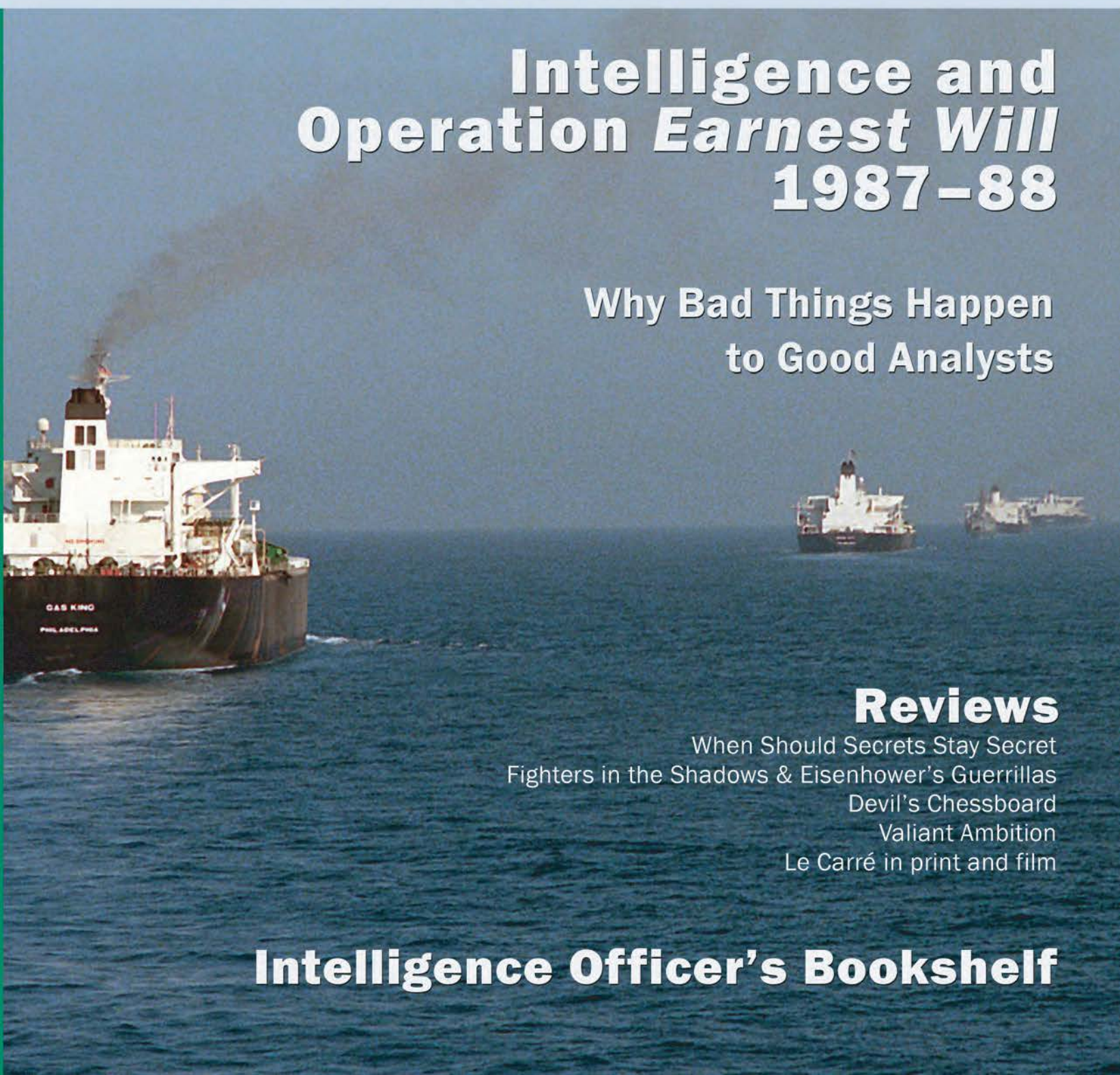
## Intelligence and Operation *Earnest Will* 1987–88

Why Bad Things Happen  
to Good Analysts

### Reviews

When Should Secrets Stay Secret  
Fighters in the Shadows & Eisenhower's Guerrillas  
Devil's Chessboard  
Valiant Ambition  
Le Carré in print and film

## Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf



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Cover image: A convoy of Kuwaiti tankers, reflagged under the US flag, moves through the Persian Gulf under escort by US Navy warships. (US Navy photo through Defenseimagery.mil)

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# Studies in Intelligence

Vol. 60, No. 3 (Extracts, September 2016)

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## Fighting Iran: Intelligence Support During Operation *Earnest Will*, 1987–88

By Richard A. Mobley

**Differing assessments of the risks, Iranian decisionmaking, and command and control (C2) fueled persistent controversy within the IC, frustrated some consumers, and became a matter of politicized, acrimonious congressional hearings even before the operation started.**

Dozens of recently declassified documents show the crucial role the Intelligence Community (IC) played in supporting US efforts to protect reflagged Kuwaiti tankers against Iranian attack during the height of the so-called “Tanker War” during 1987 and 1988. *Earnest Will*, the US Navy’s operation to escort Kuwaiti tankers granted US flag status, was controversial because of what critics saw as abandonment of US neutrality during the Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988), an open-ended commitment, and increasing the risk of escalating conflict with Tehran.<sup>1</sup>

Differing assessments of the risks, Iranian decisionmaking, and command and control (C2) fueled persistent controversy within the IC, frustrated some consumers, and became a matter of politicized, acrimonious congressional hearings even before the operation started. Nevertheless, CIA did a creditable job in providing structured, reasoned assessments of potential Iranian responses. The IC provided tactical warning of some Iranian attacks, and IC scientific and technical intelligence analysis assessed the danger posed by Iranian weapons, established Tehran’s culpability in their use despite Iranian denials, and offered persuasive evidence when Iran took the United States to court before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for attacking its oil

platforms in the so-called “Platforms Case.”

This article relies primarily on declassified reports—often heavily redacted—on *Earnest Will* released since the Iran-Iraq War ended in 1988. Many of the reports are on CIA’s FOIA Electronic Reading Room on [cia.gov](http://cia.gov) or are posted in CIA’s CREST database, which is accessible at the National Archives in College Park, MD. As we approach *Earnest Will*’s 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year, the number of available documents on the escort effort has increased, with a significant trove of National Intelligence Estimates (NIEs), CIA analytic assessments and talking points, and internal memos becoming available since 2010. A smaller number of reports from military commands and other IC agencies appear in other databases. These reports build on linear inches of documents submitted by the US government to the ICJ (and to Iran) during the Platforms Case.<sup>a</sup>

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a. Several books treat *Earnest Will* and use sources—particularly interviews—not used in this article. See David Crist, *The Twilight War* (2012) and Harold L. Wise, *Inside the Danger Zone* (2007) for two of the best. Then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. William C. Crowe and Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger devote lengthy sections in their memoirs to the operation. See Crowe, *The Line of Fire*, 186–211 and Weinberger, *Fighting For Peace*, 387–428.

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### Major Incidents During Operation Earnest Will



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### Operation Earnest Will Chronology of Major Events

1987

- Spring: US considers Kuwaiti request for aid.
- July: *Earnest Will* begins
- 24 Jul: *Bridgeton* strikes a mine
- 10 Aug: Tanker damaged and supply ship sunk in Iranian minefield in Gulf of Oman
- 21–22 Sep: US Navy seizes and sinks Iranian naval mine laying vessel
- 8 Oct: US Army helicopters sink a Boghammer and two whalers in northern Gulf after they fired at US helicopters
- 16 Oct: Iranian Silkworm ASCM hits reflagged tanker *Sea Isle City* in Kuwaiti waters.
- 19 Oct: US Navy destroyed Rashadat oil platform in retaliation for *Sea Isle City* attack

1988

- 14 Apr: USS *Samuel B. Roberts* strikes mine northeast of Qatar
- 18 Apr: US Navy destroyed Sassan and Sirri oil platforms and sank or disabled three Iranian naval combatants and three small boats
- 3 Jul: USS *Vincennes* mistakenly shoots down Iranian Airbus over the Strait of Hormuz

### *The Geopolitical Context of Earnest Will*

*Earnest Will* was Washington's response to Kuwait's request for maritime protection during the Iran-Iraq War, a conflict that by 1987 was stalemated in its seventh year. Iraq had expanded the war to the Gulf in 1984 by attacking Iranian shipping in attempts to force Iran to accept a ceasefire and hinder its ability to export oil, its primary source of foreign exchange. Iran, unwilling to accept a ceasefire, reciprocated, but it generally responded to Iraqi ship attacks on a tit-for-tat basis while preferring to confine the war to land, where it had significant advantages.<sup>2</sup>

The approaches of the two countries to conducting ship attacks, however, differed considerably. The Iraqi Air Force typically attacked merchant ships in the Iranian-declared exclusion zone by launching Exocet antiship cruise missiles (ASCMs) at suspected, but not positively identified, targets in or near the zone. This imprecise targeting technique contributed to Iraq's inadvertent attack on the USS *Stark* in May 1987.<sup>3</sup>

In contrast, Iran usually was more selective in picking its victims as it tried to dissuade Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries from supporting Iraq and to alter oil prices. Tehran in particular attacked ships associated in trade with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait because the two countries provided significant financial and logistical support to Iraq. Iran would typically identify targets using maritime patrol aircraft or its own warships. CIA analysts judged that Iranian intelligence could identify which ships transiting the Gulf were US-associated and that Tehran's na-

val force could, in turn, identify these ships for attack.<sup>4</sup>

Both sides occasionally laid mines (of different types) before *Earnest Will* started, and Tehran would use Baghdad's earlier minelaying as a pretext for its own minelaying campaign. Iran and Iraq also used variants of the HY-2 ASCM, the so-called Silkworm, with Iraqi B-6D bombers using one version while Iranian shore batteries used another—a similarity that Iran again would try to use to blame Baghdad for missiles fired by Iranian forces.

These dynamics changed, however, when the United States started *Earnest Will* in July 1987. Kuwait in December 1986 had asked Moscow to protect its tankers, and the US government seriously began considering a similar request by the spring of 1987. Iran perceived Kuwait to be a near co-belligerent to Iraq, however, given the economic aid it was providing and Kuwaiti willingness to allow its ports to be used as primary points for arms transshipments to Iraq.<sup>5</sup>

Tehran saw US assistance to Kuwait as a step toward widening the war, tilting the balance toward Iraq, and sharply increasing US naval presence in the Gulf—all developments it was determined to avoid. Nevertheless, the Reagan administration was willing to protect Kuwaiti tankers for a variety of reasons, including a general tilt in favor of Iraq in its war with Iran, a preference to keep Soviet forces out of the region—the Cold War was still well under way—a principled commitment to freedom of navigation, and a desire to buttress its credentials with allies in the GCC after the Iran-Contra affair in 1986

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**The CIA probably could not have done much better in assessing Iranian intent, given the limited available evidence and the probability that analysts were trying to anticipate decisions the Iranians themselves had yet to make.**

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revealed that Washington had provided weapons to Iran.<sup>6</sup>

After bitter congressional debate, *Earnest Will* started with a bang in July 1987 when *Bridgeton*, a reflagged Kuwaiti tanker, struck a mine near Farsi Island in the northern Persian Gulf while on the first *Earnest Will* convoy. Rather than a single dramatic event, however, the escort regime evolved into a series of incidents, some occurring without warning, and intermittent US responses. The graphic on the left, based on DIA's reconstruction, highlights the operation's tumultuous first year.<sup>7</sup>

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***Assessing Iranian Decisionmaking, Intent, and C2 Problematic, Frustrating for Consumers***

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The IC was divided throughout the first year of the operation over how far Iran would go to hinder *Earnest Will* and debated about subordinate problems such as the cohesion in Iranian decisionmaking and the reliability of Iran's C2. Even when the IC agreed on one judgment, other disagreements routinely surfaced in finished production and internal CIA memoranda.

Subsequent memoirs suggest that some policymakers were frustrated by the reporting and accused the IC of automatically defaulting to alarmist reporting when they did agree.<sup>8</sup> Adm. William Crowe, then-chairman

of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, later unfairly accused the IC of not really knowing what Tehran was going to do and instead simply offering worst-case scenarios in assessing Iran's willingness to fight at sea. He said he took the "appraisals with a large grain of salt" and offered a bleak characterization of the IC's analysis:

*The Iranians would be so upset by our reflagging that they would do anything they could to hurt Americans, not only in the Gulf but around the world. We would light an inferno we could not control. The prospects of success were nil; the whole Gulf would be aflame. That, in general terms, was the intelligence estimate.*<sup>9</sup>

The CIA probably could not have done much better in assessing Iranian intent, given the limited available evidence and the probability that analysts were trying to anticipate decisions the Iranians themselves had yet to make. An internal CIA memo captured the problem as one of insufficient evidence: "No one has all the information and, based on the limited facts, a disagreement existed on the degree of threat."<sup>10</sup> Rear Adm. Harold Bernsen, then-commander, Middle East Force, later lamented in his oral history that it was "very difficult to ferret out specific details concerning leadership decisionmaking ... I never saw any report, and certainly no report to be authoritative. So what you really did was make your assumptions based on what you knew about them, their track record."<sup>11</sup>

The debate spread out in various forms once *Earnest Will* started, but the IC arguments in May and June 1987 reflect dynamics recurring over



A convoy of reflagged Kuwaiti tankers, under US Navy escort, moves through the Persian Gulf on 22 August 1987. The nearest ship is the SS *Bridgeton*, which had struck a mine the month before. (US Navy photo through Defenseimagery.mil)

the next year. The written record shows that the IC at least helped bound the risks, although its testimony was not always palatable to partisans in the congressional debates over reflagging. CIA staked out the worst-case assessment in the spring of 1987 when a series of intelligence products and internal memos concluded that Iran would “likely continue to probe to attack an escorted ship”—a scenario DIA and INR considered to be low probability. The CIA reasoned that even if Iran suffered US retaliation against its naval forces, a successful strike would “increase significantly the Gulf states’ concern and intensify the debate in the United States on the wisdom of US involvement. Tehran is likely to expect that such a US debate would lead over time to a weakening of US resolve.”<sup>12</sup>

Summarizing the dispute in June 1987, the assistant national intelligence officer (NIO) for the Near East and South Asia reported that there was universal agreement that reflagging per se would not deter an attack on an unescorted ship and that there was general agreement that Iran would not immediately seek to confront a US combatant. Most agencies judged that Iran would seek ways to demonstrate it was not intimidated by the presence of the US flag or even a warship. If Iran could create a tactical situation in which it could successfully attack or damage a reflagged ship it would do so.<sup>13</sup>

The IC also raised the specter that Iran might stage an attack using its newly-acquired Silkworm ASCMs, characterized by Secretary of Defense Weinberger as a “very destabilizing weapon,” although analysts disagreed over whether a Silkworm

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### ***Subordinate debates about Tehran’s decisionmaking and the reliability of its C2 complicated assessments over how Iran might confront Earnest Will convoys.***

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attack was imminent.<sup>14</sup> An NIE published in June 1987 concluded that most in the IC believed that Iran “is less likely to use Silkworm missiles against US or Soviet naval vessels, at least until Tehran has exhausted other measures to obtain its objectives.” The estimate continued, however,

*Others, while they agree that Silkworm attacks on US or Soviet warships are less likely than on commercial shipping, do not believe the Iranians perceive the Silkworm as a weapon of last resort.*<sup>15</sup>

The CIA concluded that Iran would continue its anti-Kuwait “crusade” to force Kuwait to cease or reduce its support to Iraq, intimidate other Gulf states by demonstrating that increased superpower involvement in the region risked dragging the Arabs into expanded conflict, and protect Iran’s goal of becoming the dominant power in the region. The agency noted that the Iranian clerics’ history of refusing to back down in the face of threats, their recent hostile rhetoric, and an attack on a Soviet ship suggested that Tehran would pursue a course of confrontation.<sup>16</sup>

#### ***Analysts Disagree over Iranian Decisionmaking***

Subordinate debates about Tehran’s decisionmaking and the reliability of its C2 complicated assessments over how Iran might confront *Earnest Will* convoys. The NIO for Warning in October 1987 highlighted differing IC interpretations of Iranian decisionmaking. One group of analysts contended that there was debate in Tehran over strategy, with

a hardline group wanting confrontation while more pragmatic elements supported a more measured course. Other analysts believed the debate was only over tactics and that the whole government of Iran would take escalatory steps in the Gulf if it believed it could not accomplish its objectives in other ways.<sup>17</sup>

In any event, an internal CIA post-mortem on Iranian decisionmaking on the war in August 1988 concluded that Iranian elites were divided and the intelligence reporting simply reflected these debates within Tehran. The report opined that CIA might have been sending mixed messages in its reporting, with analysis citing increasing incentives for Iran to change while at the same time calling attention to steadfast reluctance to do so, probably “an accurate reflection of the corporate schizophrenia among Iranian leaders.”<sup>18</sup>

#### ***Debates over the Integrity of Iranian C2***

Analysts debated whether Iranian naval forces would consistently and totally adhere to Tehran’s orders. The CIA had assessed in February 1987 that there was a risk of an unprovoked attack on US forces that would not be sanctioned by the Iranian leadership because of the relative independence of the radical fundamentalist groups that the revolution had spawned.<sup>19</sup> An NIE published in June 1987, however, concluded that there was little evidence that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) was acting as a “rogue elephant” in the Gulf and noted that the organization had been put under tighter control. Other analysts, however, did

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**House Armed Services Committee Chairman Les Aspin released a press statement claiming the committee had learned of vast differences within the Reagan administration on the Persian Gulf threat.**

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not entirely discount the possibility that a local Guard commander might act independently to attack a US-flag ship.<sup>20</sup>

**Discerning Iran's Breaking Point**

US policymakers must have been frustrated when they read CIA analysis implying that Iran was implacable and had the resolve to withstand any pain the United States might attempt to impose. The CIA in June 1987 warned that Iran was prepared for a direct conventional military confrontation with the United States.

*Concern over US retaliation will not deter them (Iran) if they conclude direct confrontation is necessary to show that Iran will not be intimidated by the superpowers. They probably calculate that a nation that has suffered*

*massive material damage and over 700,000 casualties to win the war with Iraq will be able to absorb even the strongest punishment the US is likely to inflict.*<sup>21</sup>

Putting it another way, the tone of the August 1988 postmortem raised a similar question about whether the IC might be overstating Iran's resolve. The report concluded that CIA analysis sometimes seemed to imply "an almost limitless ability of the Iranians to endure suffering, and to assume that adversity builds anger and resistance rather than resignation."<sup>22</sup>

Whether CIA overstated Iran's determination in June 1987, Iran did demonstrate a willingness to continue challenging *Earnest Will* throughout the year. The events preceding the

August 1988 ceasefire by just a few weeks—dramatic Iraqi battlefield successes, successful US contingency operations against Iran during *Praying Mantis*—retaliatory US attacks on Iranian warships and an oil platform—and the USS *Vincennes* airbus shootdown—probably were so shocking in Iran that they changed its decisionmaking calculus in ways that were not possible in June 1987.

A byproduct of the debates appeared when they broke out on the congressional stage, and House Armed Services Committee Chairman Les Aspin released a press statement claiming the committee had learned of vast differences within the Reagan administration on the Persian Gulf threat.<sup>23</sup> DoD on 15 June 1987 provided a report to Congress on the proposed escort regime, and Aspin concluded that CIA had a much gloomier assessment than DIA and that CIA had not been given an adequate opportunity to comment on the report.<sup>24</sup>

After hearing the initial CIA testimony on 17 June, the committee asked the IC to return so it could probe the difference, an invitation that CIA staffers noted "falls into the category of a current political issue" that involved CIA in "a face-to-face dispute with a policy agency."<sup>25</sup>

After the follow-up testimony on 19 June, CIA concluded that in this case the differences were based more on semantics than on policy disagreements, with CIA analysis extending out to a year compared to the two-month timeframe of the DoD white paper. Unlike the white paper, the CIA analysis also had highlighted the danger to US and Western interests posed by Iranian terrorists responding



An Iranian corvette burns after a US air strike conducted during Operation *Praying Mantis* in the summer of 1988. (Photo courtesy of US Naval Institute Press.)

to *Earnest Will*.<sup>26</sup> Admiral Crowe, however, treated the assessments as imbued with alarmist reporting, noting, “our opponents in Congress loved it.”<sup>27</sup>

### ***IC Provided Tactical Warning (Sometimes)***

An array of heavily redacted documents shows that the IC repeatedly provided tactical warnings throughout *Earnest Will* although surprises did occur. The IC gained insights into Iranian contingency plans and used them to inform warning indicators. In fact, the IC was able to warn of Iranian preparations to lay mines on the route of the *Bridgeton* convoy, to use the naval unit *Iran Ajr* to mine the central Persian Gulf, and, apparently, to attack Kuwait and Saudi oil facilities. According to Secretary Weinberger, US intelligence efforts also enabled Washington to determine “with fair confidence” which Iranian ships were doing the mining.<sup>28</sup>

### ***Evidence on Iranian War Plans a Basis for Warning***

The body of declassified documents shows the IC had reports on several Iranian contingency plans, although their detail, provenance, and reporting veracity are not apparent in the record. The NIO for Warning in April 1988 wrote that Iran had numerous contingency plans for operations in the Gulf, including amphibious assaults against GCC countries and direct attacks against US Navy ships.<sup>29</sup> Such plans, however, were merely options that would not dictate Ayatollah Khomeini’s ultimate decision and certainly could not be the sole basis of a US indications and warning effort. The IC cited Iranian

## ***The IC leaned forward to improve the amount and speed of tactical warning to the operating forces, judging from declassified accounts.***

contingency plans to achieve the following:

- ***Closing the Strait:*** The IC in June 1987 reported that Iran had contingency plans to close the Strait of Hormuz to oil using most or all of its navy and a sizable portion of the air force. The effort was likely to include systematic attacks on critical oil installations throughout the Gulf and the use of Silkworm missiles. Nevertheless, the IC optimistically assessed that Tehran would be able to close the Strait of Hormuz for no more than a week or two.<sup>30</sup>
- ***Offensive mining:*** The CIA reported in July 1987 that Iran had made contingency plans and trained personnel for mining operations since early in the Iran-Iraq War.<sup>31</sup> Iran also developed plans to use IRGC “suicide commandos” to place limpet mines—small explosive charges—on the hulls of US warships.<sup>32</sup>
- ***Attacks against GCC oil facilities:*** Iran by October 1987 had developed a plan to attack Saudi and Kuwaiti facilities in the northern Gulf.<sup>33</sup>
- ***Seize Bubiyan Island:*** The NIO for Warning in July 1987 referred to Iranian contingency plans to occupy Kuwait’s Bubiyan Island.<sup>34</sup>
- ***Attack on a US warship:*** The IRGC by November 1987 had developed a plan to attack a US ship with 100 small boats.<sup>35</sup>
- ***Terrorism:*** A senior CIA official in April 1988 warned that Iran

had contingency plans for actions against US individuals and facilities in Europe and the Persian Gulf.<sup>36</sup>

The IC leaned forward to improve the amount and speed of tactical warning to the operating forces, judging from declassified accounts. National Security Council (NSC) meetings revealed that by May 1987 the United States was approaching Saudi Arabia to extend AWACS coverage in the Gulf and in June 1987 that Washington was preparing to orchestrate satellite coverage, AWACS flights, and P-3 maritime patrol aircraft on behalf of *Earnest Will*.<sup>37</sup> The National Photographic Intelligence Center (NPIC), forerunner of today’s National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, dove into the Silkworm threat, a major concern for policymakers as well as for *Earnest Will* convoys having to brave the Strait of Hormuz.



The *Iran Ajr*. (Photo courtesy of USNI)

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**Enjoying mixed success, the warning effort unfortunately suggests that while national-intelligence support was a wonderful force enabler, the prudent commander still must train for situations that afford absolutely no warning.**

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This area, along with the occupied Al Faw Peninsula in the northern Gulf, eventually was home to many of the Silkworm sites. NPIC in June 1987 was charged with providing the Navy immediate, direct, daily tactical support that generally took the form of two messages released each night based on exploitation of 80 Iranian targets. Although initially the reports went to Reef Point, a specially equipped P-3 aircraft that was to precede the convoys, they ultimately received wider dissemination.<sup>38</sup>

- **Bridgeton mining:** A few hours before *Bridgeton* struck a mine on the morning of 24 July, the Middle East Force commander (COMIDEASTFOR) received an intelligence tipoff regarding Iranian activity on Farsi Island, according to RAdm. Harold Bernsen's account.<sup>39</sup> Iran had staged previous ship attacks from Farsi, an island located within a few miles of the tanker's intended route. Bernsen slowed the convoy so that it would pass Farsi during daylight, but *Bridgeton* encountered a floating mine rather than the anticipated small-boat attack. IRGC divers using speedboats had laid the mines under cover of darkness, according to subsequently declassified HUMINT reports that the United States submitted to the ICJ.<sup>40</sup>
- **Iran Ajr minelaying attempt:** NPIC in September 1987 provided the initial tipoff that Iran might be preparing to lay mines with the result that a SIGINT watch was placed on *Iran Ajr*, according to NPIC's declassified account.<sup>41</sup>

The United States had been tracking the ship for two or three days when COMIDEASTFOR units noted that the ship was well beyond her normal patrol area.<sup>42</sup> When Army helicopter pilots flying from USS *Jarrett* reported that *Iran Ajr* was dropping mine-like objects, the admiral quickly gave the order to take the Iranians under fire.<sup>43</sup> Ultimately, US forces discovered that the ship had been transporting Iranian-made Sadaf 02 moored contact mines.

The IC's exploitation of documents aboard the ship also revealed hostile intent despite Iranian public claims that *Iran Ajr* merely had been transporting mines to a base in the northern Gulf. Message traffic carried aboard the ship revealed that it was on an unusual mission from the moment it had departed Bandar Abbas on 20 September. In its frequent flash-precedence situation reports to the First Naval District Command Post Bandar Abbas, *Iran Ajr* called itself a "special mission unit" (at least until the Command Post directed it not to use the term, presumably for reasons of operational security). As it approached the likely minelaying area on the 21<sup>st</sup>, it began referring to "Bahador," the likely designation for both the area and minelaying operation. For example, *Iran Ajr* reported that "if approved, Bahador to be executed at 2300."<sup>44</sup>

- **Aborted attack on Saudi and Kuwaiti oil platforms:** NPIC reported that during the summer and fall of 1987, IRGC small boats had massed in the northern Persian

Gulf.<sup>45</sup> Following an exercise held that summer, many of these boats remained at bases in Bushehr and Kharg Island. Most were removed from the water and were inactive until late September.<sup>46</sup> CIA reported on 2 October 1987, however, that 50 boats had left Bushehr Halileh and at least 10 had arrived at Kharg, a logical staging base for attacks on offshore oil facilities in the northern Gulf.<sup>47</sup> AWACS detected associated blips moving across the Gulf and COMIDEASTFOR quickly repositioned ships in response, but ultimately the IRGC aborted the attack due to rough seas, according to author David Crist's account of the incident.<sup>48</sup>

Enjoying mixed success, the warning effort unfortunately suggests that while national-intelligence support was a wonderful force enabler, the prudent commander still must train for situations that afford absolutely no warning. Tactical warning was inconsistent during the escort regime. For example, SEALs aboard the surveillance barge *Hercules* reported that they were nearly attacked by a force of 40 small boats on 8 Oct 1987 without any warning other than their own radar. The boats turned away as COMIDEASTFOR moved ships and aircraft into the area, and another Iranian attack was aborted, according to Crist's account. "No one realized how close a call we had that night," according to the SEAL commander and a senior COMIDEASTFOR staff officer.<sup>49</sup>

USS *Samuel B. Roberts* struck a mine on 14 April 1988 and nearly sank, evidently without receiving any warning that it might be steam-



ing into a minefield. This occurred following a half-year hiatus since the last Iranian-US dustup, and the declassified documents do not offer a compelling reason why the Iranians laid the mines.

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### ***Robust Scientific and Technical Intelligence Effort Defined Threat, Established Iranian Culpability***

The IC provided technical insights into Iranian missiles and sea mines that defined the threat, informed countermeasure development, and countered Tehran's claim that Iraq was using these weapons against the West. The IC provided detailed reports to policymakers and the fleet highlighting the technical capabilities of the weapons and warning of changes in the inventory. IC experts shared additional insights after flying to the Gulf to examine Iranian mines and missile fragments.

Iran's newly-acquired Silkworm ASCM received the most attention of any Iranian weapon discussed in policy circles because it was a game changer. The system was on the agendas of repeated NSC meetings and by May 1987 the JCS was reviewing the status of plans to destroy Silkworm launch sites using TLAM-Cs.<sup>50</sup> Unlike other Iranian ASCMs, Silkworm warranted the attention because its 500 kg warhead was seven times larger than that of any other Iranian ASCM and the missile could sink a variety of merchant ships.<sup>51</sup>

CIA assessed that there would be little or no tactical warning that a Silkworm—a “reliable, effective anti-ship weapon”—was being prepared for launch.<sup>52</sup> The agency judged that

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### ***Earnest Will demonstrated the challenges in providing intelligence support to forces operating in close to a determined, resourceful, and technically proficient adversary.***

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a single Silkworm had as much as a 70-percent chance of hitting an unprotected ship of medium-to-large size. Ships protected by active or electronic defense systems might be able to defend against a single HY-2 but could have trouble defending against two or more missiles approaching simultaneously.<sup>53</sup> China had sold Iran 12 Silkworm batteries, each with four launchers and some 24 missiles<sup>54</sup> so Iran could attempt to saturate a target by firing salvos of missiles, a tactic made more effective by limited reaction times in close quarters such as the Strait of Hormuz and the extreme northern Persian Gulf.

IC analysts proved that Iran had launched Silkworms at Kuwait. They demonstrated that missile fragments (including portions of the seeker and fuselage) obtained from missile wreckage after two launches differed from Iraq's air-launched variant. The mounting lugs were designed for a ground launcher and the seeker was unique to the ground-launched variants found only in Iran's arsenal.<sup>55</sup>

The IC highlighted the mining threat—also a topic at NSC meetings even before *Earnest Will* started.<sup>56</sup> The IC assessed the threat posed by Iran's Sadaf 02 mines, discussed the implications of the delivery of more sophisticated sea mines from Libya,<sup>57</sup> and later established that Iran had laid the mines the US ships and foreign freighters had struck. Although Iran had copied the Russian-designed M-08 contact mine, Office of Naval Intelligence experts showed that Iran in fact was manufacturing a unique mine, rather than an exact copy of the

M-08, given considerable differences in Iranian production process used to make their version of the original M-08. Exhaustive ONI analysis showed that the Sadaf 02 (a spherical mine containing 114 kg of explosives) differed appreciably from the M-08. Moreover, the Iranians had stenciled a unique serial number series (a combination of mine designation, production year, production lot, and mine number) on each Sadaf 02 found on or near *Iran Ajr* and Sadaf 02s elsewhere in the Gulf. Sadaf 02s had appeared in minefields off Kuwait (May 1987), near Khor Fakkan in the Gulf of Oman (August 1987), and near the USS *Samuel B. Roberts* (April 1988). US lawyers before the ICJ called the mine “Iran's calling card.”

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### ***Lessons Learned***

*Earnest Will* demonstrated the challenges in providing intelligence support to forces operating in close to a determined, resourceful, and technically proficient adversary. A few lessons learned include the following.

- ***Tactical warning is not guaranteed.*** No matter how much money is spent by the IC, a ship or afloat staff still can find itself in the position of dealing with potential bolts from the blue. The more money spent on tactically responsive surveillance systems the better. Should these fail, however, it is the ship's combat and damage-control proficiency that will matter most.

- **National imagery paid in spades.** NPIC's timely warnings repeatedly helped inform operational responses, and the flash-precedence daily imagery readouts doubtless provided a degree of confidence to *Earnest Will* convoy commanders. Nevertheless there were surprises, particularly for activity that may not have been susceptible to national imagery coverage.
- **Need for additional maritime surveillance.** In commenting on the *Bridgeton*'s mine strike during the first *Earnest Will* convoy, Admiral Crowe noted that, "we had thought our field intelligence on Iranian activity would be more comprehensive, and our patrolling in advance of the convoy hadn't been all it should have been."<sup>58</sup> The US enhanced its surveillance of the Gulf in innovative ways, but there were almost certainly gaps in theater coverage that Iran could

then exploit. *Earnest Will* might have had fewer incidents had it had more extensive, persistent imagery coverage.

- **Assessing adversary decision-making and strategic intent probably was the most difficult analytic challenge.** The complicated, dynamic, and closed nature of Tehran's decisionmaking complicated the IC's risk-assessment process, created fissures in the IC, and probably frustrated some policymakers who perceived they were merely getting worst-case analysis rather than the benefit of the more rigorous constructs used by CIA. Despite frustrating the defense secretary and CJCS, however, CIA production was carefully structured and effectively spoke truth to the policymaker.
- **Confidence levels and sourcing could have been better addressed.**

Although rigorously reasoned, CIA's production might have been better received had it consistently addressed its confidence levels in key judgments, particularly on the most controversial topics.

In summary, the newly-released material provides a number of new insights, particularly on the challenges of conducting intelligence analysis on a controversial topic. This article probably understates the IC's contribution to the operating forces, however. Much of the declassified source material is redacted or partially sanitized, so the available evidence probably does not fairly or fully portray the full dynamics of some issues. Other evidence is almost certainly still classified. The deluge of material release since 2010, however, is an excellent start in helping us authoritatively consider, and teach, the nature of intelligence support during complex, high-risk operations.



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## **Analyst, Thought Leader, Teacher Extraordinaire**

*By James Bruce*

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*Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.*

—Soren Kierkegaard , 1843

Jack Davis is a legend among intelligence analysts. Managing Editor Andy Vaart’s thoughtful remembrance in the June edition of *Studies in Intelligence* beautifully captured Jack’s most important contributions, many published by CIA’s Center for the Study of Intelligence, as an analyst, thought leader, and teacher of intelligence analysis. Jack’s academic writings, if fewer, have expanded on these important ideas.

Jack had a special gift for identifying key challenges that analysts face in the workplace. Many creep in stealthily and appear unexpectedly. Often, by the time we see them, it’s too late to correct for them. In his “Why Bad Things Happen to Good Analysts” below, Jack confronts the most important psychological hurdles that can trip up even the best analysts in their daily work—and often do. Here he explores perils in making analytic judgments and coordinating them, along with the more practical issue of dealing with the bureaucracies that analysts work in, and grappling with the insidious trap of policy bias. His remedies are found chiefly in “alternative” and “challenge” analysis, now readily available through rigorous use of structured analytic techniques.

This article first appeared in *Analyzing Intelligence*, the volume that Roger George and I co-edited in 2008. When we thoroughly revised the book for its second edition in 2014, of the dozen original chapters that we retained, Jack’s was the only one that needed no revision or updating. This was best explained by a reviewer who observed that Jack’s article was timeless.

Such contributions do not come easily. Jack demonstrated an uncommon capacity for professional growth. On the occasion of his being honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award in July 2014 by the International Association for Intelligence Education, he reflected on his 50-year experience as an analyst, acknowledging how hard it is to change:

*It took some 20 years for me fully to appreciate and vigorously to promote the analytic benefits of structured analysis, especially the insurance provided against the hazards of judgments based solely on internalized critical thinking, unstructured peer debate, and subjective boss review.*

Jack’s own training as an analyst didn’t come from the yet-to-be created Sherman Kent School of Intelligence Analysis in CIA, but rather on the job, enjoying both successes and “teaching moments” along the way, and later in the now-famous course he pioneered, “Intelligence Successes and Failures.” Much of what he learned and taught in that course became case studies to identify best and worst practices. Some of the most insightful of these cases are discussed in his article, which follows.

As a lucky alumnus of the first running of ISF, I benefitted greatly—as did hundreds of his students over the years—from learning two powerful insights Jack taught: First, to understand the intelligence problem “from the policymaker’s trench,” as he put it. And second, to know the potential sources of error in your analysis before you brief your customer or go to press. His intensive case study method of teaching brought these and many points home in convincing ways.

Next to the durable wisdom of Sherman Kent, perhaps Jack’s favorite quotation originates with the philosopher Kierkegaard cited in the epigraph above. Jack’s article reproduced here illustrates how we can better understand analysis by looking backwards, and how best to conduct it into the future.



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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 its factual statements and interpretations.

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## Why Bad Things Happen to Good Analysts

By Jack Davis

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***Intelligence analysis—the assessment of complex national security issues shrouded by gaps in authentic and diagnostic information—is essentially a mental and social process.***

Intelligence analysis—the assessment of complex national security issues shrouded by gaps in authentic and diagnostic information—is essentially a mental and social process. As a result, strong psychological influences intrude on how analysts faced with substantive uncertainty reach estimative judgments, coordinate them with colleagues, satisfy organizational norms, and convey the judgments to policy officials. Effective management of the impact of cognitive biases and other psychological challenges to the analytic process is at least as important in ensuring the soundness of assessments on complex issues as the degree of substantive expertise invested in the effort.

An understanding of the psychological barriers to sound intelligence analysis helps answer the question of critics inside and outside the intelligence world: How could experienced analysts have screwed up so badly? Ironically, after the unfolding of events eliminates substantive uncertainty, critics also are psychologically programmed by the so-called hindsight bias to inflate how well they would have handled the analytic challenge under review and to understate the difficulties faced by analysts who had to work their way through ambiguous and otherwise inconclusive information.

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### ***An Introduction to Methodology and Definitions***

This chapter benefits from numerous discussions the author has had with Richards Heuer about his groundbreaking book *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis*, which consolidates his studies during the 1960s and 1970s on the impact of the findings of cognitive psychology on the analytic process.<sup>1</sup> The chapter also takes into account recent reports on what Central Intelligence Agency analysts did wrong and how they should transform themselves.<sup>2</sup>

The chapter's insights are essentially consistent with the authorities cited above. However, they were independently shaped by my half century of experience at CIA as practitioner, manager, and teacher of intelligence analysis—and from hallway and classroom discussions with CIA colleagues with their own experiences. Informal case studies presented by analysts in the Seminar on Intelligence Successes and Failures—a course the author ran for CIA from 1983 to 1992—were particularly valuable.<sup>3</sup> Discussions of intelligence challenges on an early 1980s electronic discussion database called Friends of Analysis also were informative.

“Bad things” are defined for this chapter's purpose as well-publicized intelligence failures, as well as major errors in analytic judgments generally. As a rule, little is made publicly of the failure of analysts to anticipate favorable developments for US inter-

ests, such as the collapse of the East German regime and reunification of Germany, or Slobodan Milošević's caving in to NATO after more than two months of bombings. But the pathology of misjudgment is much the same as with harmful "surprise" developments, and because the hindsight bias is again at play, sharp criticism from intelligence and policy leaders often ensues.

"Good analysts" are defined as those well-credentialed practitioners of intelligence analysis who have earned seats at the drafting table for assessments on war and peace and the other issues vital to national security—a prerequisite for turning instances of estimative misjudgment into an intelligence failure.

Take, for example, the senior political analyst on Iran who said in August 1978, five months before revolutionary ferment drove the pro-US shah from power, that Iran was "not in a revolutionary or even a 'pre-revolutionary' situation." The analyst had worked on the Iran account for more than twenty years, visited the country several times, read and spoke Farsi, and kept in general contact with the handful of recognized US academic specialists on Iran in the 1970s. More than once in the years before 1979, I had heard CIA leaders wish they had more analysts matching the profile of the senior Iran analyst.<sup>4</sup>

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### Key Perils of Analysis

This chapter examines the psychological obstacles to sound estimative judgments that good analysts face in four key stages of the analytic process:

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### **When one is dealing with national security issues clouded by complexity, secrecy, and substantive uncertainty, the psychological challenges to sound analysis must also be better understood and better managed.**

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- When analysts *make judgments* amid substantive uncertainty and by definition must rely on fallible assumptions and inconclusive evidence
- When analysts *coordinate judgments* with other analysts and with managers who are ready to defend their own subjective judgments and bureaucratic agendas
- When analysts, in their efforts to manage substantive uncertainty, *confront organizational norms* that at times are unclear regarding the relative importance of lucid writing and sound analysis
- When analysts whose ethic calls for substantive judgments uncolored by an administration's foreign and domestic political agendas seek to *assist clients* professionally mandated to advance those agendas

To be sure, the countless post-mortem examinations of intelligence failures conclude that better collection, broader substantive expertise, and more rigorous evaluation of evidence would have made a difference. However, if good analysts are most often held responsible for intelligence failures, then such improvements would be necessary but not sufficient conditions for sounder analytic performance. When one is dealing with national security issues clouded by complexity, secrecy, and substantive uncertainty, the psychological challenges to sound analysis must also be better understood and better managed.

The emphasis should be placed on substantive uncertainty, inconclusive information, and estimative judgment. To paraphrase a point made recently by former CIA director Michael Hayden: When the facts speak for themselves, intelligence has done its job and there is no need for analysis.<sup>5</sup> It is when the available facts leave major gaps in understanding that analysts are most useful but also face psychological as well as substantive challenges. And especially on such vital issues as countering terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), US adversaries make every effort to deny analysts the facts they most want to know, especially by exercising tight operational security and by disseminating deceptive information. In short, it is in the crafting of analytic judgments amid substantive uncertainty where most perils to intelligence analysts exist.

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### Assigning Blame

One does not become an apologist for intelligence analysts if one proposes that an experience-based "scorecard" for analytic failure should generally place the blame on those most responsible for not managing psychological and other obstacles to sound analysis:

- If regularly practiced analytic tradecraft (that is, "methodology") would have produced a sound estimative judgment but was not employed—blame the analysts.

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***These cognitive biases cluster into the most commonly identified villain in postmortem assessments of intelligence failure: mind-set.***

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- If analytic tradecraft was available that would have produced a sound judgment but was not regularly practiced because of competing bureaucratic priorities—blame the managers.
- If analytic tradecraft was available that would have produced a sound judgment but was not employed for political reasons—blame the leaders.
- If no available tradecraft would have produced a sound judgment—blame history.

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***Psychological Perils at the Work Station***

To paraphrase Mark Twain's observation about the weather, everyone talks about the peril of cognitive biases, but no one ever does anything about it. No amount of forewarning about the confirmation bias (belief preservation), the rationality bias (mirror imaging), and other powerful but perilous shortcuts for processing inconclusive evidence that flow from the hardwiring of the brain can prevent even veteran analysts from succumbing to analytic errors. One observer likened cognitive biases to optical illusions; even when an image is so labeled, the observer still sees the illusion.<sup>6</sup>

In an explanation of why bad things happen to good analysts, cognitive biases—which are essentially unmotivated (that is, psychologically based) distortions in information processing—have to be distinguished from motivated biases (distortions

in information processing driven by worldview, ideology, or political preference). These cognitive biases cluster into the most commonly identified villain in postmortem assessments of intelligence failure: mind-set. More rigorous analysis of alternatives as an effective counter to cognitive biases is discussed later in the chapter. Though there is no way of slaying this dragon, analysts can learn ways to live with it at reduced peril.

“Mind-set” can be defined as the analyst's mental model or paradigm of how government and group processes usually operate in country “X” or on issue “Y.” In the intelligence world, a mind-set usually represents “substantive expertise” and is akin to the academic concept of mastery of “normal theory”—judgments based on accumulated knowledge of past precedents, key players, and decisionmaking processes. Such expertise is sought after and prized.<sup>7</sup> The strategic plans of CIA's Directorate of Intelligence [since June 2015 called the Directorate of Analysis] invariably call for greater commitment of resources to in-depth research and more frequent tours of duty abroad for analysts—which amounts to building an expert's mind-set.<sup>8</sup>

True, a mind-set by definition biases the way the veteran analyst processes increments of inconclusive information. But analytic processing gets done, and thanks to a well-honed mind-set, current and long-term assessments get written despite time and space constraints. In between analytic failures, the overconfidence inherent in relying on mind-set for

overriding substantive uncertainty is encouraged, or at least accepted, by analysts' managers. And because most of the time precedents and other elements of normal theory prevail—that is, events are moving generally in one direction and continue to do so—the expert's mental model regularly produces satisfactory judgments. More than one observer of CIA analytic processes and the pressures to make judgments amid incomplete information and substantive uncertainty has concluded that mind-set is “indispensable.” That is to say, an open mind is as dysfunctional as an empty mind.<sup>9</sup>

All analysts can fall prey to the perils of cognitive biases. A case can be made that the greater the individual and collective expertise on an issue, the greater the vulnerability to misjudging indicators of developments that depart from the experts' sense of precedent or rational behavior. In brief, substantive experts have more to unlearn before accepting an exceptional condition or event as part of a development that could undermine their considerable investment in the dominant paradigm or mind-set. This phenomenon is often described as the “paradox of expertise.” Experts are often biased to expect continuity and are hobbled by their own expert mind-sets to discount the likelihood of discontinuity.

To start, the so-called confirmation bias represents the inherent human mental condition of analysts to see more vividly information that supports their mind-set and to discount the significance (that is, the diagnostic weight) of information that contradicts what they judge the forces at work are likely to produce.<sup>10</sup> “Analysis by anecdote” is no substi-



tute for systematic surveys or controlled experiments regarding analyst behavior. But consider this example from one of CIA's most bureaucratically embarrassing intelligence failures: the assessment informing Secretary of State Henry Kissinger on October 6, 1973, that war between Israel and Egypt and Syria was unlikely—hours after he had learned from other sources that the Yom Kippur War was under way.

CIA analysts were aware of force mobilizations by both Egypt and Syria, but they saw the military activity across from Israeli-held lines as either training exercises or defensive moves against a feared Israeli attack. To simplify the analysts' mental model: Shrewd authoritarian leaders such as Egypt's Anwar Sadat and Syria's Hafez al-Assad did not start wars they knew they would lose badly and threaten their hold on power. In particular, before launching an attack Egypt was assumed to need several years to rebuild its air force, which Israel had all but destroyed in the 1967 Six-Day War. And besides, the Israelis who were closest to the scene did not think war was likely until Egypt rebuilt its air force.

As it happened, in a masterly deception campaign it was the Sadat government that had reinforced the argument bought by both US and Israeli intelligence that Egypt could not go to war until it had rebuilt its air force. All along, Sadat had planned to use Soviet-supplied surface-to-air missiles to counter Israeli battlefield air superiority.<sup>11</sup>

What follows is an anecdotal depiction of the power of the confirmation bias. A decade after the event, the supervisor of Arab-Israeli military

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***The paradox of expertise explains why the more analysts are invested in a well-developed mind-set that helps them assess and anticipate normal developments, the more difficult it is for them to accept still-inconclusive evidence of what they believe to be unlikely and exceptional developments.***

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analysts gave his explanation of the intelligence failure: "My analysts in 1973 were alert to the possibility of war, but we decided not to panic until we saw 'X.' When 'X' happened, we decided not to sound the alarm until we saw 'Y.' When we saw 'Y,' we said let's not get ahead of the Israelis until we see 'Z.' By the time we saw 'Z,' the war was under way."<sup>12</sup>

The paradox of expertise explains why the more analysts are invested in a well-developed mind-set that helps them assess and anticipate normal developments, the more difficult it is for them to accept still-inconclusive evidence of what they believe to be unlikely and exceptional developments. This is illustrated by two additional anecdotes about the Yom Kippur War.

The chairman of the Warning Committee of the Intelligence Community was concerned about the prospect of war and was ready, in two successive weeks, to sound an alarm in his report to intelligence community leaders on worldwide dangers. Twice he gathered CIA's Middle East experts to his office to express his alarm, only to bow to their judgment that war was unlikely. After all, he explained, he covered developments all over the world and only recently was reading with any detail into the Middle East situation. They were the experts long focused on this one issue.<sup>13</sup> Similarly a top-level official later reported that after surveying traffic selected for him by the CIA Watch Office, he smelled gun smoke

in the air. But when he read the seemingly confident assessment of the responsible analysts to the effect that war was unlikely, he decided, to his regret, to send the report on to Kissinger.<sup>14</sup>

The paradox of expertise is also demonstrated through the many remembrances of the those who worked on the September 1962 national estimate on the Soviet military buildup in Cuba, the unpublished 1978 estimate on prospects for the shah of Iran, and the high-level briefings given in 1989 on why the fall of the Berlin Wall was not yet likely. In the latter, less well-known case, a senior analyst who "got it wrong" made a frank observation: "There was among analysts a nearly perfect correlation between the depth of their expertise and the time it took to see that what was happening on the streets of Eastern Europe (e.g., collapse of government controls) and what was not happening (e.g., Soviet intervention)." These signs could not trump the logic of the strongly held belief that the issue of German unification was "not yet on the table."<sup>15</sup> On November 9, 1989, while CIA experts on Soviet and East German politics were briefing President George H. W. Bush on why the Berlin Wall was not likely to come down any time soon, a National Security Council staff member politely entered the Oval Office and urged the president to turn on his television set—to see both East and West Germans battering away at the wall.<sup>16</sup>

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***The rationality or coherence bias—“mirror imaging”—is another cognitive challenge that helps explain why seasoned analysts can be blindsided by epochal events.***

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The rationality or coherence bias, also known as “mirror imaging,” is another cognitive challenge that helps explain why seasoned analysts can be blindsided by epochal events. Obviously, analysts must understand the *modus operandi* of the leaders and factions of the countries and nonstate entities that are key to US national security interests, especially regarding adversaries. A great deal of effort is spent on obtaining effective insight into, for example, the intentions, risk calculations, sense of opportunity, and internal constraints of foreign leaders and groups. The effort usually includes tracking speeches and foreign media, reading biographies and histories, parsing human intelligence (HUMINT) reporting, debriefing people with direct experiences meeting such world leaders, and brainstorming with colleagues.

With justification, then, veteran intelligence analysts bridle at charges of “mirror imaging” and of using US values and experience to anticipate actions of foreign leaders and entities. Many of the analysts, for example, who tried to assess the intentions of Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev in the run-up to the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis were accomplished Kremlinologists who had spent years trying to capture the operational codes of behavior exhibited by Khrushchev and other Soviet leaders.<sup>17</sup>

These efforts are usually good enough. But the analysts’ psychological drive for coherence often causes them to fill in any gaps in understanding with what they, as American-trained rationalists, think would make sense to the foreign leader or

group under assessment. The effect that alternative, egocentric, self-deluding, and self-destructive forms of rationality have on what is usually associated with exceptional events or paradigm shifts only becomes clear to analysts after the failure of collective expert mind-set.

CIA analysts, for example, eventually learned that Khrushchev in 1962 thought he faced less risk to his hold on power by ignoring US warnings against placing nuclear weapons in Cuba than he would by rejecting his military’s demands that the huge US nuclear advantage be reduced by a crash military production program (that might have destabilized the Soviet economy) or by some other costly means.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, CIA’s Middle East analysts eventually learned that Egypt’s Sadat in 1973 was convinced he would lose power if he did not risk war with Israel in hopes of restarting negotiations to regain the Egyptian Sinai lost in 1967.<sup>19</sup> And as CIA analysts learned to their regret, Iraq’s Saddam Hussein’s deliberate ambiguity regarding possession of WMDs in 2002 reflected a seemingly distorted risk calculation in which his fear of Iranian knowledge that he did not have such weapons outweighed US judgments that he did.<sup>20</sup>

To summarize workstation challenges, when normal circumstances prevail, the hardwired cognitive pathways known as cognitive biases provide formidable benefits to good analysts, and their investment in the development, recognition, and defense of established patterns of behavior underwrites timely and useful support to policy clients. These

cognitive biases become psychological obstacles for dealing with the relatively infrequent emergence of exceptional or unprecedented, unexpected, or even unimagined developments. And there is no known theory, practice, or methodological tool for infallible determination of whether a normal or exceptional course of events lies ahead.<sup>21</sup>

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***Perils of Review and Coordination***

On intelligence problems and other complex issues, no matter how accomplished the principal researcher, subsequent review by a well-functioning team of diversified experts generally adds substantially to the soundness of an assessment. And as a rule, even CIA’s often labyrinthine review processes increase the overall quality of assessments, especially by improving poorly argued drafts. That said, psychological phenomena similar to those already discussed—but this time reflecting the interpersonal dimension of intelligence cadres—can and do cause bad things to happen to good analysts. These phenomena include groupthink, boss think, tribal think, and no think.

*Groupthink* is a phenomenon on which critics of the analytic performance of the intelligence community have leaned heavily as a psychological explanation of flawed assessments. As originally defined, it depicts the dynamic of a cloistered and like-minded small group that highly values consensus and reinforces collective confidence in what can turn out to be a flawed set of assumptions and conclusions.<sup>22</sup> Such groups exist in the intelligence analysis world. But in my direct and indirect experiences with analytic failures, the process

most often involved a large number of analysts from diverse bureaucratic offices—many with a penchant for argument, some under orders from their bosses to “fix” the final text so that it conforms to office or agency interests. For example, Sherman Kent, the renowned chief of estimates at the time, observed that at least a thousand intelligence professionals (probably no more than a score of whom he knew personally) contributed directly or indirectly to the flawed 1962 community judgment that the USSR would not install nuclear weapons in Cuba.<sup>23</sup> Thus the malfunction of analytic groups most often lies in other maladies, such as boss think, tribal think, and no think.

*Boss think* is not a criticism of the dwindling cadre of CIA gray-haired senior analysts and supervisors who have saved many a junior analyst from flawed assumptions or other analytic errors on an assigned issue. Rather, it occurs when the more senior practitioners who have worked complex substantive issues the longest often act as if they “own” the paradigm through which inconclusive evidence is assessed. Thus boss think can combine with the paradox of expertise at times in causing delayed recognition of a paradigm shift or a mind-set that was built on oversimplified key assumptions. For example, some decades ago, when I was national intelligence officer for Latin America, I delayed the publication of a junior analyst’s assessment because it contradicted my view of the country. As it happened, events soon proved me wrong, and luckily the assessment was published in time for CIA to garner praise for being on top of the issue.

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***Boss think . . . occurs when the more senior practitioners who have worked complex substantive issues the longest often act as if they “own” the paradigm through which inconclusive evidence is assessed.***

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*Tribal think*, as well, is not a criticism of the necessary division of responsibility for substantive issues among many analysts within and beyond an analyst’s organizational unit. The process of “coordination” allows analysts with different substantive responsibilities and experiences to critique and, as a rule, improve and enrich draft assessments. However, when an analyst tries to deviate from the prevailing paradigm, colleagues heavily invested psychologically in different parts of the issue can be quick to prevent what they see as misinterpretations of events and reports.

One example of tribal think came several months *before* the battering of the Berlin Wall. A CIA analyst circulated a draft assessment that argued that the well-known obstacles to German reunification were no longer strong enough to keep the issue of reunification “off the table.” This was a bold and prescient departure from CIA’s prevailing expert opinion. His well-informed and well-intentioned colleagues each asked for “small changes” to avoid an overstatement of the case here and a misinterpretation of the case there. After the coordination process had finished its watering down of the original conclusions by the mending of “small errors,” a senior reviewer delivered the coup de grâce by all but eliminating the innovative argument from the paper’s key judgments. A reader of the final version of the paper would have to delve deeply into the text to uncover the paradigm-breaking analysis.<sup>24</sup>

In another case, in 1983, eight years before the Soviet Union collapsed, an analyst invested in extensive research and an innovative methodology to conclude that strikes, riots, and other forms of civil unrest were a harbinger of substantial instability. A host of Soviet experts within CIA strongly resisted this departure from the established position that there was no serious threat to regime stability. The original text was watered down considerably during nearly six months of debate. Even after incorporating numerous changes to accommodate the mind-set of the expert critics in CIA, they refused to be associated with even the watered-down assessment, which was then published by the National Intelligence Council without the formal concurrence of the CIA analysts.<sup>25</sup>

*No think*, as a psychological barrier to sound analysis, is the analysts’ conscious or unmotivated resistance to changing an “agreed-on” assumption or estimative judgment that took hours, if not days, of overcoming tribal think to reach. Even if newly obtained information poses a challenge to prevailing opinions, it can be difficult psychologically for the leading analysts to revisit agreed-on language as long as the body of available information remains ambiguous, contradictory, and otherwise inconclusive. The cost of changing the mind-set of one obstinate analyst, much less that of a group of like-minded experts, can be quite high. Rather than calling the consensus view into question, some analysts might prefer not to focus attention on nonconforming information.

Technically specialized experts, considered science and technology analysts, who work on a single aspect of a WMD issue can be especially vulnerable to a combination of boss think, tribal think, and no think. Once the senior regional analysts or the well-respected national intelligence officers set the broad analytic framework regarding an adversary's intentions, then the science and technology specialists set about assessing the available information. They are probably predisposed to put more weight on the evidence that supports the assumptions set out by the generalists rather than any disconfirming evidence that would require rethinking or rewriting.

This tendency was singled out for criticism in the several postmortem examinations of the flawed 2002 national intelligence estimate on Iraqi WMDs. In an interview, one of the CIA's weapon analysts acknowledged accepting as "given" the principal analysts' judgment that the Saddam regime harbored such weapons and sifting through the evidence critically but with the expectation that the case for a particular suspected weapon system was there to be made.<sup>26</sup>

In sum, great deference to the authority of the principal analysts on complex and uncertain issues and their psychological drive to preserve mind-set-driven judgments work well in producing reasonably sound assessments under normal circumstances. But the practice is vulnerable to missing exceptional, at times momentous, developments. Perhaps there is an analogy between analysis driven by mind-set and nuclear power plants. Both are great for ensuring production—in between meltdowns.

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### ***Obstacles in the Organizational Culture***

As in any large organization, especially one lacking the discipline of a money-based market, CIA's norms on what constitutes distinctive value-added analysis to policymakers have not always been made clear. One key to why bad things happen to good analysts has been conflicting organizational signals regarding promotion of overconfidence ("making the call") versus promotion of more rigorous consideration of alternative hypotheses and the quality of information, and thus more guarded judgments for dealing with substantial uncertainty.

Whatever the formal norms regarding the quality of analysis, the operational norms over past decades usually have prized the volume of production over sound tradecraft. Emphasis on volume (as well as on speed and conciseness) of production in turn has placed a premium on analytic overconfidence. Put in other terms, informal norms have tended to trivialize the complexity and uncertainty of many national security issues by encouraging analysts to depict and defend a single interpretation of complex events or a single forecast of unknowable future developments.

In part this institutional overconfidence reflected the aforementioned organizational acceptance of "assessment via mind-set"—the experienced analysts' view of how things usually work. In part it reflected an unacknowledged conflation of lucid writing and sound analysis. An assessment that read well was given credit, deserved or not, for having analyzed events, trends, and prospects effectively. So the "gold standard" for

analysis as found in analyst training, as well as in the evaluation of published product, was often assessments with catchy titles and strong topic sentences that "make the call" and marshal compelling albeit selective reporting that supports that judgment.

This forceful and confident-sounding communication style has worked well enough for reporting current "normal" events affecting US interests. It often sufficed when the continuity of trends allowed the experts' mind-set to provide informed linear interpretations and projections of events. At other times, however, an understating of the complexity and fluidity of political dynamics in countries of concern to US interests led to woefully inelegant judgments. Twice in my years as an analyst I won recognition by timely prediction of military coups against regimes policymakers considered a threat to US interests. Unfortunately, my subsequent predictions of when the military would turn power over to duly elected civilian governments were off, in one case by twelve years and in another case by more than twenty.

As a result of unprecedented criticism of analytic performance over the past decade, leaders of CIA analysis are working assiduously and with promising initial results to change the operational norms to emphasize quality of analysis over quantity of production. As former CIA director Michael Hayden has indicated, analysts have to distinguish between the issues on which they can use a laser beam (aimed at the right answer) and the issues on which drawing the sidelines within which policymakers will have to operate would be more suitable.<sup>27</sup>

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***Policy Bias: The Elephant in the Room***

As other contributors to this volume—notably John McLaughlin and James Steinberg—have pointed out, tensions between intelligence analysts and policymakers are inevitable. Though they point out that many factors are at play, the greatest tensions arise essentially from conflicting professional ethics and objectives. Analysts, as a rule, are charged with assessing events abroad without conscious biasing of conclusions to either support or oppose an administration's foreign policy and domestic political agendas. As a rule, policy officials feel obliged to connect and advance these agendas in any way they can. In most cases analyst–policymaker tensions prompt both sides to enhance the utility of their contributions to the national interest. But these tensions can contribute to the perception as well as the commission of flawed analytic judgments.

As noted elsewhere in this volume, analysts have to get close enough to policymaking processes to know where clients are on their learning curves and decision cycles, if their substantive expertise and tradecraft are to have an impact on decisionmaking. That means getting close enough to be exposed to, and at times seduced by, the politics of decisionmaking. Policy officials at times challenge the first cut of analysts' judgment and, among other things, ask them to take another look at the evidence, rethink the judgment, or change the question. As Steinberg makes clear in chapter 6, at times policymakers' criticism is levied because of professional concerns about the quality and utility of the analysis. At times, however, the

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***Up to a point analysts should prefer to be challenged rather than ignored by their clients.***

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policymaker's goal is political—that is, to use intelligence as leverage against competing policy colleagues or to ensure congressional and public support of departmental or administration initiatives.

Up to a point analysts should prefer to be challenged rather than ignored by their clients. Historically, however, analysts and managers at times have resorted to politicization in response to criticism by deliberately distorting a judgment to support, or even oppose, presidential policies.<sup>28</sup>

What is of greater concern for this chapter is the influence of unmotivated (psychologically based) biases in the evaluation of evidence and the calibration of judgments. Whether acknowledged or not, there is often “an elephant in the room” when analysts and their managers know what kind of policy support officials would prefer from their intelligence counterparts. In preparing the 1962 Intelligence Community assessment on Soviet military intentions in Cuba, for example, the drafters knew that President John F. Kennedy would welcome conclusions discounting the threat and allowing him to improve relations with the USSR so that he could run for reelection in 1964 as the “peace candidate.” In preparing the Iraqi WMD estimate some forty years later, the drafters knew that President George W. Bush wanted strong emphasis on the threat that lent support to his decision to invade Iraq.

Analysts in these and similar circumstances admit to the presence of policy pressures but tend to deny that the pressures have an effect on their judgments. Yet there is evidence

in postmortem reports and academic studies that analysts, in making judgments amid uncertainty at a subconscious level, often are influenced by knowledge of the policy preference of either or both the administration and Congress.<sup>29</sup> My own experiences as a producer and observer of analysis on politically sensitive issues would indicate that. Knowledge of what a president or his congressional opposition wants can subtly influence the analytic process, and this accommodation in evaluating incomplete and ambiguous information in part can explain estimative malfunctions by experienced analysts.<sup>30</sup>

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***Coping Mechanisms: The Rigor of Alternative Analysis***

My earlier reference to the similarity in benefits and risks between nuclear power plants and analysis by mind-set applies as well to the solutions. Redundant safeguards are funded to reduce the threat of power plant meltdowns. Similarly, redundant safeguards are needed to reduce the threat of analytic meltdowns caused by the limitation of the mental faculties of even the brightest of analysts. To ensure against error in established analytic judgments, CIA is vigorously promoting alternative analysis formats, including forms of challenge analysis (for example, Devil's Advocacy) and structured analysis (such as Analysis of Competing Hypotheses). In a complementary effort, CIA is promoting more rigorous analysis of alternatives in first reaching judgments on complex and fluid issues—that is, the systematic generation and critical review of alternative hypothe-

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***Challenge analysis serves well even if the exercise only motivates analysts to reassess their previous line of argumentation before deciding to retain their original judgments***

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ses, as outlined in chapter 9 by James Bruce on epistemology.<sup>31</sup>

Think of the estimative misjudgments touched upon earlier in this chapter. The requirement for deliberate assessment of a range of plausible explanations of events and projections of developments might have shown gaps and contradictions in the assumptions supporting the prevailing mind-set and a need for rigorous scrutiny of the authenticity and “diagnosticity” of available information. As a rule, the more important the intelligence issue and the greater the uncertainty and information gaps, the greater need for incorporating alternative explanations and projections into the text of an assessment. Even a “high-confidence” judgment implies enough doubt for the properly skeptical analyst to develop a list of tipping points and signposts for one or more “wild card” developments.

Perhaps the most important contribution managers can make when their analysts present a draft assessment based on a paradigm of an issue the managers were proud to have developed in past years is to ask:

- (1) What new evidence would make you change your key assumptions?
- (2) Why not review all the evidence through the optic of those altered assumptions?
- (3) Why not consider

the costs and benefits of including that alternative argument in your assessment?

Externally structured analysis—such as the Analysis of Competing Hypotheses, Argument Mapping, and Signpost Analysis—might have overcome the barriers to sound analysis set up by boss think, tribal think, and no think, as well as by the elephant in the room. As a former practitioner of “analysis by mind-set,” I bridle at the accusation that my judgments were “intuitive” or not backed by serious thinking. Much deliberative but internalized structuring took place before, during, and after the initial drafting, including via the coordination and review processes. But neither I nor my colleagues could take effective account of hidden and contradictory assumptions and of the overweighting and underweighting of individual reports that supported a hypothesis. If I had committed to external structuring, my sleep these days might be less disturbed by recall of my personal collection of poorly argued or overconfident intelligence judgments.

Challenge analysis—such as Devil’s Advocacy, “What If?” Analysis, and High-Impact/Low-Probability Analysis—might have provided analysts and managers with an additional measure of insurance on issues they

“couldn’t afford to get wrong.” Challenge analysis usually is undertaken after the analysts in charge of an issue have reached a strong consensus and are in danger of becoming complacent with their interpretative and forecasting judgments. It is essentially “argument for argument’s sake”—that is, a rigorous evaluation of the evidence, including gaps in evidence, from a plausible if seemingly unlikely set of alternative assumptions. As a rule, the primary target audience for challenge analysis is not the policymaker but the analytic community. The primary objective is to test hypotheses and refine judgments or confidence levels and not necessarily abandon judgments.

Challenge analysis serves well even if the exercise only motivates analysts to reassess their previous line of argumentation before deciding to retain their original judgments—as is usually the case. Challenge analysis provides a distinctive service—as is sometimes the case—when it prompts the responsible analysts to alter collection requirements, analytic methodology, or levels of confidence in existing views. In the end, some combination of the often creative insights of analysis by expert opinion (that is, mind-set) and the insurance against cognitive biases provided by more rigorous and structured consideration of alternatives will best serve the reputation of the community of intelligence analysts, the professional needs of policy clients, and the national interest.



Notes

1. Richards J. Heuer Jr., *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis* (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Intelligence, CIA, 1999). Also available at <http://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/books-and-monographs/psychology-of-intelligence-analysis/index.html>
2. For example, see Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction, *Report to the President of the United States, March 31, 2005* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2005) (hereafter, *WMD Commission Report*); Rob Johnston, *Analytic Culture in the U.S. Intelligence Community: An Ethnographic Study* (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Intelligence, CIA, 2005), also available at <http://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/books-and-monographs/analytic-culture-in-the-u-s-intelligence-community/index.html> ; and Jeffrey Cooper, *Curing Analytic Pathologies: Pathways to Improved Intelligence Analysis* (Washington, DC: CIA, 2005), also available at <http://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/books-and-monographs/curing-analytic-pathologies-pathways-to-improved-intelligence-analysis-1/>.
3. CIA director William J. Casey (1981–87), who had a low opinion of CIA analysts and averred that at least they should learn from their own mistakes, reportedly requested this course. This story was recounted to the author by an agency training official in 1983.
4. The quoted judgment is cited by Gary Sick, at the time the Iran specialist on the National Security Council staff, in his book *All Fall Down: America's Tragic Encounter with Iran* (New York: Random House, 1978), 92. Columbia University professor Robert Jervis, in his unpublished “Analysis of NFAC’s Performance on Iran’s Domestic Crisis, Mid-1977” (November 7, 1978), comments that “the leading political analyst . . . seems to have had as good a general feel for the country as can be expected” (p. 8); released under the Freedom of Information Act in 1995 as CIA-RDP86B00269R00110011003-425X1.
5. Office of Public Affairs Press Release, CIA, November 30, 2006, [www.cia.gov/cia/public\\_affairs/press\\_release/2006/pr11302006.html](http://www.cia.gov/cia/public_affairs/press_release/2006/pr11302006.html).
6. For a discussion of the impact of these and other cognitive biases on intelligence analysis, see Heuer, *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis*, 111–72.
7. Jack Davis, “Combating Mind-Set,” *Studies in Intelligence* 36, no. 5 (1992): 33–38; also available at <http://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/unclass1992.pdf>.
8. See John A. Kringen (director of intelligence), “How We Have Improved Intelligence,” *Washington Post*, April 3, 2006.
9. Davis, “Combating Mind-Set,” 33.
10. Heuer, *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis*, 111.
11. Richard K. Betts, *Surprise Attack: Lessons for Defense Planning* (Brookings Institution Press, 1982), 71, and Chaim Herzog, *The War of Atonement: October 1973* (Little, Brown, 1975), 24–25.
12. Interview with CIA supervisor, 1984.
13. Interview with senior warning officer, 1987.
14. Interview with assistant to former CIA official, 2006.
15. Case study presented in a CIA seminar on intelligence successes and failures by a senior CIA briefer, 1990.
16. Ibid.
17. Sherman Kent, “A Crucial Estimate Relived,” in *Sherman Kent and the Board of National Estimates: Collected Essays*, ed. Donald P. Steury (Washington, DC: CIA, 1994), 183–84; also available at <http://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/books-and-monographs/sherman-kent-and-the-board-of-national-estimates-collected-essays/toc.html>.
18. Fritz Ermarth, reviews of *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* by Graham T. Allison and *Victims of Group Think* by Irving L. Janus, in *Studies in Intelligence* 18, no. 1 (Spring 1974): 104 (hereafter, Ermarth, “Book Reviews”), available at <http://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/kent-csi/vol18no1/pdf/v18i1a05p.pdf>; and Max Frankel, *High Noon in the Cold War: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Ballantine, 2004), 8–10.
19. Herzog, *War of Atonement*, 23. The Insight Team of the London *Sunday Times*, *The Yom Kippur War* (Doubleday, 1974), chap. 3.
20. See the Iraq Survey Group, *Comprehensive Report of the Special Advisor to the DCI on Iraq’s WMD, 30 September 2004* (CIA, 2004), vol. 1, 4–6.
21. Richard Betts, “Warning Dilemmas: Normal Theory vs. Exceptional Theory,” *Orbis* (Winter 1981): 38–46, makes a similar point about academic assessments of foreign policy issues.
22. Ermarth, “Book Reviews,” 105–6. I am indebted to Fritz Ermarth for “boss think” and other terms used in this section, although my interpretations may differ from his views.
23. Kent, “Crucial Estimate,” 175.
24. Presentation to a CIA seminar on intelligence successes and failures by the CIA office director responsible for analysis of East Germany, 1990; interview with the office senior analyst, 2007.
25. Interview with the principal analyst, 2007. A redacted version of the assessment was declassified and cited as an example of CIA’s successful analytic tracking of the pending collapse of the Soviet Union. See Douglas J. MacEachin, *CIA Assessments of the Soviet Union: The Record versus the Charges—An Intelligence Memorandum* (Washington, DC: CIA, 1996), 18; also available as a product of the Center for the Study of Intelligence at <http://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/books-and-monographs/cia-assessments-of-the-soviet-union-the-record-versus-the-charges/foreword.html>. The 1983 assessment was *Dimensions*

- of *Civil Unrest in the Soviet Union*, NIC Memorandum 83-1006, April 1983; released in February 1994. It can be found at [http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document\\_conversions/89801/DOC\\_0000273394.pdf](http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000273394.pdf)
26. Author's interview with a CIA weapons analyst, 2005. The general point is made in *WMD Commission Report*, 169–71.
27. Kringen, "How We Have Improved Analysis." See also "Opening Statement by Michael V. Hayden before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence," May 18, 2006, 3, [www.globalsecurity.org/intell/library/congress/2006\\_hr/060518-hayden.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/library/congress/2006_hr/060518-hayden.htm).
28. Jack Davis, "Intelligence Analysts and Policymakers: Benefits and Dangers of Tensions in the Relationship," *Intelligence and National Security* 21, no. 6 (December 2006): 1008.
29. For example, see Robert Jervis, "Reports, Politics, and Intelligence Failures: The Case of Iraq," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 29, no. 1 (February 2006): 36–38.
30. Davis, "Intelligence Analysts and Policymakers," 1007–9.
31. See also chap. 14 by Randolph H. Pherson and Richards J. Heuer Jr., as well as Roger Z. George, "Fixing the Problem of Analytical Mind-sets: Alternative Analysis," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 17, no. 3 (Fall 2004): 385–404.





***When Should State Secrets Stay Secret?  
Accountability, Democratic Governance, and Intelligence***

Genevieve Lester (Cambridge University Press, 2015), 213 pp., notes, bibliography, index.

***Reviewed by Jason U. Manosevitz***

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Oversight is a key topic in the study of national intelligence. The question of how a permanent intelligence system fits within the United States's democratic system of checks and balances is a recurring theme. Possible executive abuse of power; transparency; interplay among the executive, legislative, and judiciary branches on intelligence activities; and what makes effective oversight are among the central issues. Genevieve Lester's book, *When Should State Secrets Stay Secret? Accountability, Democratic Governance, and Intelligence*, is an example of the genre, animated most recently by CIA's past use of enhanced interrogation techniques and drone attacks against terrorists and the NSA's communications surveillance.

Lester's work offers a glimpse into how some in the next generation of national intelligence academics view oversight issues. She aims to apply a rigorous analytic framework to the key problem of intelligence accountability. Lester criticizes current oversight mechanisms as making it easier to keep state secrets secret (6), highlights the non-public nature of judicial decisions in intelligence matters as worrisome (202), and concludes that Congress has failed to keep pace with the growth of intelligence agencies following 9/11.

Lester roots her work in academic debates about the meaning of accountability. She makes a welcome case for a structured approach to analyzing intelligence oversight and points out, correctly, that many works dealing with intelligence accountability brush past this core concept. For Lester, accountability links one organization to another and is a mechanism that reviews, monitors, and corrects activities through external means. In her view, accountability is a "check on explicit and specific power" in a government context and means that the "supervisor has authority and the right of sanction over the supervised." (10–12)

This definition allows Lester to split accountability processes into those inside and outside intelligence agencies, though she focuses almost exclusively on CIA. Internal processes include development, review, and

correction of programs by individuals within the executive branch, such as intelligence officers, national security staff members, and the White House. External accountability refers to review processes of intelligence activities by institutions outside the executive branch, namely Congress and the judiciary. The media lies outside of Lester's conceptual scope, which is unfortunate since the press plays such an important role in holding government officials accountable in a democratic society. Nonetheless, this nuanced approach enables Lester to assess differences between internal and external oversight of CIA activities.

*When Should State Secrets Stay Secret?* offers separate but overlapping criteria for examining internal and external accountability. Lester assesses external accountability based on knowledge conditions, autonomy, organizational complexity, temporality, and transparency. (14) Internal accountability, for her, depends on hierarchical authority, organizational complexity, bureaucratic processes, legality, recourse, and internal autonomy. (21) Lester argues that internal accountability, at least for CIA, is stronger than external accountability because the executive branch has "continual control and perfect information" as intelligence activities are developed and that external oversight "is reliant on executive information sharing." (70)

The theme of executive information control and the asymmetrical relationships this creates with Congress and the judiciary is woven throughout the book. Like others, Lester sees this as problematic because it gives the executive branch and its intelligence services a tremendous advantage over the other two branches of government. (30–31, 75, 160) Interestingly, she argues the statutory inspectors general (IG) in intelligence organizations are positioned to play a special role in overall accountability because they can bridge internal and external accountability mechanisms. (25–26, 56–57)

*When Should State Secrets Stay Secret?* covers differences in congressional and judiciary oversight. For example, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court is

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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 its factual statements and interpretations.

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able to deny or demand revisions to intelligence services' application requests for electronic surveillance, physical searches, and access to targets' business documents. (14–16, 174–176) Congressional committees do not play such a role in the details of operations; rather they conduct mostly actions after the fact, such as holding hearings and conducting investigations. Moreover, the executive is legally required to inform Congress—but not the judiciary—about covert action. Lester laments the lack of congressional influence on intelligence programs because only a few members of Congress are informed about intelligence activities, and it is unlikely Congress would cut CIA's funding even if it disapproved of CIA actions. (104)

Lester argues oversight is not static. The efficacy of oversight, she finds, “ebbs and flows” because of shifting domestic politics and the threat environment. (158) This means that intelligence activities pursued under one set of political and national security imperatives may later be found unacceptable as the threat declines or political views change. Lester further judges that we are once again in a period in which the American public is seeking to determine “where the limits of intelligence activities both at home and abroad should be placed.” (206) All of this should serve as a warning to intelligence and national security officials. The dynamic Lester describes can put intelligence officers and programs in precarious positions in the face of shifting winds unless they continually assess whether the programs and actions they have undertaken on behalf of US security continue to be deemed appropriate.

This is Lester's first book, coming from the PhD dissertation she wrote while at the University of California, Berkeley. She demonstrates a good command of existing academic intelligence literature but makes little use of memoirs by intelligence professionals, deriding them as self-aggrandizing (38). True or not, the use of such work could have added to the insider views she seemed to have been seeking. Lester's interviews with intelligence and national security professionals—such as former CIA Director Michael Hayden, former CIA Deputy Director Steve Kappes, and former Special Assistant to the Director of CIA Charlie Allen and former CIA inspector general L. Britt Snider—lend authority to some of her key points. She also refers to anonymous senior CIA officials, ex-station chiefs, analysts, and congressional and NSC staffers, making it difficult to determine how many professionals she interviewed or to gauge the value of their insights on these topics.

Lester's substantive chapter on congressional oversight of CIA is concise, tracing the roots of CIA scrutiny to the mid-1970s and the Rockefeller, Church, and Pike

Committees. Her review of the CIA inspector general offers readers a short tour of a woefully understudied topic, highlighting the promise and pitfalls the position has within the CIA. Her chapter on the development, role, and function of judicial oversight provides a succinct review on the disparate collection of work on the intersection of intelligence and the courts. There is no examination of other intelligence agencies, such as the Defense Intelligence Agency or the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, and the book gives only a slight nod to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. This is unfortunate because her analysis of the CIA cannot be fruitfully generalized to oversight of the IC in general.

Frustratingly, Lester never answers the title question of when state secrets should stay secret. Readers encounter several normative questions that are also left unanswered, and at times Lester's analysis seems to confuse oversight and authorization of intelligence activities. This implies the underlying key question driving her work centers on executive authority for conducting intelligence activities. Additionally, Lester pays scant attention to previous work that found CIA operates almost exclusively on orders of the president and has not been “the rogue elephant of excited journalists and politicians.”<sup>a</sup>

Lester's focus on high profile, controversial intelligence activities also leaves readers with a skewed sense of CIA's operations. Like other authors in the genre, she gives scant attention to CIA efforts to regularly engage external institutions or police itself to ensure operations and activities are reviewed, revised, and corrected to make sure they are consistent with US law. Additionally, the thin slice of intelligence agencies and activities she analyzes do not naturally lead to Lester's conclusion that Congress should conduct more oversight because of the growth of the IC in the post-9/11 era. (208–213). At a minimum, the book would have benefited from a thorough review of how the CIA's Office of Congressional Affairs informs Congress and responds to congressional requests.<sup>b</sup> Some reflection on the efforts of Office of the Director of National Intelligence to create more transparency around intelligence work would have also advanced the study of oversight.



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a. See John Ranelagh, *The Agency: The Rise and Decline of the CIA* (Simon & Schuster, 1987), 11.

b. Lester cites L. Britt Snider's *The Agency and the Hill: CIA's Relationship with Congress, 1946–2004* (CIA, Center for the Study of Intelligence, 2008) as a reference but does not herself offer her own baseline analysis of the CIA-congressional relationship.

## Intelligence in Public Media

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### ***Fighters in the Shadows: A New History of the French Resistance***

Robert Gildea (Belknap Press, 2015), 593 pp., photographs, two maps, notes, bibliography, index.

### ***Eisenhower's Guerrillas: The Jedburghs, the Maquis, and the Liberation of France***

Benjamin F. Jones (Oxford University Press, 2016), 384 pps., photographs, one map, notes, bibliography, index.

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### **Reviewed by J. R. Seeger**

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Max Hastings recently commented in a review in *The New York Review of Books* that he was pleasantly surprised that historians still had reasons to write about World War II and that avid readers of these histories still existed.<sup>a</sup> This is especially the case as more and more of the records of the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) and the US Office of Strategic Services (OSS) are declassified and released to the public. As these documents are released, we begin to understand the complexities of local resistance to the Nazi occupation of Europe and how Allied services, most especially the SOE and the OSS, supported these resistance movements.

It is clear from these same documents that resistance leaders decided almost immediately that resistance to the Nazis would serve to transform their national governments from the status quo before 1940 to some new form of government after the defeat of the Nazis. On the ground in occupied Europe, resistance movements conducted operations on two fronts. First, they fought the Nazis and any fascist collaborators from their own country. Secondly, they fought other resistance groups that did not share their vision of a future government. It is not surprising that most of the records from the SOE and the OSS focus on the Allied assistance in attacking the Nazis, the Italians, and any fascist collaborators. After all, the role of the members of the SOE and the OSS in occupied Europe was to guide guerrilla operations and provide logistical support to the resistance. They were there to defeat the Nazis. While the SOE and OSS reports do have some descriptions of the complicated political and personal loyalties that were part of the resistance movements in Nazi occupied Europe, they are not complete.

Participation in any type of resistance during the Nazi occupation threatened more than the lives of the participants. It always meant risking the lives of immediate

family and, in many cases across Europe, the lives of innocents from the villages nearest acts of resistance. The Resistance members made decisions based on hatred for the occupation and the risks or gains from collaboration; they made those decisions over and over again each time they decided to act. French citizens in both occupied France and Vichy France had to decide to be members of the resistance, support the resistance, remain neutral, or collaborate with the Nazis.

Beginning in the 1950s, members of the resistance movements wrote their memoirs at the same time as the SOE and OSS operators. Memoirs of resistants were seldom translated into English. Two posthumously published memoirs—Daphne Joan Fry Tuyl Knox's *How Long Till Dawn* and Pearl Witherington Cornioley's *Code Name Pauline*—both provide rare glimpses into what it meant to be members of a French resistance movement and members of the civilian population.<sup>b</sup>

The two books reviewed here—Robert Gildea's *Fighters in the Shadows* and Benjamin Jones's *Eisenhower's Guerrillas*—provide detail on the complicated loyalties and politics within the French resistance and between various French resistance groups and the French leadership in exile. Gildea's book focuses on the full array of organizations, ethnic groups, and personalities that made up the resistance in France, while Jones's book serves as an excellent counterpoint. Jones focuses on one set of Allied operations—the Jedburgh teams that were assembled prior to D-Day. Gildea covers the entire period of the Nazi occupation of France from 1940 until 1944, while Jones spends the majority of his book on the period from the entrance of US forces into the war in Europe in

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a. Max Hastings, "What's New About the War?" *The New York Review of Books* 63, no. 4 (10 March 2016): 28–30.

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b. Daphne Joan Fry Tuyl Knox, *How Long Till Dawn: Memoirs of One of the Charter Members and Original Founders of the Resistance Movement in Algiers and a Member of OSS* (Outskirts Press, 2013) and Pearl Witherington Cornioley, *Code name Pauline: Memoirs of a World War II Special Agent* (Chicago Review Press, 2013).

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early 1943 through the complete liberation of France in late 1944. Both authors use archival research from the most commonly used primary sources (SOE, OSS, and Allied war records) as well as far more obscure material from French national and provincial archives and German military records from the occupation. The use of archival material in both books adds greater clarity to the individual choices during the Resistance and underscores the deep courage exemplified by those involved. All of the books published on this topic over the past 20 years show SOE and OSS operators facing a “through the looking glass” world, where friends, Nazi collaborators, and fascist enemies changed places on a regular basis and where support for resistance movements was based as much on the Allies’ strategic political goals as on any local attempts to undermine the Nazis.<sup>a</sup>

Robert Gildea’s work addresses two questions: who were the members of the Resistance and why were there multiple resistance movements in France? Gildea, a professor of modern history at Oxford University and author of another work on the French Resistance entitled *Marianne in Chains: Daily Life in the Heart of France During the German Occupation* (Picador, 2004), also describes French post-war politics that overshadowed stories of the many resistance movements and their members.

Gildea shows that the decisions to become involved in the French Resistance were not based on a single motivation, and that the members of the resistance were not all French. In his chapter “The Blood of Others,” Gildea catalogs foreign fighters inside the resistance movements, including displaced Jews, displaced Spaniards, displaced Poles, and many others who fled the Nazi occupation or the rise of fascism in their own countries.

In 1940, Prime Minister Churchill challenged the SOE leadership to make the German occupation of France as uncomfortable and expensive as possible. This meant sabotage and subversion were the primary missions of virtually every French resistance unit supported by the SOE. Meanwhile, the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) ran their own intelligence collection networks inside France. These were made up of French citizens who

resisted the occupation through espionage. For other resistance movements not part of the SOE or SIS networks, resistance meant “slowdowns” in key factories in France and propaganda efforts. The best known of these was *Combat*, the resistance newspaper in Paris.<sup>b</sup>

As the resistance movements expanded in France with SOE and OSS assistance, Gildea argues that the main question in 1943 and 1944 was whether the Resistance should expand into a national insurrection or conduct operations in support of the Allies’ invasion of Europe and the strategic effort to drive the Nazis out of France.

Gildea concludes that the story of the resistance has been airbrushed many times by many different political actors over the past 70 years, beginning with General de Gaulle’s using BBC broadcasts into France prior to the invasion and later through the careful elimination of “counternarratives” that might refute the Free French story of a single resistance under de Gaulle and his key subordinate, Koenig, with no help from either the communist lead partisan resistance or “outsiders,” which would have included foreign fighters and the SOE and OSS support.

Benjamin Jones’s book details the French resistance units affiliated with the Free French government in exile and their relationship to the Jedburgh operations prior to, during, and after D-Day. Jones is the dean of arts and sciences at Dakota State University and formerly a USAF captain in the 352<sup>nd</sup> Special Operations Group. Like Gildea, Jones is a respected scholar in the area of special operations and, most especially, in special operations in France during World War II. Jones’s research over nearly 20 years focuses on the relationship between units in occupied France (both independent Free French and the SOE and OSS guided teams) and the Allied headquarters in London. Jones’s research uses extensive primary source material from US, UK, French, and German archives, including recently released archives of written reports from the field, as well as diaries and memoirs of US, UK, and French leaders.

*Eisenhower’s Guerrillas*, a culmination of Jones’s previous research, discusses the last full year of the German occupation of France and the Allied plans to use the French resistance to support OVERLORD—the Allied

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a. For additional readings on the European resistance to the Nazis, please see Marcia Christoff Kurapovna’s 2010 *Shadows on the Mountain* (John Wiley and Sons), Roderick Bailey’s 2008 *The Wildest Province* (Random House), and Jonathan Walker’s 2008 *Poland Alone* (The History Press).

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b. For additional reading from *Combat*, see Albert Camus, *Between Hell and Reason—Essays from the Resistance Newspaper Combat, 1944–1947* (Wesleyan, 1991).

invasion of Europe. In contrast to Gildea, who speaks of the “resistance in France” rather than the “French Resistance,” Jones focuses on the Free French units and the command relationship between these units and the Free French leadership in exile from 1943 until D-Day.

Jones describes the Jedburgh teams as made up of three individuals—two special operators and one communicator. Jedburgh teams always had at least one member of the Free French Army and either a British SOE or US OSS/Special Operations (OSS/SO) officer. These individuals would parachute into France in military uniform and act as liaison elements with the Free French resistance units, serving as communications links between the Free French resistance units and Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces (SHAEF) headquarters and providing logistics support—designing and implementing plans for air drops of supplies to the resistance.

Jones divides each chapter of his book into discussions of resistance operations in France and, separately, the complex political machinations taking place inside the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces (SHAEF) and between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill regarding the liberation of France. This style of moving back and forth from the tactical operations on the ground to the strategic challenges in London and Washington makes for challenging reading. However, both the tactical and strategic aspects of the story are key to Jones’s premise that French resistance successes in France after D-Day only occurred because SHAEF leadership finally selected a single leader to represent the resistance and that leader, de Gaulle, had a strategic plan for the resistance units.

Jones argues that General Eisenhower was the first to recognize the practical reasons for the Allies’ need to accept de Gaulle as the single French leader in the Allied camp, and it was no easy task for Eisenhower to convince his military superiors and the Allied political leadership to agree. Jones points out that de Gaulle—who was “poorly prepared and had never shown any inclination at national-level political leadership . . . [and who] would, over the next few months, compensate for his inexperience with an abundance of pride”—was an uneasy ally even before Operation TORCH and the invasion of North Africa.

De Gaulle insisted that his own representative take command of Resistance operations in France and further insisted that he be placed in charge of all Allied opera-

tions in occupied France. De Gaulle’s choice to represent Free French interests, Gen. Marie-Pierre Koenig, was not an ideal leader for SHAEF Special Force Headquarters (SFHQ). As a conventional French Army armor officer with little experience in unconventional warfare, Koenig was, however, loyal to de Gaulle and that was most critical. The tensions created by the addition of Koenig resulted in the departure of the senior SOE officer, Brig. Eric E. Mockler-Ferryman. These tensions were based in part on Koenig’s personality and in part on the fact that SOE and OSS had been running independent operations in France for years before Koenig was on the scene. As a result of these tensions, Koenig—while commander of the Jedburgh program and nominally the commander of SFHQ—remained unaware of other established Allied intelligence operations in France and in the rest of Europe that were conducted without his knowledge or approval.

As this work takes the reader through the design and implementation of the Jedburgh program leading up to D-Day, mixing the difficulties of producing 100 teams; obtaining the necessary weapons, equipment, and air frames to deliver them; counterintelligence worries; and the in-fighting taking place between Washington, London, and Algiers (where de Gaulle had established the French government-in-exile), it seems a wonder that any Jedburgh operations were ever conducted. In fact, operations just prior to OVERLORD and throughout the summer of 1944 were exceptionally successful from a strategic perspective, destroying critical infrastructure and tying up German military resources throughout France, when those resources could have been used to fight the Allied advances.

While the Gildea and Jones books advance our understanding of the resistance to the Nazi occupation, neither book discusses the extensive intelligence collection operations that also took place in Occupied France. In 1940, SIS intelligence officers were inserted into France by various clandestine means with the mission to build intelligence networks reporting on the Nazi occupation. By 1942, OSS/Secret Intelligence (OSS/SI) officers were conducting similar, independent operations. The French members of these SIS and OSS/SI networks were most certainly part of the “resistance in France,” even if they were not associated with any structured French resistance organization.

There are many lessons that can be gleaned from books on the challenges of intelligence and special operations in Nazi-occupied Europe, and these lessons are delivered best when they focus on the political complexities of the European resistance movements, rather than on dramatic combat operations behind Nazi lines. Together, Gildea and Jones highlight several striking lessons.

First, special operations teams inserted into occupied France to support the resistance had a very different view of their mission from that of their colleagues in the resistance. Well before the UK or UK Special Forces decided to pay attention to a specific resistance unit, the leaders of the resistance unit had decided the desired political “end state.” Anyone who was in the way of the end state became an adversary, and any force that supported that end state (even if it was originally the enemy) became an ally. Both Gildea and Jones make it clear that, by the time the SOE and OSS were sending units into occupied France, the resistance movements in France were less interested in defeating the Nazis than in insuring a specific type of future France. Jones captures this lesson with a simple quote from Jedburgh Team HUGH’s last transmission: “Fighting was over, politics began, [Team] HUGH left.” (272)

Second, and corollary to this first lesson, is the counterintelligence lesson. Throughout the European theater in World War II, resistance leaders often used selective intelligence production and outright deception as a means to gain Allied support and undermine Allied support to their political adversaries. While successful resistance operations were almost always a result of excellent local intelligence collection, it is also true that most of the failures—and especially the capture of SOE and OSS teams—were the result of the actions of traitors from within the resistance network. One of the reasons SIS and SOE operations and OSS/SI and OSS/SO operations were

rarely linked in the field was that SIS, SOE, and OSS headquarters’ staff in London realized this threat. Both Gildea and Jones note that resistance movements rarely had an interest in operational security, beyond avoiding capture by the Nazis. Gildea points out the only resistance movement in France that had any operational security awareness was the communist resistance, but only because of the history of anti-communist operations by the French government in the 1930s.

Finally, there will always be logistics challenges in supporting resistance movements, and it is critical that special operators recognize this before they promise any support to a resistance movement. During World War II, the SOE was constantly in conflict with the Royal Air Force (RAF) and in competition with RAF counterparts in the SIS to obtain equipment and to have airframes available for their missions. Once the United States arrived in theater, OSS leadership obtained SHAEF approval for two dedicated squadrons of B-24 bombers assigned to support clandestine operations. “The Carpetbaggers,” as members of those squadrons named themselves, became the primary Special Operations aviation capability. As SOE and OSS gained traction inside France and in other parts of occupied Europe, the demands for personnel, weapons, ammunition, and equipment quickly outpaced the capabilities of the Carpetbaggers.

As Max Hastings states in his recent article, World War II remains an event that historians continue to analyze with great success. This is partly because even as the number of World War II veterans who could serve as primary sources decreases, the number of potential archival sources increases. While the SOE and the OSS were disbanded in 1945, there are still lessons their history can teach us today. *Fighters in the Shadows and Eisenhower's Guerrillas* prove this point.



## Intelligence in Public Media

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### ***The Devil's Chessboard: Allen Dulles, The CIA and The Rise of America's Secret Government***

David Talbot (HarperCollins, 2015), 686 pp., photographs, notes, index.

**Reviewed by J. R. Seeger**

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*The Devil's Chessboard* is really two very different books in one. The first half of the book is a detailed description of the early leadership of the CIA with very specific attention (as stated in the title) to Allen Dulles and the way he ran the CIA in the 1950s and first years of 1960s. Along with the detailed background on Dulles—including tracking his work against Nazi Germany and the early days of the Cold War—we are given profiles of Richard Helms, William Colby, and James J. Angleton, as well as a number of CIA foot soldiers whose work in the Cold War is used to set the stage for the second half of the book.

Talbot, a journalist and founding editor of *Salon.com*, documents strategic decisions that CIA leadership made during the early days of the Cold War, emphasizing alleged associations between CIA operations and former Nazis, hardline anti-communists, mercenaries, coup plotters, and members of organized crime—often to the exclusion of any other discussion. While it may be uncomfortable for members of the Intelligence Community to read some of these chapters, Talbot has done detailed research in his effort to stitch together a story. It may appear to most readers as prosecutorial or adversarial in tone, but this perspective needs to be read and understood, even if it is only part of the story of the CIA in the 1950s.

The second half of the book takes the reader past the details of the early Cold War into a world made up entirely of Talbot's opinions and cherry-picked quotations from government and media documents. The world he believes in is encapsulated in the following paragraph:

*Unmanaged by the White House and unsupervised by Congress, Dulles's CIA grew to become the most potent agency of the Eisenhower era. Dulles was a master at seeding Washington bureaucracies with agency men, placing his loyalists in top positions in the Pentagon, State Department, and even the White House. The CIA became increasingly intertwined*

*with the armed services, as military officers were assigned to agency missions, and then sent back to their military posts as "ardent disciples of Allen Dulles," in the words of Air Force Col. L. Fletcher Prouty, who served as a liaison officer between the Pentagon and the CIA between 1955 and 1963. (251)*

Like any good prosecutor, Talbot selects witnesses whose viewpoints support his argument. It may be easy enough to imagine that CIA officers in the field at the time felt they were part of "the most potent agency in the Eisenhower era," but it hardly seems likely that officers at Headquarters would have argued they were more potent than the Pentagon; however, since few Central Intelligence Agency officers from the time are listed as references, it is hard for the reader to know for sure. Those familiar with early CIA history will be dismayed to see the discredited former agency officer James Stockwell offered as the primary—sometimes the only—witness for the prosecution.

Beginning with the chapter entitled "The Dulles Imperium" slightly halfway through the book, the focus turns to a more speculative side of Talbot's argument. Talbot posits that, due to complex political intrigues centered in the CIA and specifically around Allen Dulles, the Kennedy administration's foreign policy was regularly undermined. As is most often the case with this well known (though not well accepted) conspiracy theory, the discussion begins with detailed reporting on the tensions between President Kennedy and the senior leadership at the Pentagon and with Allen Dulles in the early months of the administration and, most especially, during, and after the Bay of Pigs failure. It is at this point in the book that Talbot begins to describe the tensions between the president and the CIA in a manner that becomes harder and harder to accept based on the available data in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For example, Talbot frames the final plans for the invasion—limited by the president's interest in a truly deniable covert action—as follows:

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*Years after the Bag of Pigs, historians—including the CIA's own Jack Pfeiffer—painted a portrait of Dulles as a spymaster in decline . . . But, as usual, there was a method to Dulles's seeming carelessness. It is now clear that the CIA's Bay of Pigs expedition was not simply doomed to fail, it was meant to fail. (400)*

It is not clear from the research presented how Talbot decided that Dulles meant for CIA operations and operators to fail and for the Cuban surrogates to be killed on the beach, but it is only the beginning of a long series of speculative comments and accusations that fill the last third of the book. Talbot expands upon theories he began to develop during the research phase of his previous book, *Brothers: The Hidden History of the Kennedy Years* (Free Press, 2007), which addressed the conflict between both President Kennedy and Attorney General Robert Kenne-

dy and the CIA. He ends *The Devil's Chessboard* with a direct accusation of CIA complicity both in the murder of the president and in covert action after the fact to insure the Warren Commission did not present what he sees as the only logical conclusion the commission should have presented. In the author's view, there is a direct CIA link to Lee Harvey Oswald, who he suggests was set up years in advance as an agency fall guy for some longstanding CIA intelligence operation that Talbot cannot further explain.

Unfortunately, *The Devil's Chessboard* will serve as a textbook for many conspiracy theory devotees and others who are convinced "a secret government" runs the United States from the shadows. It is equally unfortunate that a book whose important research provides an auspicious beginning ends with speculation and conjecture.





**Valiant Ambition: George Washington, Benedict Arnold, and the Fate of the American Revolution**

Nathaniel Philbrick (Viking, 2016), 427 pp., notes, bibliography, index.

**Reviewed by David A. Foy**

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Most Americans, even those with a shaky grasp of American history, have a visceral reaction when they hear the name “Benedict Arnold”—understandably so, given the scope of his treachery so early in the life of the struggling American republic. Nathaniel Philbrick’s latest book, *Valiant Ambition*—a title inspired by an appropriate and cited quote from Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*—charts the unsettling history of the relationship between “His Excellency,” George Washington, and the mercurial, detached general, against the backdrop of a war whose outcome was anything but certain. *Valiant Ambition* focuses on the period from 1776 to 1780 in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, a period when, as Philbrick notes, one protagonist achieves fame, the other infamy.

Philbrick’s theme throughout the book, first introduced in the preface, is the tantalizing assertion that “In his treason, Arnold may actually have saved America,” which he follows up with, “If, by some miracle, George Washington should find a way to win the war against the British, the real question was whether there would be a country left to claim victory.” (xvi–xvii) While *Valiant Ambition* closely follows the personal and professional interactions of Washington, Arnold, and others, it is the fractious nature of the American populace that truly concerns the author.

The book opens with the hanging of Sgt. Thomas Hickey, a member of Washington’s hand-picked security force, the Life Guards, for conspiring with the British, followed by the appearance the next day of 450 British ships off Staten Island, the first two of the seemingly innumerable challenges Washington faced. As the British actively plan to sever New England from the rest of the colonies, Washington finds himself compelled to evacuate New York from the encroaching “lobstermen.”

Philbrick then turns his attention to Arnold and the “Mosquito Fleet” operating on Lake Champlain, a critical asset, given the lack of roads for the British to use in a Canada-based invasion operation. Here the future turncoat distinguishes himself in battle, demonstrating the first of

several occasions in which he blurs the line between bravery and foolhardiness. This episode demonstrates a minor theme of Philbrick’s, discomfiting to some readers, namely his assertion that Arnold proves to be a more adept military commander than does Washington, whom the author decries as tactically indecisive and whom he describes as at heart more a “backwoodsman” than a “great general in the European mold,” and “not a good battlefield thinker.” (68). In late 1776, when British admiral William Howe did not attack, as Washington expected, the latter planned an assault for early on Christmas morning against the 1,900 Hessian mercenaries huddled against the cold and snow in Trenton, New Jersey. In describing Washington’s victory, Philbrick is quick to point out that it was not the Hessians who were drunk, as widely believed; rather, it was Washington’s army that raided the Hessian’s liquor supply and became inebriated.

At this point Philbrick introduces one potential reason for Arnold’s treachery—being passed over for promotion, superseded by those whom many beyond Arnold felt were not qualified, highlighting the problem with Congress’s being in charge of such administrivia as army promotions. In part because he was not promoted, Arnold had been considering a naval career instead, his previous battlefield success having been on water. He decided to stick with the Army, however, welcoming a belated promotion, but still resigning in July 1777—which Congress refused to accept. Meanwhile, he proved his land-based command abilities at Ft. Edward and Ft. Stanwix, in New York, where he was initially subordinate to Gen. Phillip Schuyler, soon to be replaced by Gen. Horatio Gates, no fan of Arnold.

As the British force led by “Gentleman Johnny” Burgoyne timidly moved south toward Albany in September 1777, hoping to turn the Continental Army’s left flank, it approached the headquarters of Arnold and his commander, Gates, located a mile south. The sound of firing interrupted a meal Gates was hosting for his officers. When Arnold volunteered to check on the ruckus, Gates prophetically replied, “I am afraid to trust you, Arnold.”

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(161–62) In the ensuing battle, Arnold bravely but impetuously led a small force to attack a vulnerable Hessian outpost but was shot in the thigh—of the same leg he had originally injured at Quebec, a nagging, slow-healing injury that sapped him of his physical strength and mental health and, as Philbrick notes, likely hastened his volunteering as a British spy.

By the fall and winter of 1777, Congress—among others—was growing tired of the increasingly expensive, lethargic, and prolonged conflict with the former mother country. Although supplies were a serious problem for them, the British had occupied Philadelphia, compelling the Continental Army to spend a miserable winter at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. Food was in short supply, and the war was increasingly being fought by immigrants, whom Philbrick defines in this context as “African Americans, Native Americans, or what one historian has called ‘free white men on the move’ . . .” (187) The few bright spots were the growing personal relationship between the young Marquis de Lafayette and “His Excellency” and the upturn in the morale of the Continental Army provided by Baron von Steuben, whom Philbrick describes as a “Prussian fraud” but a man who proved to be just what the Army needed.

In May 1778, the young United States received the best news—that France had recognized it diplomatically and was engaging militarily against the hated British in the New World, turning the Revolution into a world war. The British pulled back to New York, having to dispatch 5,000 troops to the Caribbean to fight the French there. The impressive French fleet attempted to engage the British off Sandy Hook, New Jersey, though only half-heartedly, missing two opportunities to close quarters with the Royal Navy. Meanwhile, Washington had appointed Arnold as military governor of Philadelphia, an egregiously poor choice for such a hot-tempered personality. More fatefully, in between discovering new quasi-legal ways of enriching himself in public office, Arnold was falling ever more deeply into love with Peggy Shippen, the daughter of a well-to-do Loyalist family, a woman whom Philbrick posits may have initially suggested his defection. Despite Arnold’s heavy burden of debt and his injured legs (the other appendage suffering from gout), the two wed on 8 April 1779. These circumstances—and the opportunity to turn over the critical fortress of West Point, New York, to the British for cash—were congealing in Arnold’s mind as a rationale for what he was about to do. As Col. John

Brown—a foe of Arnold’s since 1775 and the man who had charged him with various crimes and misdemeanors in a letter sent to Washington—had commented about Arnold in 1777, “Money is this man’s god, and to get enough of it, he would sacrifice his country.” (241)

To move along his defection, Arnold—displaying what Philbrick dubs “narcissistic arrogance”—was making arrangements with British captain John Andre, the handsome, well-read, close personal friend of the Shippen family. Arnold might have been powerfully distracted by his courtmartial in Middlebrook, New Jersey, to which Brown’s charges led, but the proceedings had been delayed by British movement toward West Point. In this fast-paced series of events Philbrick points out a characteristic of 18<sup>th</sup> century American life most readers forget—the absence of speedy communications during military operations.

By December 1779, the Continental Army was in winter quarters in Morristown, New Jersey, beset by 11-foot-high snowdrifts and record-setting cold. Starving and mutinous Connecticut regiments and the loss of Charleston, South Carolina, to the British only deepened the gloom. Arnold’s trial had resumed that month, with the summation in January 1780. Arnold defended himself against Brown’s charges, receiving only a reprimand—as Philbrick notes, Washington had a “blind spot” with regard to Arnold. Meanwhile, the return of Rochambeau with the French fleet and troops prompted British defensive preparations and Washington made plans to attack New York, to relieve pressure on his French ally. Washington envisioned Arnold’s commanding the left flank in this assault, but when General Clinton called off the British attack against Newport, Rhode Island, cancelling Washington’s attack, Arnold finally received command of West Point, the long-awaited critical development in his turn to the British.

In the final chapter of *Valiant Ambition*, Philbrick describes the undoing of both Andre and Arnold. Fearing a potential American cannonade, Andre chose to travel overland for his meeting with Arnold, but encountered three New York militiamen—whom Andre described as “American peasants”—dressed as Hessians who initially accepted Andre’s explanation—until they checked his boots, which contained incriminating documents, hastening his detention as a suspected spy. On 25 September 1780, Washington and Arnold learned, nearly simultane-

ously, of Andre's arrest. Upon hearing the news, Washington turned to Lafayette and asked, forlornly, "Whom can we trust now?" (371) Arnold fled to the British fleet, his faithful wife returning to her family in Philadelphia. However, she soon overstayed her welcome there and was reunited with her husband in New York; within a short time, she would be pregnant with their second child. Washington was planning to kidnap Arnold, but Clinton then moved his spy to Virginia. When the British general refused to trade for Arnold, Washington felt he had no choice but to approve Andre's execution as a spy, which took place on 2 October 1780.

In his epilogue, Philbrick focuses on the impact of these events upon the existence and health of the new United States. He notes that a hero alone—Washington—was not enough to unite the country, but hatred of the "despised villain Benedict Arnold" was closer to the mark. He powerfully posits that America's greatest danger was not the British, but rather "self-serving opportunism masquerading as patriotism," an ugly, but accurate truth, as events unfolded. (322)

*Valiant Ambition* is the 11<sup>th</sup> book by Philbrick, who specializes in early United States history, especially of the seafaring sort. He credits his mother, who had a lifelong fascination with Arnold, with the inspiration to write *Valiant Ambition*. He is clearly an accomplished writer, especially adept at using just the right word to not only convey the desired meaning but also to stick in a reader's mind. The volume is profusely illustrated, with complete photo captions that a reader will find satisfying. Especially laudatory is the extensive use of first-class maps, to which readers will often refer, and which stress the importance of waterway transportation in late 18th century America.

As compelling a page-turner as *Valiant Ambition* is, readers unfamiliar with nautical terminology are sometimes left befuddled by the terms Philbrick—who lives on Nantucket—uses, such as "leeward." (47) There is also the unwritten expectation that readers are old salts enough to know the difference between galleys, schooners, gunboats, and gondolas. (47) Furthermore, the narrative focuses heavily on battles, often described in minute detail, with one unfamiliar conflict blending into the others—a challenge for non-tactically oriented readers.

In recent years, more books have appeared on early American history, but the number focused on the personal and professional relationship between Washington and Arnold is more limited. Ron Chernow's magnum opus, *Washington: A Life* (Penguin, 2010), which won the 2011 Pulitzer Prize for biography, devotes a number of its 928 pages to the subject, as does Kenneth Daigler's 2014 generic overview, *Spies, Patriots, and Traitors: American Intelligence in the Revolutionary War* (Georgetown University Press, 2014).<sup>a</sup> However, Philbrick has little competition in describing the complex and often tortuous relationship between "His Excellency" and Benedict Arnold, whom CIA Chief Historian David Robarge has described as "the epitome of self-interested treason." Readers who peruse *Valiant Ambition* will find the compelling research and writing they have come to expect from Philbrick—not a surprise—while getting more comfortable inside the heads of the two major actors—which may indeed be a surprise.

a. Kenneth Daigler's book was reviewed for *Studies in Intelligence* by Hayden Peake in 2014 and by David Robarge in 2015: please see Hayden Peake, "Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf," *Studies in Intelligence* 58, no. 4 (December 2014): 82–83 and David S. Robarge, *Studies in Intelligence* 59, no. 4 (December 2015): 61–64.





## Intelligence in Public Media

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### John le Carré: *The Biography*

Adam Sisman (Bloomsbury, 2015), 652 pp., endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

### Reviewed by Hayden Peake

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The word “literature,” when not referring to the enduring quality of the narrative, denotes the books, writings, and media presentations devoted to a particular subject. In the case of espionage, the literature is of singular importance since, for most, knowledge of the subject is acquired vicariously through reading or viewing stories. Serious espionage literature leaves the reader feeling the story is closer to reality than fantasy. John le Carré is a master of this genre, and Adam Sisman’s biography of David Cornwell, le Carré’s creator, conveys an elegant portrait of the author and his creations.

Sisman was not the first to consider writing a biography of le Carré. Robert Harris, author of *Enigma*, had been commissioned to do so some 20 years earlier but for various reasons did not and encouraged Sisman to undertake the task. Sisman, already an accomplished biographer of historians A.J.P. Taylor and Hugh Trevor-Roper<sup>a</sup> among others, wrote to Cornwell suggesting that Cornwell be his next subject. After reading the Trevor-Roper book, Cornwell met with Sisman to discuss details.

Writing a biography of a living subject, especially one who has worked to “keep the public at a distance” (xiv) presents unusual challenges. Foremost among them is securing the subject’s cooperation, under conditions imposed by the biographer. Sisman asked for unrestricted access to Cornwell’s papers; interviews with him, his friends and colleagues; and freedom to write without censorship from the subject. Cornwell agreed, “without restraints” (xv), though he proved reluctant to discuss his service with MI5 and MI6 since he was “bound, legally and morally, not to reveal the nature of my work” in these areas. (xvii) Sisman includes these topics using other sources. This qualification aside, one might reasonably ask, why an already-famous author would consent to such scrutiny of his life? Sisman doesn’t answer that question directly, but he does imply Cornwell may have been moti-

vated by concern that a fair hearing be accorded his views on controversial matters others wrote about him over the course of his 50-year writing career.

While *John le Carré: The Biography* addresses the usual topics about David Cornwell’s life—family origins, education, military service, marriage, and career—Sisman shows how each influenced his writing and the le Carré image. Surprises emerge throughout. For example, Cornwell’s first book, *Call For The Dead*, was originally titled *A Clear Case of Suicide*. And since he was serving in MI6 at the time, it was submitted under the pseudonym “Jean Sanglas.” The publisher—less than enthusiastic—suggested instead either “Chuck Smith” or “Hank Brown,” (217) but Cornwell settled on le Carré (literally, “the square”). Over the years, Cornwell would offer a variety of reasons for his choice but ultimately admitted to Sisman that “none of them was true.” (xiv) *Call For The Dead* also introduced Cornwell’s most famous character, George Smiley, based on his MI5 superior, John Bingham, according to Bingham’s wife and others.<sup>b</sup> “She was mistaken,” says Cornwell, as were the others. Like many of his characters, “he was no more than a component.” (208)

Sisman’s account of Cornwell’s path to le Carré reveals many attributes of a well-to-do young Englishman in search of a calling. Public school, study in Europe, national service, Oxford, and his recruitments, first by MI5 and then MI6, are the principal milestones. But this period of his life was anything but normal, and Sisman’s telling is at once stimulating and gloomily captivating. Cornwell’s mother deserted the family when he was five. During “the sixteen hugless years that followed” (25) he and his brother Anthony endured life with his outrageously flamboyant, scheming, unashamed, and charming, con man father, Ronnie. Sisman examines the curious relationship Cornwell worked to maintain with his parents even after both remarried. But it was his unrepentant father who would appear frequently in his life, unexpect-

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a. Adam Sisman, *A.J.P. Taylor: A Biography* (Sinclair-Stevenson, 1994); *Hugh Trevor-Roper: A Biography* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2010).

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b. See Michael Jago, *The Man Who Was George Smiley: The Life of John Bingham* (Biteback Publishing, 2013).

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edly asking for help, that created a constant dissonance. Ronnie pursued his investment schemes during trips to Ascot, dinners at the Savoy, gatherings at the home he couldn't afford but somehow did, and unsuccessful attempts to become a member of Parliament. He associated with the aristocracy and those of potential influence in the business world, interrupted only by frequent arrests and occasional time in prison for fraud. An embarrassed Cornwell often encountered traces of his father's unpaid obligations in Britain and Europe. Ronnie would become the central figure in le Carré's autobiographical novel, *A Perfect Spy*.

Despite his stressful home life, Cornwell did well at prep school and then public school at Sherborne. Sisman notes that he was "successful in his academic work and on the sports field (he was captain of the junior cricket team), witty, popular with his schoolmates, a charismatic individual." (50) He also wrote poetry, acted in school plays, was an accomplished cartoonist, and made many friends he encountered later in life who would become models for characters in his novels (Sisman provides many examples). At the same time, his tutor realized at the end of the 1948 term that Cornwell was unhappy. Sisman mentions several reasons Cornwell gave. Corporeal punishment and daily regimentation were factors, but his home life, Sisman concludes with ample justification, was the major contributor: in addition to his father's other parenting shortcomings, Ronnie enlisted his son's help in schemes "to diddle widows out of their pensions." (66) Cornwell dropped out of Sherborne after his third year and went to Switzerland to improve his German, though the move didn't entirely free him from his father's schemes. Here and throughout the book, Sisman interrupts the fascinating chronology of Cornwell's emerging talents with Ronnie's escapades and the toxic influence they had on his son's life.

Cornwell's arrival in Switzerland began a seminal period in his life. It was while studying and skiing in Bern that Cornwell had his first contact with the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6). When asked by a diplomat from the embassy, he willingly agreed to report on any student or other contact who had communist views.

This was also the time when Cornwell began to write. On a visit home recuperating from the mumps, he showed a short story to a German friend who commented, "Promise me you will never write a book." (80) And it was in

Bern that Cornwell met Ann. They would marry after Cornwell returned to do his military service. With his fluency in German and French, he was commissioned a second lieutenant and served in Germany, getting his first taste of clandestine operations. While there, he was again approached by an MI6 officer, who expressed interest in him, but only after he had obtained a degree.

Intrigued by the prospect, Cornwell entered Lincoln College, Oxford, in October 1952, reading modern languages—not law, as his father had wished. He was a popular student and made friends easily. One of them arranged an interview with George Leggett, a German linguist and senior MI5 counterespionage officer. Leggett recruited Cornwell to "adopt a left-wing persona . . . [and] infiltrate left-wing groups" and report back on the members activities. (126) The recent defection of Burgess and Maclean had contributed to an increase in surveillance of communist organizations and Cornwell undertook his tasking with gusto, joining the Socialist Club at Oxford. Sisman notes the moral paradox associated with choosing "loyalty to his country over loyalty to his friends. The dilemma continued to trouble him; it was a theme that would recur repeatedly in his fiction." (135)

After two years at Oxford, his father's behavior once again became too much of a burden, and Cornwell left to teach at a public school. But he was soon unhappy there and returned to Oxford, where he completed his degree and married Ann. When no offer from MI5 or MI6 materialized, Cornwell accepted a teaching position at Eton College in 1956. While there, latent thoughts of becoming a writer surfaced, but his first book submission was rejected. Once again, the Eton life proved unsatisfying and Cornwell wrote to MI5 about his desire "to come inside." (184) Officially, he left Eton in 1958 for the Foreign Office, though the rumor among the boys was that "Corny is going to be a spy." (185)

Cornwell's MI5 service was transformative. Sisman reviews Cornwell's training and early agent handling assignments, giving readers a glimpse into the professional background Cornwell used to convey the sense of reality common to the le Carré books. On one point, however, Sisman is mistaken: after noting Cornwell's transfer to the MI5 section "responsible for agent-running," he adds the clarification that the term "agent" as used in Britain differs from its use in the United States, where "in America an 'agent' is used to mean an intelligence officer," (199)

while in Britain it refers to someone recruited to provide information. Of course, the terms are used in the same sense in both Britain and the United States, and most intelligence services use the term in that sense, as well.

During Cornwell's two years in MI5, day-to-day challenges were less stimulating than anticipated. Originally tasked with vetting former communists, Cornwell eventually characterized MI5 as "a dead-end sort of place" (209), and in the spring of 1960 he applied for a transfer to MI6. But his MI5 time had not been wasted and, in fact, launched his writing career. Sisman hints that his motivation may have come in part from one of his bosses, John Bingham, a superb case officer who also wrote espionage novels (though in his case, under his own name). By mid-year when he joined the sister service, Cornwell had completed his first two novels and begun his third, provisionally titled *The Carcass of the Lion*, which was published as *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*.

After an account of Cornwell's MI6 training and his assignment in Germany, the focus of *John le Carré: The Biography* shifts to Cornwell's writings and the consequences of his rapid rise to fame, and its accompanying financial security. Foremost among these consequences—after the demands of Inland Revenue and the Foreign Office's reluctant approval to publish—was the revelation in the *Sunday Times* of le Carré's true identity, followed shortly by the MI6 decision that he must resign. (254) Sisman describes how Cornwell's newfound celebrity required dealing with literary agents and editors and meeting the publisher's demands for more books. These topics become major issues in the book. Cornwell would ultimately write 23 novels. Sisman discusses the origins of each novel, its plot evolution, and the writing techniques Cornwell developed, all while he attempted to cope with persistent complications imposed on his life by extended family and by the self-inflicted difficulties that arose from repeated extramarital liaisons, which ultimately contributed to his divorce.

Sisman's account of the events surrounding the publishing of *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* in 1963 illustrates how Cornwell achieved financial security. His parsimonious publisher, Victor Gollancz, paid an advance of £150, as he had for his two previous books. Public interest was spurred by the imprisonment of MI6 officer and KGB spy George Blake (1962), the Profumo

Affair in London (1963), and the recent defection of Kim Philby (1963), and the book quickly became the most widely read and "most talked about book of the season." (248) By 1964, it had reached its 20<sup>th</sup> impression. Then an American publisher, Coward-McCann offered \$4,500 for the US rights and Paramount Pictures bought the film rights for £7,500. Cornwell's financial future was secured and he bought a new car. Paramount wanted Burt Lancaster to play Alec Leamas as a Canadian protagonist of the story. Cornwell preferred keeping it British with Trevor Howard or Peter Finch in the role. Richard Burton got the part.

Cornwell's approach to writing began with research and handwritten drafts on legal pads. An example is Sisman's account of one of le Carré's best espionage books, *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*—originally entitled *The Reluctant Autumn of George Smiley*. It explores the moral ambiguities of counterespionage, and Cornwell considered it "the most difficult book I ever wrote." (315) And due to a contract stipulation that allowed Paramount to control use of the Smiley character, the first draft did not include Smiley at all. Legal action corrected the problem.

*Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* was originally conceived as the first of up to 15 books about the struggle between "the Circus [Cornwell's term for MI6 London headquarters] and the KGB," (352) between Smiley and his KGB nemesis, Karla. Ultimately, Cornwell would settle for three rather than 15: two became TV miniseries (*Tinker, Tailor* and *Smiley's People*), and Sisman tells how Alec Guinness became the epitome of Smiley and—Cornwell's friend. It was in these works that terms like "honey trap" and "mole" became household words and were even "adopted by intelligence professionals." (357)

As befitting bestselling books—and le Carré novels met that test—reviewers found them fair game. Sisman includes illustrative quotes as he comments on the reviews of each book. Most were positive, but even *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* had its negative critics. A *Times Literary Supplement* reviewer wrote, "The spy thriller in this case just does not seem the right vehicle for him, and his prose style is too thin as fuel." (294) "David was very hurt by the criticism," writes Sisman. (295) Even though positive reviews far outnumbered the negative, "they failed to soothe the wounds he received from the bad." (295) The wounds deepened when he moved from the espionage genre as in the semi-autobiographi-

cal *The Naïve and Sentimental Lover*, which engendered comments like “a disastrous failure,” “the narrative limps along,” “sporadically dazzling, but running to fat.” American David Remnick found *The Night Manager* “a *Goldfinger* for grownups.” (496) Some who fancied themselves guardians of “authentic literature” were even more vindictive and suggested he “stick to the ‘genre’ novel and not aspire to ‘real’ literature,” a topic Sisman explores at some length. (345)

Professional reviewers were not the only ones to comment on the le Carré novels. Some of his former intelligence service colleagues also expressed disparaging views, though not publicly. (296) Official Soviet criticism, writes Sisman, with its distinctive political aroma, publicly “demonized him for ‘elevating the spy to the status of a hero in the Cold War.’” (452) The unofficial reality was selectively different. On a research trip to the Soviet Union during the Gorbachev era, in preparation for his next book—tentatively entitled *The Biggest Toys in the World* and then *Thinking Like a Hero*, ultimately published as *Russia House*—Cornwell attended a reception arranged by Sir Bryan Cartledge, the British ambassador to Moscow with whom Cornwell had once served as an officer cadet. Numerous KGB officers were invited and “they all came . . . [and] were all le Carré fans despite the difficulty of obtaining his books in Russia.” (455) Years later Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov would admit he was also an admirer, adding that he identified “with George Smiley,” not Karla. (505) It was during this trip that Cornwell pointedly declined an invitation to meet Kim Philby.

Sisman’s analysis of the evolution of *Russia House* further illuminates Cornwell’s writing techniques. On his return from Moscow, Cornwell tore up his first draft and

began again to produce the final version. It resulted in a first printing of 350,000 copies. (Initial printings of his first books had been only 3,000 copies.)

Despite a bout with prostate cancer, David Cornwell would go on to write 14 books after *Russian House*. The latest le Carré book, *The Pigeon Tunnel*—a memoir with a title he had contemplated for *Smiley’s People* among others—was published in September 2016. Several novels were made into films in which Cornwell plays cameo roles. The stories they tell reflect Cornwell’s attempts to comment on the topics of the day—terrorism, corporate greed, the Mafia—though several have espionage-related themes. Sisman discusses them all, adding many anecdotes about the famous people with whom Cornwell came into contact.

By the 1980s Cornwell was one of Britain’s premier authors with comfortable homes in Cornwall and London, though still something of an iconoclast. He declined a CBE (Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) and a knighthood with the comment, “Titles do disagreeable things to people . . . I prefer to stay outside the tent.” (587) He also asked that his name be withdrawn from the shortlist for the Man Booker Prize for fiction, noting, “I do not compete for literary prizes.” (588) He did accept an honorary doctorate from Oxford.

Cornwell, who turns 85 in October is still writing, and Sisman asks, rhetorically, why he perseveres; *John le Carré: The Biography* itself strongly suggests the writing continues because of the personal satisfaction it provides. Thus, Sisman considers his book a work-in-progress, to be updated in future editions. For now, readers can enjoy his stimulating biography of an author with a gift for creating haunting phrases and enduring characters, whose subtle pen has contributed so much to literary world.





## Intelligence in Public Media

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### John le Carré's *The Night Manager*—the Miniseries

Directed by Susanne Bier (BBC, 2016), six 60-minute episodes.

### Reviewed by John Kavanagh and James Burridge

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Eight of John le Carré's espionage novels have been made into movies and four into BBC miniseries; *Tinker, Tailor* was done as both. The ninth film, *Our Kind of Traitor*, opened in July 2016. *The Night Manager* is based on le Carré's eponymous novel (Knopf, 1993).

The story is about Jonathan Pine, a young British man who offers to infiltrate the entourage of an infamous British arms trader, Richard Roper, "the worst man in the world." In describing this double-agent operation, le Carré reverses and neatly compresses the classic recruitment cycle and reduces it to the essentials—engagement, enticement, and entrapment. This is perhaps the most elaborate dangle ever concocted, even longer than that of Alec Leamas in *The Spy Who Came in From the Cold*. It is a textbook on building a legend to backstop a dangle.

Pine arrives dramatically in Roper's life, saving Roper's son from violent kidnappers in a meticulously staged ruse. Pine credibly risks life and limb (he is actually seriously injured), and Roper feels obligated to see to his care and recovery. Roper is a complete sociopath, but he is generous and loyal to those he trusts. Roper has survived thus far by trusting his instincts, and he carefully vets Pine—or Pine's legend, as it turns out. He is drawn to Pine's narrative—on the run from a criminal past and unwilling to acknowledge, much less share, his aspirations. Roper senses a native cleverness and ease in Pine, and, having successfully vetted him, brings him into the arms business. The dangle is grasped, and Pine manages to discredit Roper's former number two and take his place. Roper's eventual downfall is due in part to his genuine affection for Pine, whom he sees as a younger version of himself.

The intelligence back story is even more complex than le Carré's usual "Good Brits versus Bad Brits and their evil CIA allies" storyline. Both Britain and the United States have established new agencies—hybrid law enforcement/intelligence agencies. Naturally they are despised and opposed by CIA and MI6 and therefore become allies. (The US organization is the "American Enforcement Agency.") In case we miss the point that the

US enforcement officers are uncultured cowboys, a senior US officer briefs the highest levels of British intelligence wearing a polo shirt. In this tale, the Bad Brits are really bad. Well beyond their usual eagerness to sacrifice the British national interest by currying favor with CIA, these Brits are criminals—completely in bed with Roper. And COS London—a virtual clone of the beautiful and treacherous COS Berlin in *A Most Wanted Man*—is part of the conspiracy.

The politics of *The Night Manager* are fairly subdued. There is a brief reference to the United States' and the United Kingdom's abandoning the nascent democrats of the Arab Spring, and Pine (a veteran of the Second Gulf War) vaguely alludes to war crimes he witnessed. The biggest departure from the le Carré template is the happy ending—Roper and his allies go to prison, and Pine ends up with Roper's beautiful mistress (events that would never happen in a le Carré novel). The fact that the villains are criminals depoliticizes the story—there are no pressing moral issues or ambiguities here.

All in all, the program is well worth watching—exotic locales, beautifully filmed; good acting; minimal political posturing; and a compelling plot. Those who insist on absolute accuracy will find plenty to criticize, but the lapses can be easily overlooked. Le Carré recently described the complete loss of creative control he endured in the making of this program, and it shows in lapses from verisimilitude,<sup>a</sup> which include live satellite videos feeds at the push of a button on the desk of every analyst, an American infantry battalion with unilateral freedom of action at the Turkish-Syrian border (all it took was one phone call from the cowboy in the polo shirt), and export licenses listing "Sarin Gas" as part of a shipment. And when the bad Brits put Pine's case officer out of business and even confiscate her office furniture and computers, she still has the money and documentation to mount an operation in Cairo.

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a. John le Carré, "They've Totally Changed My Book—But It Works," *The Guardian*, 20 February 2016.



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### **John le Carré's *Our Kind of Traitor*—the Movie**

Directed by Susanna White; screenplay by Hossein Amini (Lionsgate, 2016), 108 minutes, rated R.

#### **Reviewed by John Kavanagh**

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The new film adaptation of John le Carré's 2010 novel *Our Kind of Traitor*, co-produced by le Carré and giving him story-writing credit, touches on themes familiar from the author's many post-Cold War books. Again, the KGB stand-in is a menacing international crime syndicate. Where in previous novels the author's heroes were pitted against international narcotics networks, arms traffickers, and murderous third world despots, here the target is the Russian mafia—not the tattooed, strong-arm mafia intent on dockside smuggling and violent extortion, but the updated, improved version.

A millennial cadre is taking over the group, intent on spreading its tentacles by invading and corrupting the West's banking and finance systems. The old leadership is to be eliminated. One marked for killing is Dima, the group's longtime bookkeeper. As the enterprise is set for expansion, Dima's doom is insured by his stockpile of guilty knowledge, including the listing of various on-the-payroll British political and banking co-optees being bribed to facilitate the opening of a mafia-financed bank in London. Dima knows the only way out for him and his family is to barter with MI-6: his information in exchange for rescue and escape. He chooses as a go-between a casual vacation acquaintance, Oxford don Perry Makepeace, who, overpowered by the Russian's rambunctious, outsized personality, agrees to deliver a message to MI-6.

His simple mission completed, Perry determines to return to his teaching, but both Dima and MI-6 ops manager Hector Meredith realize that Perry is the irreplaceable link between them, the tool needed to fulfill each man's grasp for redemption, saving Dima and his family's lives, and saving Hector's faltering, discredited intelligence career.

And so both men, joined in a silent conspiracy, put Perry "into play."

The reluctant amateur cast into physical danger and the moral morass of espionage, this is indeed le Carré territory. And the film, directed by Susanna White from a screenplay by Hossein Amini, is a tight-fitting, in parts engrossing vehicle that services le Carré's reliably bright talents for plot and character development, intrigue, and spurts of exciting action.

But this is John le Carré, and the dark side must also be addressed, and so also tellingly delivered by the filmmakers are the author's signature takes on the secret world's penchants for hypocrisy, self-delusion, and betrayal. Most affecting, however, is Perry's (Ewan MacGregor) ready empathy/identification with Dima, whose brutal, demanding "recruitment" of Perry doesn't succeed because of coercion, but because Perry senses the braggart's authentic vulnerability and fears for his family's safety. As this tale's authentic asset acquisition isn't found in Hector's deployment of Perry but rather in Perry's willingly chosen, dangerous partnership with Dima, le Carré's studied observation on the intelligence business is well taken. Personal bonds and genuine affection, shared values, friendship, so often cement the relations which lead individuals to face challenges and dangers together, for decades, or, in this story, for several desperate hours.

Many of le Carré's stories end with reversal and defeat—the darkness prevails. A final twist in this film brings a satisfying moment of measured success. This is a very good spy film, a well-tuned melodrama, and in the telling, maybe for the first time, storyteller John le Carré keeps an arm's distance from tragedy.



## **Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf**

*Compiled and reviewed by Hayden Peake*

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### **CURRENT TOPICS**

***Inside Jihad: How Radical Islam Works, Why It Should Terrify Us, How to Defeat It***, by Dr. Tawfik Hamid  
***Interrogation, Intelligence and Security: Controversial British Techniques***, by Samantha Newbery  
***Quantitative Intelligence Analysis: Applied Analytic Models, Simulations, and Games***,  
by Edward Waltz

### **HISTORICAL**

***Anonymous Soldiers: The Struggle for Israel, 1917–1947***, by Bruce Hoffman  
***Eisenhower's Guerrillas: The Jedburghs, The Maquis, and The Liberation of France***,  
by Benjamin F. Jones  
***Evasion & Escape Devices Produced by MI9, MIS-X, and SOE in World War II***, by Phil Froom  
***Looking Down the Corridors: Allied Aerial Espionage Over East Germany and Berlin 1945–1990***, by  
Kevin Wright and Peter Jefferies  
***Operation Thunderbolt: Flight 139 and the Raid on Entebbe Airport, the Most Audacious Hostage  
Rescue Mission in History***, by Saul David  
***The OSS in World War II Albania: Covert Operations and Collaboration with Communist Partisans***,  
by Peter Lucas  
***OSS: Red Group 2—A Fisherman Goes To War***, by David G. Boak  
***Rezident: The Espionage Odyssey of Soviet General Vasily Zarubin***, by Robert K. Baker  
***The Shadow Man: At the Heart of the Cambridge Spy Ring***, by Geoff Andrews  
***Soviet Leaders and Intelligence: Assessing the American Adversary During the Cold War***,  
by Raymond L. Garthoff  
***Stalin's Englishman: The Lives of Guy Burgess***, by Andrew Lownie  
***U.S. Navy Codebreakers, Linguists, and Intelligence Officers Against Japan 1910–1941***, by Capt. Steven E. Maffeo, U.S.N.R., Ret.

### **MEMOIRS**

***More Cloak than Dagger: One Women's Career in Secret Intelligence***, by Molly J. Sasson  
***The Secret Ministry of AG. & Fish: My Life in Churchill's School for Spies***, by Noreen Riols  
***Secret Revolution: Memoirs of a Spy Boss***, by Niël Barnard as told to Tobie Wiese

### **INTELLIGENCE ABROAD**

***East Asian Intelligence and Organised Crime: China, Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Mongolia***,  
Stephan Blancke, ed.  
***Labyrinth of Power***, by Danny Yatom



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## CURRENT TOPICS

***Inside Jihad: How Radical Islam Works, Why It Should Terrify Us, How to Defeat It***, by Dr. Tawfik Hamid. (Mountain Lake Press, 2015) 238, end of chapter notes, bibliography, appendices, index. Updated edition.

Historians refer to the period in the 1930s when Winston Churchill was without a Cabinet position as his “wilderness years.”<sup>a</sup> Although he had no official influence at the time, the future prime minister paid close attention to Germany’s illegal rearmament and would later write that, “My warnings over the last six years had been so numerous, so detailed, and were now so terribly vindicated, that no one could gainsay me.”<sup>b</sup> Dr. Tawfik Hamid finds himself in a parallel position with respect to the contemporary threat from radical Islam, and his book, *Inside Jihad*, seeks to alert the public before it is too late. What qualifications does he possess that justify his position?

By his telling, Dr. Hamid was born in Cairo in 1961 to a respectable Muslim family. He studied Islam in high school, where he was exposed to some anti-Christian views, but it wasn’t until he entered medical school to follow in his father’s footsteps that he became radicalized. Although he didn’t know it then, he soon found out that “medical schools at the time had become vanguards of fundamentalism in most Egyptian universities.” (31) He was spotted by Jamaa Islamiya (Islamic Group), which prepared recruits for leadership positions in other jihadist organizations. He attended lectures by Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri—who would later become Osama Bin Laden’s deputy and then leader of al-Qa’ida—and for the next three years—1979–1982—worked to become a jihadist, ready to “fight and kill the Russian invaders in the name of Allah.” (51) At the same time, he gradually noticed conflicts between the Jamaa interpretations of the Quran and what the book actually said. Then, he learned of a plan to “kidnap a police officer at a medical school function and ‘bury him alive.’” (52) It didn’t happen, but this and other incidents led to his association with

another Muslim group—the Quranics—who followed the traditional Quran, avoiding radical jihadist interpretations. In the end, he decided to leave Jamaa despite their threat, “Apostates such as you will be killed.” (53)

Dr. Hamid then emigrated to the United States, where he attended Stanford and Georgetown universities and obtained degrees in internal medicine and cognitive psychology. He goes on to explain explain that, as the terrorist threat became “an intractable scourge” (13) in the United States, he noticed that some observers failed to distinguish between the goals and beliefs of traditional Islam and the distorted dogma of Islamic radicalism, the perpetrators of the terror. *Inside Jihad* seeks to clarify the differences and to suggest what can be done to neutralize the threat.

Dr. Hamid identifies the “myths and misconceptions about Islam” and the root causes that distinguish it from jihadism. He argues, persuasively and ominously, that many world leaders do not realize that the principal cause of the radicalism is the version of Islam “currently taught and practiced in the vast majority of Muslim communities.” (56) Then he discusses the “categories of Islamic belief” and what needs to be understood about each one. He sees undue emphasis on the distinction between Sunni and Shia Muslims—“they do not differ doctrinally in significant ways,” their murderous clashes notwithstanding. Their motivations and tactics are the same, he suggests. What should be studied in detail when considering Islamic terror are the differences “between Salafi Islam, or Salifism, and Sufi Islam,” and he deals with both in some detail. (79)

In Dr. Hamid’s view, the West is losing the struggle against radical Islam, in part by refusing to criticize the reality of its actions while not recognizing—together with many Muslims—what must be done to reform the radicals. He discusses at length steps toward Islamic reformation.

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a. Martin Gilbert, *Winston Churchill: The Wilderness Years* (Macmillan, 1981).

b. Winston S. Churchill, *The Gathering Storm* (Houghton Mifflin, 1948), 667.

*Inside Jihad* concludes with an extensive account of “a strategic plan to defeat radical Islam” that draws on the information in the earlier chapters. Dr. Hamid offers no silver bullet solutions; instead, he focuses on what must be

done to defeat Salafism and its goal of an Islamic world under Sharia law. In many ways, *Inside Jihad* is a deeply disturbing book, but one that should be taken seriously.

***Interrogation, Intelligence and Security: Controversial British Techniques***, by Samantha Newbery. (Manchester University Press, 2015) 226, end of chapter notes, bibliography, photos, index.

Samantha Newbery is a lecturer in contemporary intelligence studies at the University of Salford, where she specializes in ethical aspects of counterterrorism and counterinsurgency. In *Interrogation, Intelligence and Security*, she examines the so-called “five techniques” of interrogation developed and used by the British military after 1945: uncomfortable stress position, hooding, loud continuous noise, sleep deprivation, and restricting the quality and amount of food intake. The European Commission on Human Rights branded these techniques as “torture” in 1976, but Newbery “avoids describing the ‘five techniques’ as torture.” She acknowledges the existence of the current debate on torture but focuses instead on the origins of the techniques, their objectives, and their results. (3–4) She also recognizes that the benefits of interrogation are difficult to measure, even qualitatively.

Use of the “five techniques” in Northern Ireland was more complex and involved MI5 as well as the military. Complaints from those interrogated created political problems and investigations that led the British prime minister to ban their use in 1972. Newbery devotes a chapter to examples that suggest valuable intelligence was acquired. Nevertheless, she concludes that, overall, there was “a miscalculation.” (125)

After reviewing the “five techniques” and some variations often used in various emergencies since 1945, Newbery analyzes their use in three operations for which public reports are available: Aden (1963–67), Northern Ireland (1971), and Iraq (2003). She writes that in Aden “the military and Special Branch were convinced that interrogation was a valuable source of information.” (52) But she acknowledges there were allegations of mistreatment that potentially lessened their value and complicated correlating results with “specific evidence” they may have provided. (52)

That the banned techniques were employed at all in Iraq is surprising. Newbery writes with a hint of cynicism that the directive banning their use “had very largely fallen from corporate memory.” (148) She analyzes three operations—one called the “Temporary Detention Facility Episode,” (TDF) during which a detainee in Basra died under interrogation with the techniques. She shows how the techniques changed since the 1970s and how sensitive the public has become to their use. Another inquiry followed the TDF episode. It called for additional training and specificity about what is permissible in deploying this “method of obtaining intelligence.” (182)

*Interrogation, Intelligence and Security* concludes with a review of the lessons learned, noting that the “five techniques” were used “because there is a willingness to believe they produce intelligence and enhance security” (196), while stressing that new policy directives must nevertheless be adhered to. This is a thoughtful and valuable book.

**Quantitative Intelligence Analysis: Applied Analytic Models, Simulations, and Games**, by Edward Waltz. (Rowman and Littlefield, 2014) 282, end of chapter notes, appendices, diagrams, index.

In his foreword to *Quantitative Intelligence Analysis*, former DDI and NIC chairman John Gannon observes that, “In my early years as an analyst and manager . . . individual brainpower and expertise were the coin of the realm. Methodological approaches, by contrast, assumed time-consuming and credit-sharing collaboration, which was less valued.” He sums up the situation saying, “This undercurrent of resistance to tools and techniques both from individual analysts and the bureaucracy itself, was endemic in the Community into the 1990s.” (xx)<sup>a</sup>

Since then, the advancing information age and the high volume of data involved in analysis has imposed changes in that approach. Today, Intelligence Community analysts routinely employ state-of-the-art, structured analytic techniques such as those described by Richards Heuer and Randolph Pherson.<sup>b</sup> “Brainpower,” writes Gannon, “is now viewed as enhanced by the rigor of modeling, dynamic simulations, and interactive games that are the wave of the Intelligence Community’s collaborative future.” (xxii)

In *Quantitative Intelligence Analysis*, Dr. Edward Waltz, a senior researcher at Virginia Tech University who has studied these new methods, provides the conceptual background and illustrates the practical application of these techniques in the form of models. The models Waltz has devised “refer to the detailed and often technical

descriptions or representations of the analysts’ thinking” about the subjects with which he is confronted. (1)

Waltz defines the models in the analyst’s mind as implicit and those in words, graphics, or on a computer terminal as explicit. He goes on to explain their limitations—how implicit mental models are transformed into explicit computer models, and how they are applied to intelligence problems. The models discussed are illustrated with graphic representations and narrative explanations of what the analyst is thinking or the computer is executing. Then he devotes chapters to show how they are used in target analysis, wargaming, and collection operations that illustrate the power they confer on collaborative work and how teams interact. He offers “case studies” to clarify the process.

A word of caution is warranted here: the procedures illustrated by graphic representations are rather complex. Moreover, the case studies are very general, which is to say that this is not a primer. The quantitative aspect of the book refers to mathematical probability and statistical methods used to evaluate data, but for the most part no detailed explanation of the underlying mathematics is included. He only describes their functions. (131)

*Quantitative Intelligence Analysis* is not a step-by-step, how-to book and is probably best suited for the classroom or for experienced analysts who haven’t employed these techniques in their work. But it does demonstrate the complexity of modern analytic procedures; the potential value of team analysis; and the extensive technical support now required compared to the John Gannon era. In that sense it reveals what modern intelligence analysis has become.

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a. See in this issue a reprint of Jack Davis, “Why Bad Things Happen to Good Analysts,” his chapter in *Analyzing Intelligence: National Security Practitioners’ Perspectives* which describes his view of the pressures on analysts that have led to biased analyses.

b. Richards J. Heuer Jr, and Randolph H. Pherson, *Structured Analytic Techniques for Intelligence Analysts* (Sage, 2015).

## HISTORICAL

***Anonymous Soldiers: The Struggle for Israel, 1917–1947***, by Bruce Hoffman (Alfred A. Knopf, 2015), 618 pp., endnotes, bibliography, appendix, photos, maps, index.

Can terrorism succeed? Can it achieve the social and political goals its advocates advance? The conventional wisdom is that, in the long run, it cannot. Bruce Hoffman, director of the security studies program at Georgetown University and senior fellow at the US Military Academy’s Combatting Terrorism Center, asks, if it doesn’t work, “why has it persisted for at least the past two millennia and indeed become an increasingly popular means of violent political expression in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?” (x) *Anonymous Soldiers* answers these questions using the Arab-Zionist conflict as a case study.

Hoffman’s interest in this topic began while studying terrorism at Oxford University, when he became aware of the “centrality of intelligence” to the study of history in general and terrorism in particular. (xiii) With the release in 2003 of British Security Service (MI5) documents covering the British struggles in Palestine after WWI and drawing on related firsthand diplomatic accounts, Hoffman was able to analyze the emergence of terrorism as a tool by the Arabs and Jews to achieve their goals. At the outset, the Arabs sought to limit Jewish immigration and territorial ambitions, while making Palestine ungovernable for the British. The Jews demanded the Jewish homeland implicitly promised by the British in the Balfour Declaration and sought to undermine the government when the promise was broken.

In the early post-WWI period, the Arabs reacted with a short-lived, largely rural campaign of terror raids on British forces and Jewish communities that were easily put down by British police and Army troops. But as WWII approached the attacks continued and the demand for increased Jewish immigration quotas grew. Thus the Jews created underground organizations—the Irgun, the Haganah, and Lohamei Herut Yisrael, known by its

Hebrew acronym, Lehi, to the Jewish and to the British as the Stern Gang<sup>a</sup>—to deal with the Arab campaign of bombings and bloodshed interrupted somewhat by the war. These groups would penetrate the Royal Air Force (RAF) and the British Army. Arab attacks increased in frequency and fury after WWII as Holocaust survivors placed new demands on immigration quotas.

Hoffman chronicles these groups as they work individually and sometimes in conjunction to pressure the British government with bombings, assassinations, and prison breaks until its withdrawal in 1947. He uses the famous Irgun attack on the King David Hotel, commanded by Menachem Begin—a future prime minister of Israel—as an exemplar of skill and determination. He questions Begin’s later claim in his memoir that, since he had given prior warning so civilians could be evacuated, the attack was not a terrorist act and only the British Mandate personnel were targets. Unfortunately the call came too late and 92 civilians died, mostly Arabs.<sup>b</sup>

The Jewish terrorist acts against British interests were not confined to Palestine—there were attacks in Rome, Cairo, and London—and Hoffman deals with the international furor that led to condemnation by Albert Einstein, among others. These actions sometimes had unintended consequences, as when the 1944 assassination in Cairo of Lord Moyne—a close friend of Churchill—ended any hope of Churchill’s backing. International support was important to the Jewish politicians in Palestine who were seeking some accommodation with the British, and Hoffman explains multiple attempts of Jewish leaders to end the attacks, but they continued until the British left.

a. The title of this book comes from a poem by the leader of the Stern Gang.

b. Menachem Begin, *The Revolt: The Dramatic Inside Story of the Irgun* (Nash Publishing, 1972). A plaque affixed to the fence of the rebuilt King David Hotel says that the Irgun gave a 25-minute warning to evacuate the building.

Hoffman also deals with the quandary facing British military and security officials in the Palestine Mandate. Even though at one point they enjoyed a “twenty-to-one numerical superiority over five-thousand terrorists” and London was decrypting all the Jewish agencies’ traffic, still they could not stop the attacks. Their “Achilles’ heel in governance and policing in Palestine,” notes Hoffman, “was the lack of intelligence . . . a paucity of Hebrew linguists and skilled detectives.” (415) The political leaders were in a similar predicament. Their recommendations for a two-state solution were rejected by the Arabs and, as Hoffman concedes, only full-scale war would have stopped the terrorists.

***Eisenhower’s Guerrillas: The Jedburghs, The Maquis, and The Liberation of France***, by Benjamin F. Jones. (Oxford University Press, 2016) 384, endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

The story of the OSS Jedburgh teams, their relationship to the French Maquis resistance elements, and their contribution to defeating the Germans in France, has been told before.<sup>a</sup> The typical emphasis on their origins, training, and operations is undertaken with some discussion of the political factors influencing their deployment and rules of engagement. *Eisenhower’s Guerrillas* takes a different approach. While operations comprise an important part of this story—though little new is added—author Benjamin Jones focuses on complicated and often conflicting political objectives of the Allies.

As Colin Beavan explains in *Operation Jedburgh*, the British and Americans viewed the invasion of France as a military operation, the first step on the way to Berlin and Nazi defeat. They planned to establish a military government in France headed by Eisenhower until the end of the war. But as Jones points out, the French provisional government, led by Charles de Gaulle, would have none of it. From their point of view, the invasion was just the first step to regaining French sovereignty. In de Gaulle’s view, he would lead the new French government once the Germans were expelled. The French resistance, a loose collection of quasi-military units, ironically sup-

*Anonymous Soldiers* concludes that “Jewish terrorism played a salient role in . . . the British decision to leave Palestine.” But many other factors also contributed to the decision, for example, granting independence to India, the plight of Holocaust survivors, and lack of a consistent British policy. Hoffman doesn’t claim terrorism is the answer to solving dissident revolts. But in the case of the British Palestine Mandate, Begin’s strategy of undermining government control expressed in his book, *The Revolt*, had worked. A copy of that “seminal work” was found in an al-Qa’ida library by US military forces in 2001. (484)

ported logistically entirely by the Allies, pledged their allegiance to de Gaulle. Britain and America considered their support after the invasion to be crucial to tying down German military units. De Gaulle agreed, but demanded official American and British recognition of his provisional government before he would consent to Allied use of the resistance. Complicating matters, French recognition was beyond Eisenhower’s authority, and Roosevelt opposed it. The practical consequence was that the French were denied a role in planning for the invasion, and that, in turn, made coordination of Jedburgh efforts with the resistance difficult.

Two events occurred that eased Eisenhower’s task of getting the support of resistance units after D-Day. First, Roosevelt finally recognized de Gaulle as the leader of France, and second, he added French general Pierre Koenig to his staff to coordinate operations with the French. In the end, resistance operations delayed German movements after D-Day, as intended.

The Jedburghs teams—one American, one Frenchman and one Brit—were originally conceived by the British to support the resistance units with which the Special Operations Executive (SOE) had been working since early in the war. For reasons of security, they were not dropped into France until after the invasion. In his

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a. See for example: Colin Beavan, *Operation Jedburgh: D-Day and America’s First Shadow War* (Penguin Group, 2006).



book, Beavan shows that the record of the 93 Jedburgh teams was mixed. They performed well only when liaising with well-organized resistance units, though their secondary mission of supporting Allied headquarters

***Evasion & Escape Devices Produced by MI9, MIS-X, and SOE in World War II***, by Phil Froom (Schiffer Publishing, Ltd, 2015) 383, bibliography, appendices, photos, index.

While undergoing escape and evasion training with the British army in West Germany during the Cold War, Phil Froom developed a passionate interest in the WWII origins of the special devices and procedures that they were then being taught. When he learned that no single book had been written on the subject, he began studying official records and memoirs, collecting documentation from firms that built the special devices, and conducting interviews with survivors to learn how they were actually used. The result is the impressively illustrated coffee table edition, *Evasion & Escape Devices*.

Besides regaining one's freedom, successful escape from captivity had two principal military benefits: return of the highly trained personnel themselves, as well as the intelligence they could provide. For these reasons Britain formed a special unit designated MI9 to conduct the training required before deployment and to develop the devices necessary to aid those captured. *Evasion & Escape Devices* describes how MI9 accomplished its mission in every theater of war. The book pays particular attention to the development of special devices, methods of secret communication with prisoners, and covert delivery of equipment to help prisoners escape and then evade recapture.

The kinds of special devices developed drew heavily on the experience of those who had successfully escaped during WWI and WWII. Communicating with prisoners through "letters and books from home" that contained coded instructions (and later through Red Cross packages and bogus charities), allowed the delivery of instructions and essential devices. Froom provides detailed illustrated examples of silk maps, button compasses, playing cards, passports, needle

went well, setting a precedent for coalition warfare. *Eisenhower's Guerrillas* reveals the interaction of solid military planning and often conflicting political considerations, and adds a new dimension to the Jedburgh story.

guns, Gillette razor blades with hidden messages, (255) and a great variety of concealment devices.

When the United States entered the war, its soldiers were faced with the same problems and—based on the British precedent, Froom explains—they established their own version of MI9, designated MIS-X. Located at Ft. Ward, in Alexandria, Virginia, MIS-X developed training programs and a variety of devices. For example, miniature radios were hidden in cigarette packs, cribbage boards, and baseballs. At one point, writes Froom, communication with some camps was such that entire radio sets were shipped and the prisoners managed to steal the parcels before the Germans inspected them. (38)

The German prison authorities were not asleep at the switch, however, and they eventually discovered many of the items sent to the prisoners. But the prisoners greatly outnumbered their guards and the volume of gadgets was so great that communication was effectively continuous.

Froom does not neglect the players that made MI9 and MIS-X a success. The most well-known of those mentioned is Charles Fraser-Smith, the inventor of what he called "Q" devices, a term the James Bond movies applied to Desmond Llewellyn, himself a prisoner of war for five years in Colditz Castle. (9)

While *Evasion & Escape Devices* does not comment on the number of prisoners actually aided by MI9 or MIS-X, other sources make clear the program helped many, particularly downed airmen.<sup>a</sup> Phil Froom has provided the most comprehensive account to date of the efforts to assist POWs in their duty to escape captivity during WWII. A fine reference work.

a. See M.R.D. Foot and J. M. Langley, *MI: Escape and Evasion 1939–1945* (Little, Brown, & Co., 1980).

***Looking Down the Corridors: Allied Aerial Espionage Over East Germany and Berlin 1945–1990***, by Kevin Wright and Peter Jefferies. (The History Press, 2015) 224, bibliography, appendices, photos, index.

Aerial photography was a major source of tactical and strategic intelligence throughout the Cold War for all participants. For many in the United States, its importance was highlighted publicly during the U-2 incident in 1960 and later with the satellite programs used during nuclear arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union. In addition to strategic collection platforms, each nation's military conducted fixed-wing aerial reconnaissance, which was common knowledge. But one Western aerial collection program was kept secret from the public during the Cold War, though ironically not from the Soviet Union. *Looking Down the Corridors* tells that story.

After the end of World War II, British, US, and French occupying forces reached an agreement with the Soviet Union that provided ground and air access to the divided city of Berlin from the Western occupied zone of Germany via three well defined virtual corridors. In the case of aircraft—military and civilian—the corridors created flight paths that passed over territory the Soviets and their allies would have to traverse before attacking the West. Thus, in the spring of 1946, Britain and the United States began secret aerial reconnaissance flights in the corridors. A wide variety of aircraft with photographic, SIGINT, and radar sensors were employed to collect data on targets on both sides of the corridors. The imagery recorded Soviet and later East German military activity for early warning purposes, while at the same time providing important order-of-battle intelligence.

Authors Kevin Wright and Peter Jefferies interviewed participants and examined records declassified since the end of the Cold War to produce a comprehensive record of flight operations and the intelligence they produced. For perspective, the authors include descriptions of the major events that influenced collection priorities—for example, the Berlin Airlift, the Czech

invasion, and even “non-corridor peripheral flights” (57) over Russia and the Baltic and Caspian seas.

Since four nations were involved in all activities involving Berlin, a Berlin Air Safety Centre (BASC) was formed to control all flights. In separate chapters on corridor operations for Britain, the United States, and France, the authors explain how they operated within the agreed-upon rules. They discuss the targets, types of aircraft employed, and the response of the Soviets when they attempted to harass (there was an occasional shutdown) aircraft they asserted were flying outside of agreed-upon altitude or geographic limits. With a few exceptions, no attempt was made to disguise the nature of the collection flights, since the aircraft had to open doors that concealed the cameras and were thus visible to the Soviets during flight. The Soviets did not file complaints, however, since they were flying their own reconnaissance missions. The result was that the flights were kept secret from the public. (186ff)

In addition to the corridor flights, the authors discuss the British military mission (BRIXMIS) in Berlin that flew light aircraft in the Berlin area from which crewmen employed handheld cameras to collect close-up imagery of Soviet and East German equipment, such as the then-new T-72 tank.

The authors include a chapter on the joint imagery exploitation of US and British units that eventually provided imagery readouts. Their advance warning of what turned out to be the Czech invasion in 1968 and preparations for building the Berlin Wall are noted in a chapter discussing the value of the program.

*Looking Down the Corridors* documents a little known chapter in Cold War intelligence. It is meticulously documented, thoroughly illustrated, and well written. A really valuable contribution.

**Operation Thunderbolt: Flight 139 and the Raid on Entebbe Airport, the Most Audacious Hostage Rescue Mission in History**, by Saul David. (Little, Brown and Company, 2015) 446, endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

On Sunday 27 June 1976, Air France flight 139 left Ben-Gurion International Airport in Israel, where security was notoriously tight and landed in Athens, Greece, where security was notoriously light. By the time the plane left for Paris, the 283 passengers had been joined by a team of hijackers led by two German terrorists linked to the anti-fascist Baader-Meinhof gang. Once airborne, they forced the pilot to divert to the Entebbe airport in Uganda. There, the Jewish passengers became hostages, while the others were sent on to Paris. With Ugandan President Idi Amin's complicity, the terrorists demanded the release of colleagues already in Israeli jails. Israel's policy was not to negotiate with terrorists. Seven days later, the hostage takers were dead and all but three of the Jewish hostages were back in Israel. *Operation Thunderbolt* fills in the details.

If this sequence of events rings a bell, it is because a movie was made of the event and many books have been written about the operation—five in the past six years alone. What, then, justifies this one? There are several reasons. It is an exciting, well-told story that keeps a reader's attention through the step-by-step planning and execution of the rescue attempt. More important, historian Saul David better illuminates the political controversies among Israeli president Yitzhak Rabin and his defense minister, Shimon Peres, and other participants in the operation. And finally, David supports his story with diaries, interviews with the surviving hostages, and official documents recently released.

As might be imagined, worldwide public reaction to the rescue was positive, except, of course, in Muslim and some African countries; official government responses, however, were not. David discusses attempts to condemn the operation in the UN and Britain's refusal to send a message of congratulations, as had Germany, France, and Switzerland, among others. The United States, writes David, had it both ways: President Ford sent a message expressing his "great satisfaction", while the State Department was upset that Israel had broken its agreement not to use military equipment supplied by the United States, in this case the C-130 aircraft, outside Israel. (349)

David provides hints at the role Israeli intelligence played. He notes that an "informant" drew a "map to mark the spot" where the murdered hostage Dora Bloch was buried; a copy of the map is included in the book. (360) Then evidence surfaced that Amin had ordered her execution while at the same time claiming she had been returned with the other hostages. At this point, Britain broke relations with Uganda. The mysterious death of Wadie Haddad—the sponsor of the hijacking—was not due to an incurable disease (as was claimed), but rather, according to one account, was the work of Mossad and a box of poisoned Belgian chocolates (his favorites) he consumed.<sup>a</sup>

In the end, David asks, did Operation Thunderbolt "make it harder for Israeli politicians to push through compromises required for peace"—even though it saved lives? (373) He leaves the answer to history.

a. Ami Pedahzur, *The Israeli Secret Services and The Struggle Against Terrorism* (Columbia University Press, 2009).

*The OSS in World War II Albania: Covert Operations and Collaboration with Communist Partisans*, by Peter Lucas. (McFarland & Company, 2007) 210, endnotes, bibliography, photos, maps, index.

*OSS: Red Group 2—A Fisherman Goes To War*, by David G. Boak. (AuthorHouse, 2011) 227, photos, no index.

These two books, published long ago but only recently come to our attention, are about little known OSS operations. Both fill gaps in OSS history.

In his foreword to *The OSS in World War II Albania*, Fatos Tarifa, the former Albanian ambassador to the United States (2001–2005), makes an extraordinary claim: “This is an outstanding work and the first of its kind.” (1) He is correct on both counts.

Author Peter Lucas, himself of Albanian descent, originally went to Albania intending to write a biography of Enver Hoxha, the Albanian dictator. When he came across a picture of Hoxha marching in Albania’s WWII victory parade, one of the men with him was identified as Capt. Tom Stefan, the OSS liaison officer to Albania. Unaware that such a position existed, Lucas decided to abandon the Hoxha story, and pursue the OSS involvement. He went on to interview survivors, examine archival records, and visit safehouses employed in Albania.

Lucas soon learned that the British also had a liaison team in Albania, several of whose members had written memoirs with little detail about the OSS role. Both teams were aware the partisans were communists, but they were fighting the Nazis—the common cause justifying Allied provision of communications, supplies, and intelligence—and Lucas tells how it was done. He also discusses the sometimes awkward relationship between Britain and the United States as both competed for influence with Hoxha. But *The OSS in World War II Albania* mainly focuses on the exploits of several OSS team members. Lucas devotes chapters to each, devoting the most space to Captain Stefan, son of Albanian parents, who spoke Hoxha’s same dialect and established a relationship, which was initially close, with the leader.

After the victory parade, Stefan’s relationship with Hoxha deteriorated, a circumstance arising from politics,

Hoxha’s increasingly severe treatment of his enemies, and Stefan’s marriage to an Albanian without Hoxha’s permission. When the OSS officer was called home, Stefan smuggled his wife aboard the plane, ending his latent hopes of returning to Albania in a diplomatic post. After being rejected by the State Department for service as an Albania expert, Stefan’s marriage deteriorated, and he ended up dying homeless in Los Angeles.

With his photographs and superb documentation—both Albania and American—*The OSS in World War II Albania* provides a fine contribution to the OSS literature.

*OSS: Red Group 2* is a memoir of David Boak’s service with an operational group (OG), the combat element of OSS. The overall story of the OGs appeared in Albert Lulushi’s recent book, *Donovan’s Devils*.<sup>a</sup> Boak’s contribution is a firsthand account of one man’s service with partisans in North Africa, England, France, India, Burma, and China with his unit “Red Group 2.”

Boak takes us from his fishing days in New Jersey, to college in North Carolina—interrupted by the war—to ski troops in Colorado, and finally to his adventures in OSS that began in early 1944. After service behind the enemy lines in France after the invasion, it was off to the Far East via California. He arrived in the China-Burma-India (CBI) theater in April 1945. By the time he reached China, after driving the Ledo Road from India, the war was nearly over. But he managed one assignment in conjunction with Chinese guerrillas behind Japanese lines and a few skirmishes after the war was over because the Japanese army hadn’t gotten the word. Then, after more than six weeks afloat, Boak finally reached the “land of the Big PX” (215) and could go fishing again.

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a. Albert Lulushi, *Donovan’s Devils: OSS Commandos Behind Enemy Lines—Europe, World War II* (Arcade Publishing, 2016).

*OSS: Red Group 2* concludes with some pertinent observations on what the Army forgot about guerilla warfare after WWII and what it took to relearn

it all again during the present difficulties. Boak has a good sense of humor and tells his story well.

***Rezident: The Espionage Odyssey of Soviet General Vasily Zarubin***, by Robert K. Baker. (iUniverse, 2015) 626, end of chapter notes, bibliography, appendices, photos, index.

If the era of the whistleblower didn't begin on 7 August 1943, it was certainly presaged by an anonymous letter addressed to "Mr. Hoover" that arrived that day at FBI headquarters. Among other revelations, it named all the KGB (NKVD) officers serving in the Washington residency, including Vasily Zubilin (true name Zarubin), the Rezident responsible for KGB operations in America during World War II.

In July 1941, after the expulsion of the Soviet rezident in the United States—an interesting story in itself—Zarubin arrived to replace him. For the next four years, accompanied by his third wife, Liza—also an experienced NKVD officer, whose story Baker includes in some detail—the Zarubins worked diligently to run some of the most famous agents ever to serve the Soviet Union under the noses of the FBI.

FBI counterintelligence specialist and Russian linguist Robert Baker had been aware of the letter, and when it became public in 1995 it came to mind after he interviewed Zarubin's daughter Zoya—herself a former KGB officer—in 1996 as part of his FBI duties. After his retirement in 1999, and with Zoya's and her brother Peter's cooperation, Baker began the research that resulted in *Rezident*.

Baker goes over Zarubin's cases at length. The Moscow investigation that followed the receipt of the anonymous letter absolved Zarubin of malpractice but turned up an administrative problem that led to his recall in 1944. After a later investigation ended well, Zarubin was given awards and made deputy chief of the first chief directorate, where he served until retirement in 1948. Baker suggests retirement was not Zarubin's choice but the result of one of Stalin's anti-Jewish campaigns. (552) After Stalin's death, Zarubin periodically was called back to train new officers. He died in 1972 of a heart attack.

Zarubin is well known to enthusiasts of intelligence history for his frequently mentioned wartime service in the United States, where he coordinated the work of the Soviet Union's spies. Baker tells the rest of Zarubin's fascinating story. Born in 1894, he served in both the czar's army and the Red Army, from whence in 1919 he was recruited into the Cheka and rose to the rank of major general. In between, he was stationed in China, Finland, Denmark (his first assignment and an illegal), France, Germany, and his first duty in the United States (also as an illegal).

*Rezident* is thoroughly documented with Western and Russian sources—VENONA, books, and interviews—and supplemented with what Baker calls "administrative sections" that consider attributes of the Zarubin story that add background but can't be firmly attributed. Baker also adds detailed historical descriptions of events surrounding Zarubin's career that add helpful context. Baker has done a fine job showing how the KGB/NKVD functioned against its "imperialist" enemies through the life of one of its most effective officers.

Zarubin managed to survive the Red Terror purges in the late 1930s. In 1940 he was assigned to a Polish prisoner of war camp near Katyn, where a mass execution of Polish officers took place. Baker found no evidence that Zarubin participated in the so-called Katyn massacre ordered by Stalin, as some have charged. (351)

*The Shadow Man: At the Heart of the Cambridge Spy Ring*, by Geoff Andrews. (I.B. Tauris & Co., 2015) 275, end-notes, bibliography, photos, index.

The Gresham public school in England, founded in 1555, has a webpage that recognizes notable “Old Greshamian” graduates. The citation for James Klugmann, class of 1931, notes he was a “contemporary of Donald Maclean”—not otherwise mentioned—and “a leading British communist who served with the SOE during the War and later became official historian of the Communist Party of Great Britain.” *The Shadow Man* reveals other attributes that brought him to the attention of MI5.

After graduating Gresham, Klugmann attended Trinity College, Cambridge, in October 1931, where author Geoff Andrews depicts him as one of many prominent intellectuals who chose communism as the path to the future, at least for a while. It was Klugmann, however, who followed communism—openly—for the entirety of his life. He befriended others on the same path: he mentored Donald Maclean, Guy Burgess, Anthony Blunt, and US citizen Michael Straight.

Since Klugmann was an open communist known to MI5, he seldom participated in clandestine activities. At the urging of Burgess and Blunt, however, and somewhat reluctantly, according to Andrews, he helped Arnold Deutsch recruit John Cairncross, the so-called “fifth man,” and, Andrews suggests, very likely worked to bring Oxford students to the attention of Soviet intelligence. (125)

By 1935, Klugmann had become a promising academic and “a person of enormous prestige, even a sort of guru.” (74) He went to Paris for two years of research and, while there, became involved with Soviet propagandist Willi Münzenberg’s Comintern activities. The pull of the party overcame his academic bent, and he abandoned his Cambridge studies to become a professional revolutionary. During this period, his travels for the Comintern included trips to India and China, where he met Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong. (78)

When World War II began, Klugmann—apparently feeling no obligation to adhere to the German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact of 1939—returned to England to join the Royal Army Service Corps as a private. Andrews observes that, as a communist well known to MI5, Klugmann should never have been allowed overseas, but as a result of an administrative foul-up he was sent to Egypt, where he learned Arabic. (129) His linguistic abilities, his knowledge of communist activities in Yugoslavia (acquired working for the Comintern), and help from a Gresham colleague soon earned him a position in SOE and a commission as an officer. MI5 and later historians suspected he aided both the Soviets and the British.

Klugmann never admitted manipulating reports to the advantage of the partisan, and Andrews concludes from his analysis of the allegations, “We can exonerate Klugmann from claims that he acted as a Soviet agent.” (145) After the war, MI5 still kept him under close surveillance and even heard him admit during a talk at communist party headquarters that he had worked for Soviet intelligence before the war. (151) Still, inexplicably, they merely continued the surveillance.

Klugmann returned to work for the party after the war and became its “Cold War intellectual,” editing several of the party’s publications, contributing to its education programs, and eventually writing the first two volumes of a party history. His time as a party functionary was often difficult, as the Soviet leaders and their policies changed. Andrews goes over these times in detail, and they should be of interest to communist party historians.

MI5 made one more attempt to get evidence on Klugmann’s spying by enlisting the help of Cairncross to gain a confession in a bugged conversation over lunch. It failed, as did Klugmann’s refusal to be debriefed by MI5 in connection with the Philby case. (219, 223)

While in quasi-retirement in 1973, Klugmann gave an interview to the BBC “to discuss his love of book

collecting”—a most admirable passion—but he told the journalist that he “would hate to be remembered for my book collection.” (234) He wanted to be remem-

bered for his contribution to communism. *The Shadow Man* assures that is a goal only partially fulfilled.

***Soviet Leaders and Intelligence: Assessing the American Adversary During the Cold War***, by Raymond L. Garthoff. (Georgetown University Press, 2015) 142, endnotes, index.

Throughout the Cold War, few Americans thought it likely there would be a hot war with the Soviet Union because of stated US national security policy and roughly offsetting military capabilities. Nevertheless, the United States and her allies remained concerned about Soviet expansionism and the intense propagation of its ideology. At the same time, however, “the United States was seen by Soviet political leaders and by their intelligence services as the ‘Main Adversary’” because the Soviets saw the “American-led Western bloc waging political warfare against it.” (ix) How then did intelligence and ideology influence the Soviet leadership’s views and how did their perceptions of their adversaries evolve during the Cold War?

Raymond Garthoff, a former State Department officer and CIA analyst, and now a diplomatic historian at the Brookings Institution, is uniquely qualified to answer this question from the Soviet point of view, and he does so in *Soviet Leaders and Intelligence*. His approach is chronological. He examines “the interaction between the political recipients of intelligence assessments”—from Stalin to Gorbachev—and “the intelligence chiefs who provided them.” (x)

Initially, writes Garthoff, Stalin, the political realist, “did seek to continue the wartime Big Three partnership after the war, albeit in his own way,” (1) and he reviews a number of actions that support this observation. At the same time, the Soviet ambassador to the United States reported to the 1946 Foreign Ministers meeting in Paris that “the foreign policy of the United States, which reflects the imperialistic tendencies of American monopolist capital, is characterized in the post-war period by striving for world supremacy.” (9) By the fall of 1947, this assessment was regarded as “too soft” and when

the COMINFORM was created later the same year, the official Soviet view was that the world was comprised of “two counterposed ‘camps’, with the capitalist/imperialist camp headed by the United States.” (11). Thus did the United States become “firmly established as the USSR’s main adversary” (15) and the Soviet intelligence services were reorganized to improve intelligence assessments that reflected the leadership’s views. Garthoff discusses the changes in detail, adding that “none . . . had a discernible impact on Stalin’s headstrong personal role in interpreting events and deciding policies.” (16)

Despite the growing Soviet enmity, Garthoff sees hints of eventual coexistence in Stalin’s policies that were continued by Khrushchev and each of his successors. As he discusses each regime in turn, Garthoff highlights the diminished impact of ideology on Soviet national policies as it continued its gradual decline until the arrival of Gorbachev’s “new thinking.” Here Garthoff stresses that “intelligence played no role in promoting the new thinking that fundamentally recast Soviet foreign policy,” (82) though the KGB may not have realized it as they continued attempts to be influential. “Gorbachev’s early interest in intelligence reports quickly declined,” Garthoff notes, and he explains how that happened. As one KGB chief wrote later, “when the information confirmed Gorbachev’s views, it was welcome. But when policy and reality started to diverge, with the situation in the country going from bad to worse, he did not want to know.” (87) In the end, Gorbachev relied on his own political judgment, but that was not enough to save the Soviet Union. As KGB Vadim Kirpichenko wrote, “The bitter truth is that not the US Central Intelligence Agency, and not its agents of influence in the USSR, but we ourselves destroyed the state.” (94)

*Soviet Leaders and Intelligence* concludes that, as the role of ideology and intelligence declined as primary factors in Soviet decisionmaking, the adversarial relationship with the West diminished and policy decisions were based on the judgment of Soviet leaders and their Western

contacts. They no longer viewed the United States as a “permanent adversary . . . predestined to conflict.” (101)

Garthoff’s assessments, based largely on Soviet sources, are a valuable contribution to the explanation of why the Cold War ended as it did.

***Stalin’s Englishman: The Lives of Guy Burgess***, by Andrew Lownie. (St. Martin’s Press, 2016) 448, endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

On Friday, 25 May 1951, two British diplomats boarded the ferry Falaise at Southampton, England, and headed for France. One, Donald Maclean, was on a watchlist and, when an immigration official recognized him, he was reported immediately to MI5—but MI5 failed to act in time. The car the two left behind had been rented by Guy Burgess of the Foreign Office; French and British intelligence offices were notified, but the French port police were not, and the diplomats disappeared.

arly and journalistic articles. Philby, Cairncross, and Straight also contributed with memoirs and, except for Cairncross, each was the subject of a biography.

In September 1952, at the suggestion of Ian Fleming, then executive editor at the Queen Anne Press, suggested to his former “old Estonian” colleague, journalist Cyril Connolly, that he publish a book about the still mysterious disappearance of Burgess, who had also attended Eton. In *The Missing Diplomats*, Connolly, discounting the possibility they were spies, speculated the two might have gone on a secret mission or been kidnapped.<sup>a</sup> Then in 1954, KGB defector Vladimir Petrov in his book, *Empire of Fear*, named Burgess and Maclean as Soviet agents and some of what the British and American intelligence services already knew became public.<sup>b</sup>

*Stalin’s Englishman*, the most recent contribution, is by far the most comprehensive biography of Guy Burgess. In many ways the most perplexing and controversial of the Cambridge spies, Burgess was also a complex, often conflicted human being. Author Andrew Lownie presents a life portrait of an attractive upper-class man from a good family, educated at Royal Naval College (Dartmouth), Eton, and Cambridge University. He was also an engaging conversationalist and an astute political analyst who relished dealing with people in high places. At the same time, Lownie reveals, he was a loyal communist; an alcoholic; a philandering homosexual; possessed of bad breath, dirty fingernails, an often untidy appearance. And yet, many friends tolerated his eccentricities while enjoying his company. Despite these qualities, Burgess was successively a BBC producer, an MI5 agent, an MI6 officer, a diplomat in London and Washington, and a productive Soviet agent whom no one in the government suspected until he defected.

Gradually, over the next 45 years, more of the “missing diplomats” story emerged. They had not acted alone and several Cambridge compatriots who had also spied for the Soviets—Kim Philby, Anthony Blunt, John Cairncross, and Michael Straight—were publicly identified and dubbed “the Cambridge Spies.” Their stories quickly became the subject of numerous schol-

Drawing on documentary material recently released by the British National Archives, which included Burgess’s correspondence, memoirs by former colleagues, and interviews with past associates and family, *Stalin’s Englishman* provides a chronological account of the highlights and challenges of Burgess’s career. An example of the former is the day he spent with Churchill, a man he genuinely admired. (91ff) In the latter category, Lownie shows how Burgess succeeded in his double life

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a. Cyril Connolly, *The Missing Diplomats* (Queen Anne Press, 1952), 14–15.

b. Vladimir Petrov, *Empire of Fear* (Praeger, 1956).



in part because of class tradition (no one with his background could possibly be a traitor) and in part because of a bureaucratic willingness to overlook his eccentricities and his homosexuality, which was illegal at the time.

Lownie also provides some new material in *Stalin's Englishman*. Although a confirmed homosexual—a theme that pervades Lownie's book—Burgess “had several heterosexual affairs” and once introduced Clarissa Churchill—Churchill's niece and later Anthony Eden's wife—to his mother as his fiancé. (171) In another example, Lownie adds evidence that Burgess did in fact have a “roaring affair” with Donald Maclean, a topic often disputed in other accounts. (83) He also adds evidence that Burgess never met Philby in Moscow. And Lownie reports, for the first time, that an MI5 report noted that, at his death, Burgess was writing a memoir. (318)

A few chapters of *Stalin's Englishman* deal with Burgess's despairing life in Moscow after his defec-

tion. Perhaps Burgess summed it up best: “I'm a communist, of course. But I am a British communist, and I hate Russia!” (309) Guy Burgess died on 30 August 1963 from sclerosis of the liver, among other ailments. Donald Maclean spoke at the funeral. Burgess's remains were returned to England.

In his final chapter, Lownie considers the significance of Burgess's life. He includes the views of some KGB officers who worked with him in Moscow. His onetime London controller, Col. Yuri Modin, thought Burgess was the “moral leader” of the Cambridge spies. KGB general Sergei Kondrashev said Burgess was “the most important of the Cambridge spies” (323), a view Lownie, but not all former intelligence officers, share. This is a fine biography about an effective spy and a disgraceful traitor who lived to enjoy communist reality first hand. It fills a major gap in intelligence history.

***U.S. Navy Codebreakers, Linguists, and Intelligence Officers Against Japan 1910–1941***, by Capt. Steven E. Maffeo, U.S.N.R., Ret. (Rowman & Littlefield, 2016) 540, footnotes, bibliography, appendices, photos, maps, index.

For those who recall the 1970s, the title *Behind Closed Doors* brings to mind a country ballad sung by Charlie Rich. A generation earlier though, *Behind Closed Doors*<sup>a</sup> was the title of a book about counter-espionage, later to become a TV series, both based on the naval intelligence files of RAdm. Ellis M. Zacharias, a Japanese linguist, battleship commander, and later deputy chief of Naval Intelligence (ONI).

The profile of Admiral Zacharias is just one of the 59 “minibiographies” of ONI officers serving on 7 December 1941 included in Steven Maffeo's interesting book. Though there are three officers about whom full biographies have been written (Capt. Joe Roche-

fort, Adm. Edwin Layton, and Capt. Jasper Holmes), a 2013 poll of 40 serving naval intelligence officers “showed virtually no recognition” of the others. (xxii)

*U.S. Navy Codebreakers* seeks to make the contributions of these others part of the historical record. Maffeo has divided his book into four parts. The first deals with officers involved with radio direction-finding and traffic analysis. The second concerns cryptographers, cryptanalysts, and codebreakers. Part Three deals with linguists, translators, and intelligence officers, and the final part with what he calls “hybrids”—multiskilled and multiproficient.

Captain Maffeo, himself a former naval intelligence officer who also served the Army Signal Corps, has produced a fine reference that accomplishes just what it set out to do.

a. RAdm. Ellis M. Zacharias, *Behind Closed Doors: The Secret History of The Cold War* (G. P. Putnam & Sons, 1950).

## MEMOIRS

***More Cloak than Dagger: One Women's Career in Secret Intelligence***, by Molly J. Sasson. (Connor Court Publishing Pty, Ltd., 2015) 316, endnotes, photos, index.

It took more than 60 years after the end of World War II for the role of senior women intelligence officers to be acknowledged with biographies. The first three were SOE officer Vera Atkins (OSS and SOE), CIA officer Virginia Hall, and MI6 officer Dame Daphne Park.<sup>a</sup> Now Molly Sasson, at 92, has contributed a fourth. Her autobiography, *More Cloak than Dagger*, adds to the recording of the wide range of intelligence duties these pathbreaking women accomplished.

Molly Sasson grew up in England, was educated in Holland, studied music in London, and joined the Royal Air Force during WWII. Fluent in French, German, and Dutch, she was assigned to intelligence duties. After the war, while stationed in Germany, she was called to London for a meeting with MI6 that changed her life. Grigori Tokaev, a Soviet aeronautical scientist co-opted by the GRU to work in Germany, had defected with his family. Sasson was asked to help MI6 and assist with his settlement in London, a task she performed well for two years.

Sasson's RAF service ended in 1954, after she became pregnant—a condition not allowed women in active service at the time—and she went to the Netherlands where her by then-retired RAF officer husband had found work. It was there because of her fluency in Dutch that she was recruited by the Australian Security Intelligence Organization (ASIO). Among other duties, she soon began liaison counterespionage work with the Dutch

domestic security service (BVD), mainly against the KGB, a relationship that would continue for 14 years.

When the head of ASIO, Brigadier Sir Charles Spry, visited Holland in 1959, he briefed Sasson on the VENONA program and other ASIO operations, including his concerns that MI5 and the CIA were withholding important intelligence from his service. (He was right, since VENONA had revealed poor security in ASIO.) The situation improved somewhat in 1954, thanks to the defection to ASIO of KGB officer Vladimir Petrov, who also suspected ASIO had been penetrated by the KGB. Trusting Sasson, Spry offered her an appointment to ASIO to work in counterintelligence. She accepted and in 1960 moved to Australia.

For the rest of her career, Sasson would work on ASIO CI operations. She describes the many bureaucratic and political obstacles she encountered and adds vignettes on the Soviet penetration, investigations she conducted, most of which were resolved by quiet retirement—as opposed to prosecution—to her great frustration. By way of background, *More Cloak than Dagger* includes her assessment of the two principal sources Sasson used in her work—Oleg Gordievsky and Vasili Mitrokhin—and some of the precedent-setting controversies that influenced the development of ASIO. The latter include chapters on the Cambridge spies and Roger Hollis, the director general of MI5 and suspected Soviet agent.

Sasson retired in 1983 and became an international cat show judge—a longtime hobby—and later Consul-General of the Republic of San Marino. But she will be remembered more by her former colleagues for her precedent-setting work as an intelligence officer.

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a. Sarah Helm, *A Life In Secrets: The Life of Vera Atkins and the Lost Agents of SOE* (Little, Brown, 2005); Judith L. Pearson, *Wolves At the Door: The True Story of America's Great Female Spy* (The Lyons Press, 2005); Paddy Hayes, *The Queen of Spies: Daphne Park Britain's Cold War Spy Master* (The Overlook Press, 2016).

***The Secret Ministry of AG. & Fish: My Life in Churchill's School for Spies***, by Noreen Riols. (Macmillan, 2013) 304, no index.

Intelligence-related codenames are often intended to deflect attention from an operation's true purpose or person's actual duties. "Manhattan Project" and "Tube Alloys" were US and UK codenames, respectively, for aspects of atom bomb programs, and "The Fluency" committee concerned a British molehunt—not language competence. Perhaps the most unusual WWII codename was the "Secret Ministry of AG. & Fish," a fictitious British war cabinet office created by Noreen Riols to put her mother's mind at ease—she never learned the truth—while her daughter was employed by the Special Operations Executive (SOE).

In her memoir of the same name, Ms. Riols, the only woman survivor of SOE's F Section (concerned with operations in France), relates how she ended up training officers who were to be sent behind German lines in France. Her path to SOE was unusual. Called to duty as a teenager, she was faced with service in a munitions factory or the military. She initially chose the Women's Royal Naval Service (WREN) "mainly because I liked the hat." (11) But the bureaucracy disagreed with her choice. The rules also kept her out of a BBC job she had been offered. About to be sent to a factory, she was saved by an SOE recruiter. Her qualifications included fluency in French and a willingness to keep her work secret. That she was young and attractive, she would eventually learn, also mattered.

At first Riols "didn't really have a job title . . . I was a general dogsbody . . ." (25) or—in indisputable English—a girl-Friday. But the work was interesting and she met some of the most famous SOE

officers, including Forest Yeo-Thomas and Leo Marks, the cryptographer whose father owned the "84 Charing Cross Road" antiquarian bookstore.

Eventually she was transferred to the training facility at Beaulieu "where future agents learned the art of spying." (130) There were 25 officer instructors at Beaulieu, all but two who had served in France and escaped when their codenames became known to the Germans. One of the two civilians was the "handsome, charming, efficient—everybody liked him—Kim Philby." (133)

Riols was one of three women at Beaulieu who became "decoys." (149) Their job was to meet trainees "by coincidence" in their off duty hours at hotels or pubs. After striking up conversations, they would try to persuade them—by any means necessary—to reveal details of their upcoming missions. Riols tells stories about those who "couldn't resist a pretty face" (157) and were released from the program.

Throughout the book, Riols includes diversions that reveal some of the operations undertaken by SOE agents and the price they paid when caught. She also includes stories about the political battles that occurred within MI6, an organization that did not look favorably upon SOE.

*The Secret Ministry of AG. & Fish* concludes with some reminiscences of Riols's post-war life and her contributions to preserving the SOE story. This engaging book, written from the perspective of a low-level employee, adds to the richness of the literature of SOE's wartime service.

***Secret Revolution: Memoirs of a Spy Boss***, by Niël Barnard as told to Tobie Wiese (Tafelberg, 2015). 304, endnotes, photos, index.

Change at the top often results in a period of bureaucratic, if not operational, uncertainty in an intelligence agency. And when the new chief is in his 30s, comes

from academia, has no prior intelligence experience, and arrives with a mission to bring order to a chaotic security situation, the chances of success are slim. These

were the circumstances that Niël Barnard faced in 1980 when South Africa's Prime Minister P. W. Botha suddenly appointed him to head the National Intelligence Service (NIS). Curiously, Botha never explained his choice, and the surprised Barnard never asked. (35)

Barnard's initial marching orders were to provide the prime minister with honest assessments of the data his service was given for analysis. Of course this required receipt of accurate and timely information. But at that time collection was the province of the military and the police, and both bureaucracies wanted to be the one to inform the PM. The initial result was chaos. But in the end, Barnard, with Botha's backing, won the day. He redefined the NIS mission to include responsibility for relations with foreign intelligence services, collection of foreign intelligence, a separate cryptologic capability, and the protection of foreign dignitaries. Domestic security responsibilities were parceled out to other agencies.

With these issues settled, Barnard describes in general terms the NIS relationships and operations with various foreign services in Africa, Russia, and the West. He clearly admires the MI6, the German BND, and the Mossad but dismisses CIA with the comment that it "would not win many gold medals in an intelligence Olympiad." (86)

As to the KGB, he is proud that NIS honored its request to keep their extensive contacts secret from the CIA. (91)

By 1986, with NIS providing reliable intelligence, Botha "accepted, perhaps with reluctance, that a negotiated settlement was the best option to solve our political predicament" with the increasingly violent African National Congress (ANC). (150) Progress was slow. In 1988, Botha charged Barnard, by now a trusted confidant, with heading up a small government team to conduct more formal exploratory talks. Barnard writes that Botha acknowledged that the only result would be a majority black government with Mandela as president. Barnard met with Mandela some 50 times, during which he tried to get Mandela to halt the violence before he and his colleagues were released and elections held. Mandela refused and eventually Botha and his successor, F.W. De Klerk, gave in.

Apartheid was abolished in February 1990; Mandela was released; and Barnard resigned, returning to his family and academia. *Secret Revolution* tells an unusual success story that demonstrates what sound management practices can achieve when applied firmly and how a trusted intelligence chief quietly accomplished a delicate political mission that helped create a new democratic government.

## **INTELLIGENCE ABROAD**

*East Asian Intelligence and Organised Crime: China, Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Mongolia*, Stephan Blancke, ed. (Verlag Dr. Köster, 2015) 480, footnotes, no index.

Editor/contributor Dr. Stephan Blancke writes that he works as an analyst and lecturer in a "government function" in Germany. (476) A political scientist and lawyer, he concentrates his research on international state- and non-state intelligence matters, especially North Korean and Chinese espionage. The idea for the present book grew out of his academic studies, where he realized how little was available in English on East Asian intelligence, particularly the five countries covered here.

*East Asian Intelligence and Organised Crime* contains 22 articles—an introduction, five articles on China, four on Japan, three on South Korea, six on North Korea, and three on Mongolia—each written by a specialist in the intelligence service covered. Organized crime is included because it is a problem in each country and internationally, and state intelligence and security agencies are responsible for dealing with it.

The depth of each of the discussions concerning these intelligence agencies and their associated cultural backgrounds and crime related organizations varies. Each country has at least one article devoted to intelligence services, though only the article on China's intelligence provides organization charts—and these are very general. The section on Mongolia's services is the most general, while articles on Japan, South Korea, and North

Korea, in particular, offer more detail. Versions of several articles have appeared in relatively obscure journals. The documentation in each case is substantial.

*East Asian Intelligence and Organised Crime* offers a glimpse of intelligence services in countries that is not found elsewhere in English. Dr. Blancke has performed a valuable service.

***Labyrinth of Power***, by Danny Yatom (Danny Yatom and Contento, 2016) 733, photos, no index.

Maj. Gen. Danny Yatom served in the Israeli Defense Forces and was chief of staff and security adviser to Prime Minister Ehud Barak before being elected to the Knesset, where he served until he retired in June 2008. But of principal interest here is the period 1996–98, when he was director of the Mossad, and *Labyrinth of Power* begins with his account of that challenging assignment.

Joining Mossad from the military meant Yatom was an outsider and he worked hard to gain the confidence and respect of his subordinates. An early challenge concerned a senior case officer whose premier agent absolutely refused to be handled or even to meet any other case officer. This arrangement lasted for 23 years before Yatom and a colleague decided to investigate. Surveillance soon proved the case officer was his own agent and he went to prison. A precedent had been set.

But counterterrorism, writes Yatom, was Mossad's high priority mission at the time, and its overseas operations sought to penetrate Hamas and the related organizations that continued to kill Israelis. After Hamas attacks in Jerusalem in August and September 1997, the prime minister decided to respond by assassinating a senior Hamas leader. Mossad was assigned the operation. Yatom provided a list of priority Hamas targets. Prime Minister Netanyahu and his security advisers selected Khalid Mashal, then living in Amman, Jordan, where Hamas had its headquarters. Yatom opposed the selection for three reasons. First, Mashal wasn't senior enough. Second, Jordan had just recently signed a peace treaty with Israel, and third, Yatom was a personal friend of

King Hussein. In fact, Yatom had been his guest in Amman just weeks before. But he eventually agreed with the PM's decision and Mossad planned the operation.

Its execution was a disaster. "Nearly everything that could go wrong, did." (20) Mashal survived, though he was hospitalized with mysterious symptoms. Moreover, the Jordanians arrested several of the Mossad officers. Yatom writes that he was forced to plead with the king for their return and, as partial compensation, offered to give "the Jordanians the means to save Mashal's life." (25) The king agreed and the operatives were returned but only after Israel was forced to release key Hamas leaders then in Israeli prisons.

Yatom is not the first to tell this story. Australian journalist Paul McGeough wrote a book about it and there are important differences.<sup>a</sup> While Yatom does not mention what caused Mashal's hospitalization, McGeough wrote that a poison was injected in his ear as the assailant walked by him. Further, Yatom states that Netanyahu instructed him to do what was necessary to save Mashal and get his officers back. McGeough's version is that the Jordanians eventually realized Mashal had been poisoned and a furious King Hussein called Netanyahu and demanded the antidote if he wanted to get his men back.

There is no way to reconcile the differences; Yatom doesn't mention McGeough's book. But he does add

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a. Paul McGeough, *Kill Khalid: The Failed Mossad Assassination of Khalid Mishal [sic] and the Rise of Hamas* (The New Press, 2009).

considerable detail about the principal Israeli players and the two investigations—one staffed by members outside the government and one by the government—that looked into the fiasco. Both investigations were critical of Yatom, but not of Netanyahu, though they did not recommend he resign. Yatom describes the bureaucratic politics at work as various players sought to protect their careers.

Then a second disaster hit. A Mossad team sent to Europe by Yatom's deputy and unknown to him was caught implanting bugging devices in Hezbol-

lah facilities in Bern, Switzerland.<sup>a</sup> (85) Two catastrophes so close together was too much for the prime minister; Yatom's resignation was accepted.

*Labyrinth of Power* also tells of Yatom's upbringing and his post-Mossad career working with several prime ministers while participating in attempts to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians at Camp David and Oslo. Though unsourced, the book is a firsthand account and thus worth serious attention—while keeping in mind that differing views exist.

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a. Ibid, 229. McGeough's account says there were seven European cities involved.

