Wisdom of the Ancients
Chinese Conceptions and Approaches to
Secrecy, Denial, and Obfuscation

Countering Foreign Denial and Deception
The Rise and Fall of an Intelligence Discipline–
and Its Uncertain Future

Secret Warriors
Thai Forward Air Guides in the Covert War in Laos

Intelligence in Public Media

Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf

Cover: Classical Chinese landscapes tend to show only vague and evocative views of the terrain they depict, suggesting here the topics of two of the articles in this issue. Shown on the cover is a small portion of a 13'-long scroll entitled "Dream Journey along the Xiao and Xiang Rivers. It was painted during the Southern Sung Dynasty (1127–1279) and hangs in the Tokyo National Museum.

The characters represent the words "secrecy," "denial," and "obfuscation." Calligraphy courtesy of Mei-chun Sawyer.

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Traditional Chinese Conceptions and Approaches to Secrecy (秘 密), Denial (否 定), and Obfuscation (模 糊)

Ralph D. Sawyer

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Knowing capability is not as good as knowing intentions."
—*Guanzi,*
Fifth century BC

Whatever the disjuncture between theory and practice, warfare's increasing lethality at the end of China's Spring and Autumn period (722–481 BCE) made commanders conscious of the need for information about enemy capabilities, intentions, and activities for the purpose of making accurate assessments, balking plans, and formulating strategy. The *Art of War*, traditionally attributed to Sunzi (Sun-tzu) but more likely compiled by his disciples in the fifth century or later, reflects this realization.[a] Not only is the 13th and final chapter, "Employing Agents," the first theoretical treatise on spycraft, the opening section ("Initial Estimations") constitutes a veritable mandate for intelligence gathering.

Despite its often enigmatic and pastiche nature, the *Art of War* articulates a calculated, unemotional approach to warfare that eschews engaging the enemy unless victory can be foretold. Even then,

> *attaining a hundred victories in a hundred battles is not the pinnacle of excellence. Subjugating the enemy's army without*

fighting is the true pinnacle of excellence.[1]

Though not always realized in practice, the book's pronouncements initiated the Chinese emphasis on achieving victory through wisdom and cleverness, through manipulating the enemy, rather than through the direct application of force, no matter how overwhelming the army's power:

> *The highest realization of warfare lies in attacking the enemy's plans; next is attacking their alliances; next their army; while the lowest is attacking their fortified cities. Thus, one who excels at employing the military subjugates other people's armies without engaging in battle, captures other people's fortified cities without attacking them, and destroys other people's states without prolonged fighting.*

As epitomized by the saying, "One who knows the enemy and knows himself will not be endangered in a hundred engagements,"[2] the key is knowing the enemy. However,

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a. Although the *Art of War* has been overexposed and trivialized in the West, with its principles applied to every field of human activity ranging from romance and the stock market through sports (as in *Sun-tzu on Golf*), it not only exerted a formative influence on Chinese military thought and practice, but continues to be highly relevant as part of the contemporary Chinese mindset and the object of conscious study in the PRC's quest to "formulate military science with unique Chinese characteristics," as are all the materials presented herein. (All translations of original texts are by the author.)

Rejecting reliance upon spirits and resorting to divination, common approaches in earlier times, Sunzi turned the focus onto human effort.

the requisite knowledge can only be acquired through careful observation and diligent intelligence efforts. The *Art of War* thus identifies some 40 aspects and characteristics centered on topographical features, the comparative state of readiness, command and control, governance, the strength and condition of the army, capability of the commanders, and the army's morale which should be targeted for scrutiny. Though not totally encompassing, seven are deemed crucial:

> *Which ruler has the Dao? Whose generals have greater ability? Who has gained the advantages of Heaven and Earth? Whose laws and orders are more thoroughly implemented? Whose forces are stronger? Whose officers and troops are better trained? Whose rewards and punishments are clearer?*[3]

While this emphasis recurs in all the subsequent military writings, it is particularly visible in the dedicated quest to manipulate the enemy and ferret out information.[a]

Rejecting reliance upon spirits and resorting to divination, common approaches in earlier times, Sunzi turned the focus onto human effort:

> *The means by which enlightened rulers and sagacious generals moved and conquered others, that their achievements surpassed the masses, was advance knowledge. Advance knowledge cannot be gained from ghosts and spirits, inferred from phenomena, or projected from the measures of Heaven, but must be gained from men for it is the knowledge of the enemy's true situation.*[4]

Since perspicacious commanders at the end of the Spring and Autumn period sought to conceal this information from interlopers and observers, Sunzi advocated resorting to spies, thereby prompting their extensive employment thereafter. Moreover, because horrendous losses were being suffered and enormous expenses incurred in the era's internecine strife, in contrast with self-proclaimed paragons of virtue who eschewed supposedly unrighteous activities or begrudged the expense, he condemned anyone who failed to employ spies by saying "this is the ultimate inhumanity. Such a person is not a general for the people, an assistant for the ruler, or the arbiter of victory."[5]

The *Art of War*'s contents thus embrace an underlying conception that might be characterized as the ruthless practice of efficient warfare, which should not be confused with the efficient practice of ruthless warfare.[b] "Know the enemy" and "victory without combat" quickly became famous watchwords, as well as constant rejoinders to commanders, radically changing the need for, and nature of, secrecy. No matter how greatly commanders might differ in their approach and emphasis, it quickly became a dominant concern rather than a commonplace, offhand affair. Moreover, insofar as the targets were well articulated, the aspects that required defending were manifest.

Security

In this context it was quickly realized security measures were a prerequisite for thwarting spies and capturing intruders. Apart from employing passive barriers such as palisades and guard posts to ensure impenetrability, common measures included precisely demarking the ground inside camps,[c] establishing internal controls, deploying roving patrols in the nearby countryside,[6] and imposing numerous strictures enforced by an almost bewildering array of punishments. External excursions were barred, visitors excluded, unauthorized movement

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a. For example, the *Wujing Zongyao* (*Essentials of the Military Classics*), an encyclopedic Sung dynasty martial compilation that became the basis for the military exams, contains chapters identifying aspects that should be specifically targeted for assessment, including the enemy's generals – such as "Liao Dijiang" 料 敵 將 ("Assess Enemy Generals") and "Liaodi Zhujiang" 料 敵 主 將 ("Assess the Enemy's Commander-in-chief")—and their disposition, "Liaodi Xingshi" 料 敵 形 勢 ("Assess the Enemy's Disposition of Strategic Power"). (For an overview of the important classic Chinese military writings, see Sawyer, "Military Writings," in *A Military History of China*, David. Graff and Robin Highham editors [Westview, 2001].)

b. Even though China had already embarked on an inexorable thrust toward total warfare by the late Spring and Autumn period, in "Planning Offensives" the *Art of War* clearly states the enemy should be preserved to the fullest extent possible, rather than brutalized and destroyed, to increase the profits that might be gained and, no doubt, avoid unnecessarily angering them, thereby increasing their resistance, just like men thrust onto "fatal terrain."

c. The *Wujing Zongyao* and other military compendia preserve intricate schematics for camp layouts.

"In planning, nothing is more important than not being knowable."

outside a contingent's designated area prohibited, and the soldiers' natural boisterousness repressed to prevent anyone overhearing loose talk about military activities.[7]

Although premised upon a highly effective command hierarchy that exploited early success in segmenting and maneuvering, the security measures that came to be implemented through the ages relied upon extremely detailed regulations underpinned by a draconian system of mutual responsibility that entangled every member of a unit. Soldiers might be executed for the slightest transgressions, though the heaviest penalty was always reserved for behavior that endangered the army or mission.[8]

As asserted in the extended statement, "people do not have two things they fear equally. If they fear us they will despise the enemy; if they fear the enemy, they will despise us," rewards were expected to provide battlefield incentives, but punishments coerced behavior.[a, 9] For example, according to "Army Orders" (*Junling*) in the Sung Dynasty *Huqian Jing* (*Classic of Tiger Lock*) composed by Xu Dong at the turn of the 11th century, in the realm of secrecy "Anyone who learns the plans or passwords and talks about them outside should be executed." In comparison, the very early *Art of War* only speaks about extreme punishments in conjunction with espionage activities, stating "If the mission is exposed before it has begun, the spy and anyone who was

informed should be put to death." Out of the fear that hidden scouts or clandestine agents might overhear useful talk about preparations or activities, all discussion of military matters within the camps was not just prohibited, but also rigorously enforced.

At the same time, while this panoply of security measures regulated and physically protected the camp, they couldn't ensure spies wouldn't penetrate or disgruntled or avaricious soldiers wouldn't betray the army's plans. Only the commander's efforts could accomplish the task of keeping secret what should be kept secret. According to a late formulation found in the esoteric *Bingfa Baiyan* (*One Hundred Words of Military Strategy*) dating to just after the Ming's collapse or about 1650 AD,

> Something that isn't divulged to the wrong people is termed 'secret' (mi, 秘). One man's affairs are not leaked to a second person, tomorrow's actions are not leaked today. Refine and extend this [idea], being careful not to allow the slightest gap."[b]

All the military writings in China's lengthy tradition stress secrecy's importance in terms similar to those first expressed in the *Art of War*. For example, according to the famous Warring States (403–221 BC) text attributed to the great Zhou Dynasty strategist Lu Shang, the *Tai Gong*

Liutao (*Tai Gong's Six Secret Teachings*):

> In employing the army, nothing is more important than obscurity and silence. In planning, nothing is more important than not being knowable. The greatest affairs are not discussed, while the employment of troops is not spoken about. Moreover, words that discuss ultimate affairs are not worth listening to. If your plans are heard about, the enemy will make counter plans. If you are perceived, they will plot against you. If you are known, they will put you in difficulty. If you are fathomed, they will endanger you."[10]

Several strategists asserted that any loss of information or other failure in this regard would entail severe consequences:

> If we maintain secrecy while the enemy has leaks, we will always be victorious. But if the enemy maintains secrecy while we have leaks, the enemy will always be victorious.[11]

> If the enlightened plans of strategists are leaked, they won't be successful. If they are kept secret, they will be useful. When they become evident, misfortune will be attracted. When they

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a. The passage continues: "When the general is able to implement the Dao to awesomeness, his commanders will fear him. When the commanders fear their general, the people will fear their commanders. When the people fear their commanders, then the enemy will fear the people."

b. Literally, "the thickness of a hair." (Jie Xuan, the *Bingfa Baiyan's* author, apparently composed this highly abstract work after unsuccessfully opposing the Manchu conquest that resulted in the Qing Dynasty with a locally raised force and then disappearing.)

於不意謀莫善於不識夫先勝者先見弱於敵而後
同非國工也事莫大於必克用莫大於玄默動莫神
已失之後者非上聖也智與衆同非國師也技與衆
戰無與戰故爭勝於白刃之前者非良將也設備於
待張軍善除患者理於未生善勝敵者勝於無形上
也夫兵聞則議見則圖知則困辨則危故善戰者不
其狀不足見也修而往忽而來能獨專而不制者兵
語用兵不言且事之至者其言不足聽也兵之用者
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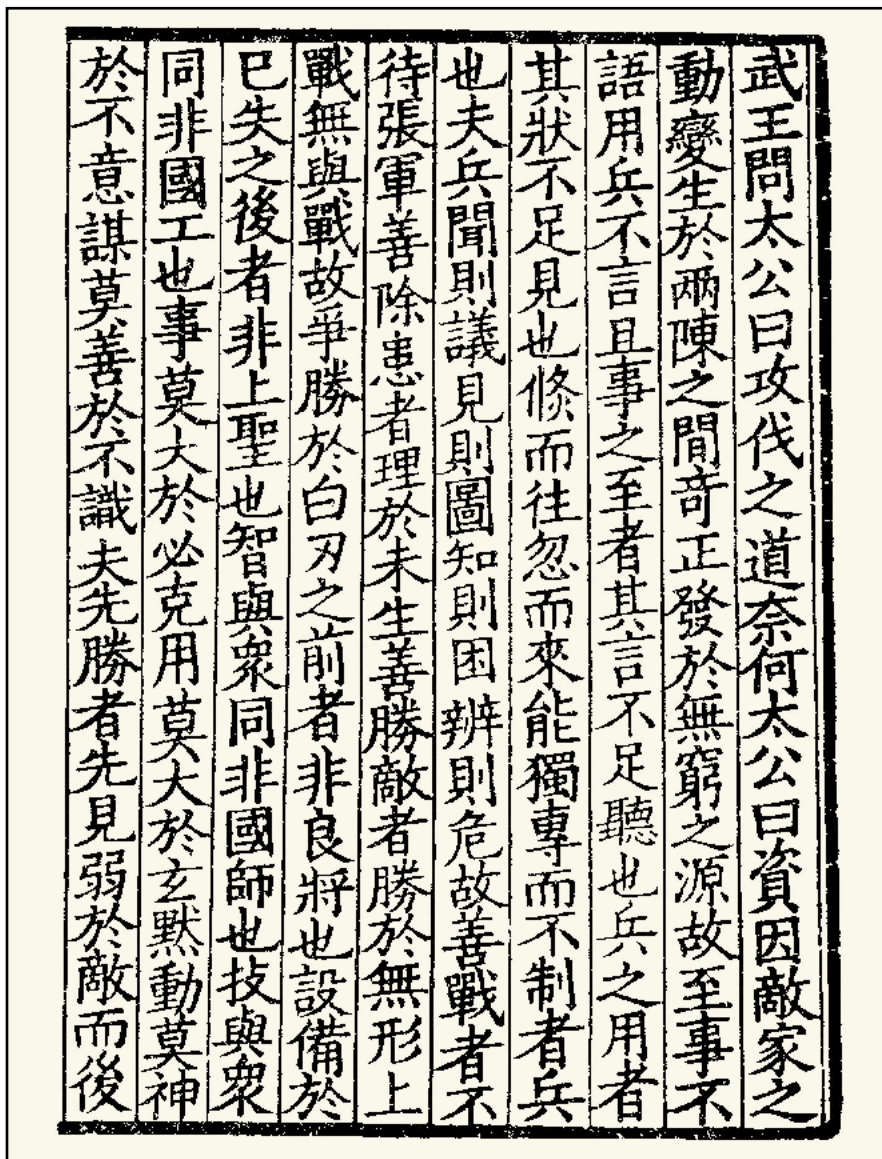
A leaf from s woodblock print of *Tai Gong's Six Secret Teachings*. The print is a readily available copy of a Sung Dynasty (960–1279) print..

remain concealed, the army will be preserved.[a, 12]

Two statements that appear in the *Liutao* regarding the need to be secretive were repeatedly cited thereafter:

The greatest affairs are not discussed, and the employment of troops is not spoken about. Moreover, words that discuss ultimate affairs are not worth listening to, the employment of troops is not so definitive

as to be visible. Only someone who can exercise sole control, without being governed by other men, is a military weapon.[13]

In the Tao of planning, thoroughness and secrecy are treasured.[14]

The late Warring States *Wei Liaozi* (尉繚子) then observed that "control of the army is as secretive as the depths of Earth, as dark and obscure as the heights of Heaven." The *Three Strategies of Huang Shigong*, dating to the Former Han (206 BC–8 AD), proclaimed, "For the general's plans one wants secrecy. When the general's plans are secret, treacherous impulses are thwarted. If the general's plans leak out, the army will not be able to effect the strategic disposition of power."[15]

The noted early Tang commentator and theorist Li Quan concluded, "Plans are concealed in the mind but affairs are visible in external traces. One whose thoughts and visible expression are identical will be defeated, one whose thoughts and visible expression differ will be victorious. Therefore, the highest plans are not spoken about, great military affairs are not discussed. It is subtle and mysterious."[16]

Commanders sometimes became obsessed with secrecy because it could be betrayed in many ways. According to the *Bingfa Baiyan*: "When it comes to secrecy in meetings, the fear is affairs will leak out in discussions. The fear in discussions is that secrets will be leaked by appearance. The fear for appearance is that they

a. The passage appears under the definition for yin, which generally means dark, passive, or hidden, as opposed to yang which is bright, active, and visible. Yin is defined as "what wisdom cannot perceive."

"What you cast aside in the light may be reaped in the darkness."

will be leaked by emotions. The fear for secrets in emotions is that they will be leaked in dreams and sleep."[17] Accordingly, Li Quan earlier offered the following advice:

> *Be profound like the Mysterious Origin free of all images, be an abyss like the unfathomable depths of the sea. When you attain this,* yin *and* yang *can no longer be employed to calculate your intentions, ghosts and spirits will be unable to know them, techniques and measures unable to impoverish them, and divinatory methods unable to fathom them, so how much more so enemy generals!*[18]

While esoteric and difficult to implement, the thrust to absolute secrecy is clearly apparent.

Ignorance and Its Implications

Fearing the usual security measures would always be inadequate, Sunzi advocated the radical approach of concealing the commander's plans even from his own officers and troops:

> *It is essential for the general to be tranquil and obscure, upright and self-disciplined, and able to stupefy the eyes and ears of the officers and troops, keeping them ignorant. He alters his management of affairs and changes his strategies to keep other people from recognizing them. He shifts his position and travels indirect routes to keep other people from being able to anticipate him.*[19]

In short, "When you mobilize the army and form strategic plans, you must be unfathomable."[20]

Nevertheless, Sunzi obviously assumed the army would be capable of implementing the commander's plans despite being ignorant of them:[a]

> *At the moment the general has designated, it will be as if they ascended a height and abandoned their ladders. The general advances with them deep into the territory of the feudal lords and then releases the trigger. He commands them as if racing a herd of sheep – they are driven away, driven back, but no one knows where they are going."*[21]

Despite the difficulties entailed by his approach and the infrequency of its implementation, it was a much embraced idealization. According to the Sung dynasty *Wujing Zongyao*, "Whenever about to mount an attack or undertake a siege, only the commanding general knows about it. Even the officers in charge of responding are not informed in advance."[22] Shortly thereafter, Ho Boshi said, "The marvelousness of employing the army lies not just in deceiving the enemy, but in also stupefying the ears and eyes of our own officers and troops."[23] And someone known as the Taibai Shanren added, "The military values the Tao of deception not just to deceive the enemy, but also to deceive our officers and troops."

The most complete and sophisticated exposition appears in an anonymous very late Ming dynasty (1368–1644) compilation known as *Ruminations in a Grass Hut* (*Caolu Jinglue*) under the rubric of "Esteem Secrecy" (尚 祕):

> *Military affairs are a question of subtle strategy. If the commander fails to completely conceal his strategy, it will allow the officers and troops to perceive chinks. Then, when the enemy hears about them, they will prepare. Thus, the army should not know in advance where it is to attack and the commander should be calm and composed. Quickly advancing once your spies learn the enemy is unprepared is the secret to advancing the army.*

> *Beware of leaking clandestine strategies and unorthodox plans even when dreaming and sleeping. Focus upon keeping your deep, dark, far reaching actions from having any discernible traces for then even ghosts and spirits will not be able to ferret them out and the wise will not be able to make plans [against] them. Only thereafter will all your actions accord with your desires.*

The author of the *Ruminations* included some specific suggestions for commonly encountered situations in his discussion of the topic:

> *Sometimes you should be as secretive as a virgin, sometimes as elusive as the wind and thunder. Sometimes what is commonly said will be incorrect, but do*

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a. In Strategic Military Power" he speaks about how "strategic power" coerces soldiers to act as desired, irrespective of their inclinations.

"Only those without form cannot be ensnared. . . . For this reason, the Sage . . . moves in the formless so that his deployments cannot be fathomed."

not seek to correct it. Sometimes you will have to endure rancor and suffer doubt, but do not try to exonerate yourself. When your knowledge precedes others, it is difficult to inform other men about the crux. Even though you question your subcommanders about your plans, you should still not reveal [anything] because what you cast aside in the light may be reaped in darkness. Confounded and unable to fathom your plans, the army's officers will remain tranquil and pensive. Isn't this what is meant?

However, despite the concept's seductiveness, according to China's own historical records, this sort of absolute secrecy not only proved too extreme for common realization, it invariably engendered insurmountable problems because large operational forces cannot instantaneously implement complex strategies in a real world. Even the most self-reliant commander must allocate assignments and receive assistance in formulating tactical measures, planning logistical and physical activities, disseminating unit orders, and mobilizing and maneuvering the army in accord with his intent. Depending upon the situation, the process might require as little as a few hours or extend over days or weeks.

Actual discussion of the hindrances posed by extreme secrecy didn't arise until the Sung dynasty when incursions and persistent threats from highly mobile steppe peoples severely taxed China's ability to respond militarily. The most incisive appraisal appears in the *Bingfa Baiyan*:[24]

Generals have stomachs and hearts, thighs and forearms, eyes and ears, claws and teeth, hands and feet, blood and pulse.[a] They are all parts of a single body. If secrets are kept from the entire body, how will it different from keeping a secret from myself? But among them there are the perspicacious and the not perspicacious, those who are circumspect in speech and those who are not, those who are brilliant and those who are not, and those who contend for achievement and those who do not. If I do not select and carefully guard against the others, then those who guard me may, on the contrary, misconstrue (wu 誤) *my affairs. How will this differ from me leaking them myself? Thus, the prime technique of secrecy is to keep secret what should be kept secret, but not keep secret what need not be secret."*

In this more realistic approach to maintaining secrecy, one long practiced by default, the solution becomes simply vetting people and trusting appropriately, as needed: "Commanders not only cannot dwell in isolation, they cannot act alone or formulate plans solely by themselves. For affairs that cannot be undertaken alone, it's just necessary to be careful about whom you entrust them to. If you want to undertake secret affairs, first seek out men who keep secrets."[25]

The effects and implications turn out to be surprisingly expansive: "The origins of action should be concealed, the employment [of plans] silenced at the mouth. Nevertheless, it doesn't do any harm to speak about things that can be spoken of in order to show one's credibility. When this sort of sincerity is constantly extended, what isn't secret will become the context for the secret."[26] Albeit with greater and lesser degrees of success, this is the approach that predominated throughout Chinese history.

Formlessness and Nebulosity

Unexpected complexities prompted disagreements about how best to preserve secrecy. The unimaginative, who tended to be in the majority, were usually satisfied with mundane measures such as demanding silence on the part of all the participants and augmenting physical security. Others, still fearful of clandestine agents and the potential actions of the disaffected, advocated two far more sophisticated approaches: being "formless" and adopting a dazzling array of deceptive measures. While the former generally relied upon physical techniques such as obscuration and concealment, the latter well accorded

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a. These of course euphemistically refer to his close associates, staff, observers, and so forth, reflecting an analogy that first appears in the *Liutao* chapter, "The King's Wings." The idea of the mind controlling the four limbs is also prominent in the military writings.

with the assumption that 'warfare is the Dao of deception"[a] to exploit misinformation equally with feints, misdirection, and deceit to become unfathomable.

Within this context debate arose over whether it was better to be formless or deceptive. The latter has the collateral benefit that enemies might be manipulated to good advantage, the former ensures not just being unknowable, but also causes the enemy to disperse their forces in order to prepare against multiple possibilities and simultaneously induces doubt. As many critical military concepts, being "formless" was first discussed in almost incidental fashion in the *Art of War*:

> *When someone excels in attacking, the enemy does not know where to mount his defense. When someone excels at defense, the enemy does not know where to attack. Subtle! Subtle! It approaches the formless. Spiritual, spiritual. It attains the soundless.*[27]

Or, as summarized in the *Liutao*,

> *When matters are not discussed and the general preserves their secrecy, he is spirit like.*[28]

The very image of formlessness (wu xing 無 形, "without form") or being formless prompted esoteric disquisitions:

> *Only those without form cannot be ensnared. For this reason, the Sage conceals himself in the*

"Ever since antiquity commanders have been defeated because of a single misjudgment."

> *originless so that his emotions cannot be perceived. He moves in the formless so that his deployments cannot be fathomed. Without tactics or appearance, he acts appropriately. Without name or shape he changes and creates an image. Even among those with acute vision, who can spy out his nature?*[29]

Whatever the connotations, in essence it isn't synonymous with invisibility (as some thinkers misconstrued), but with avoiding any display of identifiable characteristics, with being nebulous and amorphous to external observers.

Divergences apart, the true objectives shouldn't be overlooked: keeping enemies ignorant, preventing them from discerning reality, inducing doubt, and compelling them to wastefully expend energy. According to the *Art of War*, "If I can determine the enemy's disposition while I have no perceptible form, I can concentrate my forces while the enemy will be fragmented."[30] The basic principle is simply keeping the enemy ignorant so that "the location where we will engage the enemy must not become known to them. If it is not known, then the positions they must prepare to defend will be numerous . . . and then the forces we will engage will be few."[31]

Although the emphasis historically fell upon physical means, such as manipulating the army's disposition

to conceal its actual strength and the presence of incipient formations— "hiding yang in yang"—and basic obscuration techniques, including the use of smoke and dust, deceptive measures often played a crucial role.[32] However, their real importance lay in manipulating the enemy and causing doubt and misjudgment, thereby maintaining secrecy through confusion and uncertainty. Early thinkers who believed it is impossible to prevent the loss of vital information therefore advocated the deliberate release of misinformation to not only distract the enemy and structure their perceptions, but also foster sufficient confidence in the certainty of projected events that information and behavior contrary to the orthodox interpretation would be offhandedly dismissed.

Causing doubt and misjudgment remains focal, but the numerous possibilities ("noise") being fostered renders any real information the enemy might acquire highly problematic, accounting for chapters such as "First Attack their Minds" (先 攻 其 心) and "Use Many Methods to Cause Misjudgments" (多 方 誤 之) in the early Tang dynasty (618–907) *Tongdian*.[b] This approach reflects a traditional belief in the importance of causing misjudgments in the enemy. The best expression is found in "Cause Misjudgment in the Enemy" (誤 敵), a chapter in the Ming dynasty *Ruminations in a Grass Hut*:

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a. First articulated in the *Art of War*'s "Initial Estimations," it is a belief that underpins Chinese military thought and pervades its military writings.

b. The *Tongdian* was compiled by Du You (735-812), one of the 10 noted commentators to the *Art of War*, to provide a historical retrospective on governing. Not only are 15 seminal chapters devoted to military topics, the book initiates the case study approach in China.

"Of the many harms that can beset an army, vacillation is the greatest. Of disasters that can befall an army, none surpasses doubt."

Ever since antiquity, commanders have been defeated because of a [single] misjudgment.[a] Misjudgment is quickly followed by error, just when victory and defeat hang in the balance. It might be compared with a Wei-ch'i game in which the two opponents confront each other, even recognized heroes. But if their subordinates make mistakes, the enemy will certainly take advantage of them and the entire enterprise will be lost. Surpassing generals have therefore always employed numerous measures to cause misjudgments in the enemy.[b]

As usual, the *Bingfa Baiyan* contains a quintessential discussion which defines "doubt" (yi 疑) actively, as "perturbing and confusing the enemy's mind." According to the accompanying explication:

Doubt has been a prevalent affliction ever since antiquity, but it is also something that commanders can bring about. People have eyes so their eyes invariably see things. When they see the semblance of shapes (形 似) they are doubtful. People have ears so their ears invariably hear things. When they hear the semblance of things (形似) they are doubtful. People have minds so their minds cannot be without perception. When they perceive the semblance of shapes (形似) they are doubtful.

The conclusion for another term, "make the enemy doubtful" (yidi 疑 敵), analyzes the effects:

Armies are victorious through being decisive but defeated by numerous doubts. Therefore, strategists must have methods for making the enemy doubtful. When the enemy is doubtful they will carefully investigate the subtle possibilities and not advance, they will conceive of numerous affairs and be unable to be decisive. We should take advantage of their indecision and, in response to ongoing changes and transformations, decide our strategy and adopt unorthodox measures.

Thus, while both physical and abstract means are employed and concealment and silence maintain ignorance, misinformation and disinformation[c] lead people astray and cause doubt, which is corrosive and debilitating:

Of the many harms that can beset an army, vacillation is the greatest. Of disasters that can befall an army, none surpasses doubt. . . One who excels in warfare will not lose an advantage when he perceives it or be doubtful when he meets the moment. One who loses an advantage or lags behind the time for action will, on the contrary, suffer from disaster.[33]

While not necessarily the primary objective, secrecy can therefore be preserved through complexity and misdirection. Accordingly, Li Quan asserted:[34]

When your mind is filled with great plans, display only minor concerns. When your mind is planning to seize something, feign being about to give it away. Obscure the real, cast suspicion upon the doubtful. When the real and doubtful are not distinguishable, strength and weakness will be indeterminable.

Many means and elaborate measures were adopted in the highly theorized quest to effectively create false impressions and spread spurious and deceptive information, including misleading announcements, phony orders, benign and pernicious rumors, disinformation agents, phony defectors, duped prisoners, naive spies,

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a. In Book IIII of *Questions and Replies,* purportedly a dialogue on military affairs between the surpassing Tang general Li Ching and Emperor Taizung, Li says: "In ordinary situations involving the use of the military, if the enemy does not make an error in judgment, how can our army conquer them? It may be compared with a Chinese chess match in which the two enemies begin equal in strength. As soon as someone makes a mistake, truly no one can rescue him. For this reason, in both ancient and modern times, victory and defeat have proceeded from a single error, so how much more would this be the case with many mistakes?"

b. The text continues by enumerating a number of measures and techniques that can cause misjudgment, all intended to "display a form that the enemy must follow."

c. Disinformation being deliberately fabricated for a specific purpose, in contrast with misinformation which lacks avowed objectives other than causing confusion.

double agents, misplaced documents, and the victims of the "ploy of suffering flesh," which turned upon physically punishing an individual who then provides the enemy with supposedly vital information. Apart from providing a motivation for defecting, the individual's highly visible suffering, even mutilation, of course attests to the information's veracity.[a] The effectiveness of such measures was generally ensured by following the principle of misleading people by their own beliefs and by confirming feints and false thrusts with visible, at least minimal, physical activity.

Realm of Communications

Being confined to natural transportation modes based upon horses and rivers, communication wasn't just slow and difficult in the pre-electronics era, but also highly vulnerable and easily interrupted. Messengers might be slain, preventing delivery, but the real danger lay in them being captured and in written materials being intercepted. Distant relay systems that relied on smoke and fire, while more rapid, were also susceptible to the vagaries of inclement weather, errors arising from the difficulty of managing the fires and smoke, and inattention among the intended recipients.[b] More significantly, as the meanings of such signals were gener-

> **Staff officers were specifically assigned to the task of "creating deceptive signs and seals and issuing false designations and orders" as early as the Warring States period.**

ally transparent, astute enemies could easily fabricate false signals.

The most succinct discussion of the need to securely transmit information is found in the *Bingfa Baiyan* under the rubric of chuan (傳), which basically means "transmit" or "pass on."

> *Successfully passing on information is termed transmission (chuan).*
>
> *When an army on maneuver doesn't have any method of communicating, the divided will not be able to rejoin nor the distant respond. When they are mutually cut off, they will be defeated. On the other hand, if it's possible to communicate, but the communications aren't secret, the information will enter the enemy's calculations.*

The authors conclude, "Transmitting information is the most important thing in the army, but every army's commands differ. The essence is keeping the enemy from becoming aware of them while our own army knows them. It is the most secret of affairs."

Techniques for clandestine communication began to evolve as early as the Warring states period, including ciphers, physical concealment, multiple messengers, and transmission in parts.[c] Accordingly, the *Bingfa Baiyan* states:

> *When two armies meet, it's necessary to arrange secret signals.* [To communicate] *a thousand li away, you should use ordinary appearing letters. Write incomplete characters, send out formless letters, even employ non-paper* [bamboo] *strips. Those involved in transmitting them won't be knowledgeable, anyone who manages to obtain them won't find a trace. It's spiritual, spiritual!*

Authenticity might be ensured by a variety of physical means, not that tokens of confirmation couldn't be stolen. Elaborate seals, copies of whose impressions were maintained in central locations, confirmed the assignment of authority and the identical, matching halves of small cast bronze figures, especially tigers, validated orders and secret communications. Tallies with similar meaning were also created from bamboo strips

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a. These and other often highly complex measures such as making the dubious more dubious and the real deliberately obvious to foster the conviction it couldn't possibly be real, as well as numerous historical illustrations, are reprised in Sawyer, *Lever of Power*.

b. A simple, early border warning system is attested as early as the eighth century BC. More elaborate systems from the Han onward that exploited fires, smoke, and even flags atop relay towers were capable of conveying basic information about enemy activities including force size both day and night, providing only heavy weather didn't thwart efforts. ("Hou Wang" in the *Beizhenglu* notes all the ways in which wind, rain, dust, and fog can interfere with transmission reliability.)

c. Clandestine changes that radically affected the meaning could be affected by codes or special phrases embedded within the document or by simple physical means as the style of calligraphy, size of characters, darkness of ink, type or size of paper or bamboo strip. External cues could also be provided by the messenger's insignia, physical stature, color of horse, type of weapons he might be carrying, or even the type or color of the dispatch container. For an extensive discussion, see Sawyer, "Clandestine Communication in Historic China," Journal of Military and Strategic Studies, Autumn 2014.

Shadows have shadows within them, but shadows also have reality within them.

split in half in the expectation that the edges, writing, and deliberate incisions would need to match exactly. Coins were also sometimes cleaved for the same purpose.[35] Negatively, unless additional verbal checks had been prearranged, anyone who managed to acquire these tallies and challenge coins could readily employ them to authenticate false orders and forged communications.

Conversely, purportedly valid communications that fall into enemy hands can be employed for disinformation purposes. Given that the steppe peoples were thoroughly familiar with the meanings of imperial smoke, fire, and flag signals, they were the most obvious candidates for exploitation despite the limited informational scope. Common techniques included reversing the significance of signals coupled in binary pairs, shifting the entire range of meanings, and transposing the methods of communication so that, for example, outgoing orders signaling a retreat now signified an attack.[a] Similarly, drums might be employed to sound a retreat and gongs an attack, reversing the usual significance.

The capture or apparently unwitting loss of written communications similarly provides an opportunity to disseminate disinformation and thus ensure the secrecy of actual plans. Forged documents might be misplaced or "accidentally" left out for spies to view, letters with misleading contents dispatched to real individuals in the expectation of interception, phony letters intended to implicate or estrange recipients sent to important enemy personnel, and contrived orders and plans allowed to be captured in variants of the famous Haversack Ruse.[36] Staff officers were specifically assigned to the task of "creating deceptive signs and seals and issuing false designations and orders" as early as the Warring States period.[37] However, just as with physical obscuration measures, these efforts need to be systematic, consistent, and unremitting because singular events might go unnoticed or be too jarring to have dramatic impact.

Final Musings

The systematic implementation of disinformation not only misleads the enemy and muddles their thoughts, preserving secrecy, it often spawns sometimes lethal doubt, as an incident involving Cao Cao and Yuan Shao illustrates. On the verge of being annihilated in 200 AD, Cao Cao unexpectedly defeated Yuan Shao's vastly superior force and embarked on the trajectory that would eventually see his descendants usurp the emperorship.

While Yuan Shao's army was encamped at Guandu across the river from Cao Cao, one night a reconnaissance patrol under Xun Yu managed to slay a messenger racing away from Cao's encampment. As a result, they captured an order calling for the urgent dispatch of provisions. Concluding the enemy was growing weak from hunger, Xun advised Yuan Shao to quickly strike. However, Yuan Shao rejected the suggestion even though his forces outnumbered the enemy three to one because another adviser claimed it had to be a ruse, that the crafty Cao Cao had anticipated the messenger's capture and concocted this false information to lure them into attacking.

Fearing his advice would continue to be rebuffed by an indecisive leader, Xun defected to Cao Cao and betrayed the location of Shao's food depot. Cao Cao immediately exploited the newly acquired information to lead a famous nighttime cavalry raid that resulted in seizing desperately needed provisions and incinerating the rest, causing severe consternation in Yuan Shao's own camp. When Cao Cao subsequently decimated Yuan's famished and dispirited army, Yuan reportedly became so enraged that he suffered a stroke and died, ending the danger to Cao Cao's small force.[38] Even though a vital secret had been divulged, Cao Cao's reputation for exploiting unorthodox and deceptive tactics engendered the doubt needed to moot the loss.

> *Shadows have shadows within them, but shadows also have reality within them. Within the real there are shadows, within the real there is reality. Reality and shadow thus inexhaustibly complete each other.*[39]

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a. Other physical means included disguise, first advocated in the Warring States period but primarily used along the border, and changing army insignia, flags, and designations. (A number of such measure are discussed in "Countering Leaks," *Cuiwei Beizhenglu*.)

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Endnotes

1. Sun Zi, *Art of War (Sunzi Bingfa),* "Planning Offensives" (Sawyer, *Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Basic Books, 1993, reprinted in 2007).
2. Ibid. Conversely, "One who knows neither the enemy nor himself will invariably be defeated in every engagement."
3. *Art of War,* "Initial Estimations." The chapter's title, "Shi Ji" (始 計), may also be translated as "Initial Assessments."
4. *Art of War,* "Employing Spies."
5. Ibid.
6. For examples, see "Military Instructions, II" in the *Wei Liaozi* and "Li Ying" ("Establishing Camps") in the *Caolu Jinglue* (*Ruminations in a Grass Hut*).
7. "Orders for Segmenting and Blocking Off Terrain" in the *Wei Liaozi* preserves an example of the strict controls imposed upon random movement within camps.
8. For an example of Qin military regulations, see "Orders for Severe Punishments" in the *Wei Liaozi*. The *Wei Liaozi* contains several chapters on responsibilities, regulations, and punishments.
9. *Wei Liaozi,* "Tactical Balance of Power in Attacks."
10. *Tai Gong Liutao* (*Tai Gong's Six Secret Teachings*)*,* "The Army's Strategic Power." (Translation in *Seven Military Classics*)
11. "Fan Xie," *Cuiwei Beizhenglu (Cuiwei's Record of Northern Punitive Expeditions).* (The book was written by Hua Yue [Hua Cuiwei], who served as a border commander around the turn of the 13th century.)
12. *Bingfa Baiyan (One Hundred Words of Military Strategy),* "Yin."
13. *Tai Gong Liutao*, "The Army's Strategic Power."
14. "Three Doubts." "Junhao" ("Army Orders") in the *Caolu Jinglue* similarly insists upon preserving the secrecy of all orders until they are issued.
15. *Huang Shigong Sanlue, (Three Strategies of Huang Shigong),* "Middle Strategy." (See translation in Sawyer, *Seven Military Classics*).
16. *Taibai Yinjing* ("Submerged Plans"). Apparently an experienced mid-level military commander, Li Quan was probably active from about 745 to 765 CE. The book's title is somewhat awkward to render in English because taibai, meaning "great white," refers to the planet Venus which was as prominently associated with warfare in China as Mars was in the West. Yinjing is generally taken as "hidden" or "esoteric" classic.
17. *Art of War*, "Secrecy."
18. *Taibai Yinjing*.
19. *Art of War*, "Nine Terrains."
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.
22. *Wujing Zongyao* (*Essentials of the Military Classics*), "Xingjun Yuesu" ("Constraints for Maneuvering the Army").
23. *He Boshi Luelun, "Wei-lun, xia"* ("Discussion of Wei, part II"). A national professor of military science late in the 11th century, Dr. He was one of the editors of the vastly important compilation of classic military writings known as the *Wujing Qishu* (*Seven Military Classics*) consisting of the *Art of War*, *Wuzi*, *Sima Fa*, *Liutao* (*Six Secret Teachings*), *Huangshi Gong Sanlue* (*Three Strategies of the Duke of Yellow Rock*), *Wei Liaozi*, and *Tang Taizung Li Weigong Wendui* (*Questions and Replies between Tang Taizung and Li Weigong*) that became a basis of the imperial military exams. (Translations of all seven may be found in Sawyer, *Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*.)
24. *Bingfa Baiyan*, found under the definition for "secrecy," mi.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. *Art of War*, "Vacuity and Substance."
28. Ibid., "Army's Strategic Power."
29. *Huainanzi*, "Bingluexun." A heavily Daoist but eclectic book purportedly intended as a guide for governing, the *Huainanzi* was compiled under the patronage of the king of Huainan, Liu An, and presented to the throne in 139 BCE. (Liu An was eventually executed for planning a revolt in 122 BCE.)
30. *Art of War*, "Vacuity and Substance."
31. Ibid.
32. For a discussion of manipulating overt and hidden aspects, *yang* and *yin* respectively, as well as "vacuity" and "substance," to mesmerize and mislead the enemy, see Ralph Sawyer, *Lever of Power: Military Deception in China and the West*.
33. *Tai Gong Liutao*, "The Army's Strategic Power."

34. *Taibai Yinjing.*
35. A number of these are discussed in the *Wujing Zongyao* chapter "Chuanxin Pai."
36. For a discussion and examples see Sawyer, "Disinformation, I," *Lever of Power*.
37. Cited from "The King's Wings," *Liutao*.
38. For further discussion of various aspects of this clash, see Sawyer, *Tao of Deception of Fire and Water*.
39. *Bingfa Baiyan,* "Shadows."

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The Rise and Fall of an Intelligence Discipline– and Its Uncertain Future

James B. Bruce*

Formal Intelligence Community efforts to understand and counter foreign denial and deception have experienced a rollercoaster ride in post-WWII US intelligence history.

There is no single facet of the warning problem so unpredictable, and yet so potentially damaging in its effect, as deception. ... [A study of deception cases] will only reinforce a conclusion that the most brilliant analysis may founder in the face of deception and that the most expert and experienced among us on occasion may be as vulnerable as the novice.

– Cynthia Grabo, *Anticipating Surprise*[1]

Formal Intelligence Community (IC) efforts to understand and counter foreign denial and deception (D&D) have experienced a rollercoaster ride in post-WWII US intelligence history. Champions have been few, resources uncertain, and appreciation of its importance lacking. Two exceptional periods provided high points. Under the leadership of Directors of Central Intelligence (DCIs) William Casey (1981–87) and James Woolsey (1993–95)—buoyed by help from outside the IC—counter-D&D enjoyed strong support, and CIA and the IC developed a discipline to work effectively in the field. Yet the discipline was not sustained.[a]

This article surveys the origins of the counter-D&D discipline, its notable accomplishments, and the failure to sustain a durable counter-D&D capability. It also examines the implications of a mercurial history, argues that the capability is still needed, and suggests approaches to achieving it in the present. This interpretation is largely based on direct experience; interviews and correspondence with key participants; and informed critiques of previous drafts, though without the benefit of internal classified records. This article examines the two periods in which countering foreign D&D became a recognized IC priority. Each period presented an uncommon convergence of a DCI favorably disposed toward D&D with an external constituency insisting on more of it. And both periods demonstrated the responsiveness of IC leaders to strong, high-level Executive Branch and congressional engagement.

The substantive D&D focus of both periods was on the question

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a. In IC terminology, analytic disciplines refer to fields of analysis that require specialized knowledge, tools, training, and standards of quality.

* During the Casey period, the author served as a senior analyst with the newly established Foreign Intelligence Capabilities Group (1984–86), which began the first D&D portfolio in CIA's Directorate of Intelligence (DI) (now Directorate of Analysis [DA]). During the Woolsey period (1994–95), the author served as assistant to National Intelligence Council (NIC) Vice Chairman Lynn Hansen, who worked with Woolsey to re-establish the counter-D&D capabilities that had declined precipitously after Casey's departure; and later with the DCI (now DNI) Foreign Denial and Deception Committee (1995–2004).

of potential foreign deception of intelligence—and, therefore, potential deception of US policymakers. Secondarily, both periods addressed foreign denial that had degraded the capability of US intelligence to collect against the hardest targets. These were mainly the USSR under Casey, and Russia, China, and other state and non-state actors under Woolsey and later. Where deception intends to mislead policymakers, denial by impeding collection and starving analysis is meant to impair policymaker decisionmaking by weakening intelligence support to policy.[2]

Well before the 1980 election of Ronald Reagan and William Casey's arrival as DCI, antecedents in the D&D field helped set the stage for Casey and Woolsey. Though US intelligence had no identifiable, organizational counter-D&D capabilities, episodic attention to foreign D&D did exist:

- The first traceable study was done in 1946 by the Office of Naval Intelligence, "A Study on the Capabilities of the Russians to Employ Covert Deception Against the United States." That was followed a decade later, in 1957, by the first IC intelligence estimate, led by CIA, on foreign D&D, entitled "Soviet Capabilities for Deception," Special National Intelligence Estimate 100-2-57. This community D&D product grew out of a recommendation of the *Killian Report* and the National Security Council (NSC).[3]

- Arguably CIA's most significant penetration of the Soviet Union,

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Defining Denial & Deception

Denial refers to activities and programs designed to eliminate, impair, degrade, or neutralize the effectiveness of intelligence collection within and across any or all collection disciplines, human and technical.

Deception refers to manipulation of intelligence collection, analysis, or public opinion by introducing false, misleading, or even true but tailored information into intelligence channels, including open sources such as social media, with the intent of influencing judgments made by intelligence producers, and/or the perceptions of their consumers.

GRU Col. Oleg Penkovsky, had provided before his execution in 1963 at least two documents on D&D (maskirovka) practices with Soviet mobile missiles.[4]

- CIA's former imagery component, the National Photographic Interpretation Center, undertook a range of studies in the 1970s of camouflage, concealment, and deception (CC&D) surrounding Soviet military forces, weapons, and installations.

- CIA's Office of Research and Development in the late 1970s, lacking internal expertise, contracted with consultants to examine deception methods. In addition to its instructive case studies, a notable study identified 10 deception maxims of theoretical relevance rooted in the experience of deception planning.[5]

- The Air Force Special Studies Group had a highly focused pro-

gram in the late 1970s and 1980s, which addressed Soviet CC&D calculated to protect Soviet military targets of possible interest to US strategic planners. This group's discovery of the deception involving deep underground command facilities at Russian sites highlighted possible Soviet preparations for protracted nuclear warfare.

Driving such concerns in the mid- to late-1970s were difficult arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union. The IC took on the responsibility of monitoring compliance with key arms control treaties of the day and the Nuclear Threshold Test Ban Treaty for addressing policymaker concerns about whether maskirovka and CC&D would degrade US intelligence reporting.[a] Some in the White House and Congress worried that successful Soviet espionage may have enhanced its CC&D and thus neutralized or blunted US space-based intelligence.

It is against this 35-year backdrop of relatively few relevant studies, little demonstrable expertise in the doctrine and practice of foreign D&D and the means to defeat it, and growing policymaker concerns about the capacity of intelligence to support strategic decisions, that leaders under DCI Casey had little choice but to ramp up IC counter-D&D capabilities.

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a. These treaties included the Strategic Arms Limitations Treaties (SALT I and SALT II), the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, and the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions,

William J. Casey and the Launch of D&D

I have decided that a more aggressive and focused US program is essential to better understand and counter Soviet CC&D activities.

—President Ronald Reagan, 1983[6]

DCI Casey brought unique D&D credentials to the job. An Office of Strategic Services veteran who served in the European Theater during World War II, he later wrote a book on the American Revolution that highlighted the importance of deception. Casey's personal library contained a good collection of books on that topic, and he had a solid understanding of military and political deception, including Soviet active measures, before he became DCI.

Casey carried this passion for deception with him to the job. Robert Gates, CIA Deputy Director for

Casey carried this passion for deception with him to the job. Robert Gates, DDI under Casey for four years, identified Soviet deception as one of the several topics that "really got [Casey] fired up."

Intelligence under Casey for four years, identified Soviet deception as one of the several topics that "really got [Casey] fired up. His appetite in these and related areas was insatiable."[7] As Reagan's campaign manager and with the standing of a cabinet member,[a] Casey's access and potential influence was unmatched by any previous DCI. Apart from Casey himself, the key Executive Branch institutional players were the White House, its NSC staff, and the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB), now called the President's Intelligence Advisory Board. In Congress, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) played a vital role.

President Reagan himself had a strong interest in deception.[8] Senior Director for Intelligence Kenneth deGraffenreid recalled the president saying that "deception is the mother's milk of tyranny," referring to lessons he had learned from the attempted communist takeover of the actors' guild that Reagan had led in Hollywood years before. Other senior White House staffers—seasoned cold warriors all, including Richard Allen, Judge William Clark, Bud McFarlane, and John Poindexter—aligned well with the president on the significance of Soviet deception.

Two early White House documents spotlighted its importance: National Security Study Directive 2, issued in February 1982, focused on hostile foreign intelligence collection, human and technical, against the United States, as well as active measures (covert influence operations), including subversion and disinformation inimical to US interests. A pointed critique of US counterintelligence, NSSD-2 called for an "urgently needed" review of the capabilities, resource priorities, and vulnerabilities of the US government to "detect and counter this hostile threat in its totality."[9] White House concerns about foreign spying were amply reinforced with the Integrated Damage Assessment, an interagency study produced by a team of CIA, DIA, and NSA analysts during 1982–83. That landmark study examined significant Soviet spy cases resulting in revelation of major secrets of US imagery and signals

Director Casey briefing President Reagan, Secretary of State George Shultz, and Treasury Secretary Don Regan on 2 September 1983 on Soviet attack on KAL 007 Korean airliner. Photo, NARA Ronald Reagan Library, C16798-17.

a. Both the director of National Intelligence (DNI) and director of CIA were made cabinet-level positions in February 2017. https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-trump-administration/the-cabinet/.

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Detecting Deception at Deep Underground Facilities near Chekov and Sharapovo

Beginning in the late 1940s, the Soviet Union began building deep underground facilities at Russian sites. Those near Chekov and Sharapovo, both outside of Moscow, were notable for their heavily concealed national command authority wartime relocation functions. Disguised to look like research and development facilities to US overhead collection, they thus conveyed a deceptive imagery signature to analysts. Only persistent analysis in the early 1980s by the US Air Force Special Studies Group based on anomaly detection and change comparison over 10 years of imagery coverage eventually exposed the facilities' true purposes.

Designed principally to ensure the survivability of the top leadership and provide continuity in command and control during wartime, these exceptionally well-hidden, deep underground, facilities implied Soviet intentions and capabilities to prepare for protracted nuclear war. This discovery caught the attention of the Reagan White House and strategic targeting planners in the Pentagon.[14]

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intelligence collection from space-based platforms.

Other deception-related developments the White House found unsettling included the discovery of well-hidden, deep underground facilities at Chekov and Sharapovo (See textbox above.) and the continuing foreign espionage revelations that culminated in the 1985 "Year of the Spy," so named when the John Walker, Jonathan Pollard, Ronald Pelton, Edward Howard, and Larry Wu Tai Chin spy cases broke into public view.

Following the NSC study directive in 1982, a seminal D&D policy document, National Security Decision Directive-108, appeared the following year. It noted that "the Soviets have established a program to counter Western signal and imagery intelligence collection [and] may be attempting to deceive the West regarding the intent and purpose of basic policies, e.g., arms control."[10] NSDD-108 directed the creation of an organized national deception analysis capability. It specifically discussed the Soviet doctrine of strategic

maskirovka, which employs camouflage, concealment, and deception and consists of "measures to deceive or mislead the enemy with respect to Soviet national security capabilities, actions, and intentions."[11]

Over President Reagan's signature, the decision directive states that "immediate actions shall be taken to identify, train, equip, and assign adequate resources devoted specifically to analyzing, and, where appropriate, countering Soviet CC&D."[12] Assigning the implementation of the decision to the DCI, the intent of these White House documents was to allocate greater IC resources to address deception and to make the rationale more explicit.[13]

The key drivers at the NSC, Senior Director deGraffenreid and Soviet expert and NSC Director John Lenczowski, who had come over from State, both had strong interest in countering Soviet expansionism. Both also appreciated the constructive role that intelligence could play in a new strategy to support a robust posture to counter, even roll back, Soviet ambitions in strategic and

conventional arms, and geopolitical competition with the United States in Europe, Asia, and Third World. Both also strongly suspected that US intelligence was underperforming against the Soviet target; and if US intelligence wasn't already a victim of Soviet deception, then it soon would be. To them, CIA and the rest of the IC stood naked as vulnerable targets of highly-skilled Soviet deception planners. NSDD-108 warned of possible Soviet deception of their basic policy intentions.

For example, the NSC had noticed similarity in the themes being pushed in Soviet active measures and propaganda aimed principally at Western academic, journalist, and think-tank audiences. These included themes contemporaneously appearing in classified reporting. This raised the question of why the overall KGB narrative of a more benign Soviet Union was also being echoed in clandestine US intelligence reporting, often presented as "unevaluated intelligence."

Skeptics at the NSC began to question whether the IC could be complicit, if unwittingly, in legitimating Soviet disinformation themes under the imprimatur of intelligence—poorly vetted reports but judged good enough to disseminate. Such concerns added impetus to growing policy-driven incentives to engage the IC in focusing on strategic deception, in part to improve intelligence, but also to identify its own susceptibility to being deceived. Some skeptical senior customers began wondering whether CIA reporting was any more trustworthy than suspect materials issuing from American academics and journalists, often viewed by Reagan-era

policymakers as naive in their gull-ibility to Soviet propaganda.[15]

As the White House was gear-ing-up to prompt a real IC push against Soviet deception, related concerns were surfacing at the Department of State. There, the Active Measures Working Group, set up in 1981 as an interagency effort to better understand and counter the Soviet propaganda apparatus, began a different focus on another key aspect of strategic deception that employed KGB covert influence operations.[16] These operations presented disin-formation themes that characterized the USSR as a non-threatening, non-communist, and even pluralistic superpower.[17] The Active Measures Working Group helped focus IC attention on the neglected propaganda aspect of deception. Enjoying support from CIA and others in the IC, the group succeeded in elevating the collection priorities for reporting on Soviet disinformation and clandestine influence operations, demonstrat-ing along the way that analysis of high-interest issues suffers without good collection.

At PFIAB, where Casey him-self had served as a member during 1975–76, two of its new members were staunch advocates of develop-ing better counter-D&D capabilities at CIA and elsewhere in the IC. Ambassador Sy (Seymour) Weiss, and former Director of Livermore National Laboratories Johnny Foster, then at TRW, which did sensitive classified contract work for US intel-ligence and defense clients, became

> *The upshot of the Casey period is that foreign D&D gained the stature—at least to some of its external advo-cates and internal practitioners—of a new and necessary, if still quite limited, intelligence effort.*

the PFIAB spokesmen for the cause. Both had Reagan's ear.

The Department of Defense also advocated a greater focus on D&D through such voices as Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, Director of Net Assessments Andy Marshall, and senior DIA analysts Jack Dziak and David Thomas.

In Congress, the SSCI, prodded by its chairman, Senator Malcolm Wallop (R) of Wyoming, also played an influential advocacy role for better D&D capabilities. Wallop was ably supported by two key SSCI staff-ers, Angelo Codevilla and William (Bill) Harris. Both were staunchly conservative, and both viewed US intelligence as a puny weakling when compared with its cunning Soviet adversary.

Including the DCI himself, when taken together with the White House and NSC, PFIAB, and SSCI, this constellation presented a formidable array of senior policy-level and con-gressional oversight forces to cham-pion the importance of understanding and countering foreign D&D. From his perch at the NSC, deGraffenreid crafted study documents and policy directives addressing deception and demanded briefings on what CIA was doing to get its act together. Weiss and Foster at PFIAB raised concerns about D&D implications of recent espionage cases involving technical collection, and proposed conferences

on such topics as Soviet propa-ganda and disinformation. They also reminded CIA leadership of strong White House interest in Soviet decep-tion. Senator Wallop and his staffers, Codevilla and Harris—perhaps the toughest outside critics—requested briefings on progress and sent letters to IC leaders demanding more of it.[a]

Effects of the Newly Emerging D&D Environment

The upshot of the Casey period is that foreign D&D gained the stat-ure—at least to some of its external advocates and internal practitioners—of a new and necessary, if still quite limited, intelligence effort. These gains happened despite internal resis-tance from some CIA managers jeal-ously guarding their own resources and from influential skeptics in both the DI and the Directorate of Operations (DO) that deception was a non-problem and a distraction from higher-priority intelligence needs. Palpable resistance to deception in the DO reflected its searing expe-rience during the preceding period (1954–74) when James Angleton had been chief of counterintelligence (CI).

Largely driven by the divisive case of Soviet defector Yuri Nosenko, whose bona fides were clouded by decade-long suspicions of a Soviet "master plot" theory of deception through the mid-1970s, senior DO

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a. When perceived as politically motivated, policy outsiders who demand intelligence reforms are often resisted as unwelcome kibitzers by IC professionals. According to Gates, both deGraffenreid and Codevilla were "politicals" on the Reagan transition team and, along with other hard line conservatives, "found little they liked at CIA." Gates, *From the Shadows*, 191.

> ### *Nearly 40 years after CIA's founding, the Foreign Intelligence Capabilities Group became the first CIA element of its kind.*

officers were living in a post-Angleton recovery period, fiercely unsympathetic to claims of strategic deception. Counterintelligence excesses during Angleton's tenure as CI chief were premised on an exaggerated image of all-pervasive Soviet deception.[18] As the DO was trying to recalibrate its CI focus on a less deceptive Soviet threat after Angleton's forced retirement, it became increasingly, if understandably, resistant to outside calls for greater emphasis on what, to them, was an imagined threat that had earlier proven to be counter-productive to its operations. A few managers in both directorates even felt that this new account area amounted to pandering to the recently empowered conservative Republicans then in the White House and in Congress, or even politicization. Notwithstanding some internal pushback, notable counter-D&D accomplishments of the period were substantial.

Emergence of an external constituency for D&D intelligence

With policy interest at the level of the White House and congressional oversight led by the chairman of the SSCI, the DCI was far from standing alone in his recognition of a glaring intelligence weakness in its ability to comprehend and counter foreign denial and deception. Others in senior policy positions cared about this issue too and, as long as they did, it was hard for intelligence leaders to spurn the demand or appear tone

deaf or non-responsive to persistent, high-level consumer and oversight expectations for tangible progress in this neglected area. External pressures forced internal change.

DCI Establishment of an IC Denial and Deception Analysis Committee (DDAC)[19]

DDAC began in 1984 as one of four IC committees operating under NIC auspices and formally established by DCI directive (DCID) the following year.[a,20] These interagency committees played important advocacy roles, highlighting intelligence problems at risk of neglect or understated priority. The newly-established DDAC operated under the supervision of the National Intelligence Officer for Foreign Denial and Intelligence Activities (NlO/FDIA), an artifact of the early- and mid-1980s.[b] DDAC was chaired by a CIA officer, the committee's only chairman for its 10 years, 1984–94.

Just before DDAC's establishment, a small group of representatives from CIA, DIA, and NSA undertook a significant analytical product during 1982–83, an integrated damage assessment (IDA) of major spy cases. Here the Soviet espionage cases of William Kampiles (CIA), Christopher Boyce (contractor) with Andrew Daulton Lee, and the British Jeffrey Prime (GCHQ–Government Communications Headquarters), were examined for

D&D implications of compromised space-based collection systems.

DDAC operated in an atmosphere of unusual secrecy, partly because of its work with sensitive espionage cases and because it became an IC focal point for special collection programs to defeat foreign D&D. This special-access focus was based on the idea that traditional collection capabilities at the TS/SCI level were already well understood by the Soviets—chiefly through US classified information having been acquired through espionage as documented in the IDA, and from serious press leaks—and thus vulnerable to complex D&D countermeasures. The justification for some special collection initiatives was their potential to defeat foreign D&D, and DDAC advocated for several new and promising compartmented programs.

CIA's establishment of the Foreign Intelligence Capabilities Group (FICG)

Stood up in 1982, this new DI analytic component was initially focused on damage assessments from technical collection compromises to alert collectors and analysts to foreign denial and/or deception implications that might result from such losses of classified sources and methods. Foreign deception emerged as a dedicated account area.

Nearly 40 years after CIA's founding, FICG became the first CIA element of its kind. Its creation was not without controversy. As described by the new DDI (and future DCI

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a. The others were the Scientific and Technical Intelligence Committee, the Joint Atomic Energy Intelligence Committee, and the Weapons and Space Systems Intelligence Committee.

b. Three senior officers served as NIO/FDIA until it was disestablished; each served one-year terms: Rutledge "Hap" Hazard, Fred Hutchinson, and Murat Natirboff.

Countering Foreign Denial and Deception

and secretary of defense), Robert M. Gates, arguably Casey's most influential deputy, the FICG was "at last" established "to study Soviet and other foreign covert actions and deception activities around the world."[21] Unmentioned in his memoir, but understood by some analysts at the time, Gates rejected objections from the DO to another group that would, in effect, study the KGB.[a]

First established as a staff component in the DI's Collection Requirements Evaluation Staff (CRES), the new D&D group was reassigned to the DI's Office of Global Issues (OGI) in 1985 as a line organization with analytic production responsibilities. Though labelled a "group," its actual size and organizational ranking were equivalent to a DI branch, with fewer than 10 analysts, a GS-15 chief, and placed as a subordinate element in a DI office-level component. The justification for the move from CRES, a staff element, to OGI was said to be that the placement of the function into a DI line, analytic unit would better institionalize and enhance the discipline than leaving it in a staff element not accustomed to preparing analysis for broad dissemination. In principle, this seemed a good idea. In practice, it later failed, as had FICG.[b]

> **At DCI Casey's request, the NIC produced its first National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Soviet deception in nearly 30 years, the two-volume NIE 11/11,** Soviet Strategic Deception**, for the Reagan administration in 1985.**

Convening of a major conference joining D&D advocates and opponents

A noteworthy accomplishment in FICG's short life was sponsorship of a conference in 1984 that engaged key proponents (nearly all external) and opponents (all internal) of an IC counter-D&D program. Held at the TS/SCI level, the two-day gathering assembled roughly 75 senior officials and experts for "a good substantive thrashing," as then described by Tom Callanen, chief of FICG. The seniority of the attendees revealed the emerging prominence of the issue. The advocates included DCI Casey, SSCI Chairman Wallop, PFIAB members Weiss and Foster, senior staffers deGraffenreid and Lenczowski from the NSC, and Codevilla from the SSCI.

Opponents included National Security Agency Director Lincoln Faurer, CIA's chief of counterintelligence, and the DO's senior Soviet reports officer. C/NIC and DDI Gates along with an array of seasoned IC analysts and operations officers from key agencies were favorable to D&D or generally open to it; a few opposed. The most controversial discussions—and not settled there—hinged on whether the Soviets

had ever conducted or even would or could conduct strategic deception against the United States. Tactical or operational deception was not an issue. An after-action report prepared for the DCI by the present author, labelled those making the case for counter-D&D capabilities as "believers," those opposed as "non-believers," and the undecideds—mostly analysts—as "agnostics." While few if any minds were changed during the conference, the agnostics gained a much better appreciation of the assumptions and implications of the polar views expressed by the others.[22]

The first CIA and IC deception course

A conference recommendation proposed establishing a course in deception analysis. DDI Gates tasked that action to CIA's Office of Training and Education (OTE) which began a seven-day course in 1985, enrolling students from across the IC.[c] The course greatly increased D&D awareness and pioneered counter-deception analytic methodologies.[23]

The Second NIE on Deception

At DCI Casey's request, the NIC produced its first National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Soviet deception in nearly 30 years,

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a. At this time, the DO claimed a monopoly on KGB reporting as its exclusive prerogative at CIA, and it opposed the creation of a DI component that would study Soviet intelligence. Presumably with DCI Casey's backing, Gates simply disregarded the objection. In his memoir, Gates also alluded to his efforts to overcome strong DO resistance to giving analysts access to DO operational files to improve understanding of Soviet covert action. *From the Shadows,* 207.

b. The assignment of FICG to OGI was a controversial move since, with a Soviet focus, the Office of Soviet Analysis (SOVA) might have been a more logical home for the new capability. But its assignment to SOVA, or to the Office of Scientific and Weapons Research, was apparently spurned by both offices. Even the receiving office, OGI, was conflicted about the acquisition. Apparently not seen as a long-term commitment, just a few years later the fledgling capability was disassembled, and its analysts reassigned.

c. Increasingly restricting attendees from the IC, OTE dropped the course about six years later, claiming lack of interest at CIA.

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the two-volume NIE 11/11, *Soviet Strategic Deception*, for the Reagan administration in 1985. Managed by NIO for Strategic Programs Lawrence Gershwin, the estimate produced an in-depth and balanced analysis. Regarded as highly informative to readers in the policy and intelligence communities, it nevertheless failed to fully satisfy the IC's most persistent critics on the SSCI staff.

Elevated visibility of D&D as a "legitimate" account area

To many, even intelligence professionals, deception was a new interest area. Until then, with the sole exception of the Air Force Special Studies Group, where D&D analysis was its exclusive mission before the Casey period, no other such components appeared elsewhere in the IC. A focus on D&D also served as an unexpected, internal quality assurance function in that any discovery of a successful deception against US intelligence would unavoidably

expose intelligence failure. It is an inescapable feature of D&D analysis that comes with the territory, as illustrated in the Rabta deception. (See textbox below.) As the discovery of successful deception exposes earlier failure, its study thus predictably generates few allies in the DI or the DO, and managers of many line analytical components failed to find virtue in supporting its work.

Unique Attributes of the Casey Period

The convergence of both an emerging external constituency and a rare DCI favoring focused attention to D&D—excepting the lone Woolsey case summarized below—is not likely to be often repeated. To sum up, the Casey period established and empowered a new counter-D&D capability in the IC because it successfully combined:

- A constellation of external decisionmakers who forcefully argued

the need to understand and counter foreign D&D.

- Effective engagement of the key US government institutions.

- Constructive oversight and congressional support to resource this needed capability.

- A DCI, C/NIC, and DDI who favored a counter-D&D capability and exercised effective leadership to achieve it.

A pioneering achievement of the Casey period was the emergence of a counter-D&D mission for US intelligence, and the beginnings of a new intelligence discipline with the mandate, focus, and developing expertise to carry it out.

James Woolsey and the Relaunch of D&D

Not teaching deception to intelligence analysts is akin to a navy that does not teach its sailors how to swim.

—James Woolsey, 1993[25]

Casey's departure in January 1987 and the attrition of the Reagan-era constituency that valued D&D turned the period into a transient moment in the life of counter-D&D capabilities as the emphasis given to the topic rapidly atrophied.[26] Lacking sustained customer and oversight interest, and with other priorities competing for attention, successive DCIs William H. Webster (1987–91) and Robert M. Gates (1991–93) did little or nothing to ensure that the fledgling D&D capabilities built under Casey would remain a permanent fixture at CIA or institutionalized elsewhere in the IC. Perhaps ironically, Gates had a solid

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Deception Detected: The Rabta Chemical Weapons Plant

No Fire After All—The Plant Still Works

The double-edged sword that a detected deception may also unearth previously erroneous analysis is illustrated in an important discovery made possible only through focused attention on potential foreign deception of US intelligence. In March 1990, a freshly-trained D&D alumnus of CIA's Deception Analysis course begun under Casey discovered that a fire had been staged at a chemical weapons plant at Rabta, where the Libyans sought to show that the CW plant there had become inoperable due to a putative fire. Apart from its substantive importance, this case highlighted the organizational sensitivities of revealing how US intelligence had gotten spoofed and why that mattered.

Earlier published intelligence reporting of that presumptive fire was corrected by using a newly innovative counter-D&D analytic tradecraft (Analysis of Competing Hypotheses). The new analysis revealed the deception showing painted burn marks on the factory walls, burned tires accounting for the smoke, and even ambulances dispatched to the scene implying casualties. In actuality, that intact plant was perfectly functional. It had suffered no fire and was continuing its CW production apace. The publication of this significant multi-INT deception case was controversial as it necessarily exposed earlier analytic error as an unintended consequence when successful counter-D&D analysis uncovered it.[24]

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grasp of Soviet strategic maskirovka as it related to arms control verification and Soviet strategic nuclear and conventional forces, as well as of active measures; and no DCI or DNI since could claim a comparable understanding.

Yet both Gates and Webster had higher priorities. D&D resources were not an issue under Webster, and neither he nor Gates seemed attentive to consolidating past gains. Not long after Casey's death in May 1987, for example, the DI's FICG was disassembled in a two-stage process: by incrementally rotating some of its analysts to the DO's new Counterintelligence Center to complete their work there or move on to other topics; and by repurposing the previously dedicated D&D billets to other analytic priorities. Absent its external constituency and abetted by the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent "peace dividend" that much reduced intelligence appropriations, the standing and limited resources earlier assigned to D&D were destined to decline in the early post-Cold War period. And they did.

Reversing the Post-Casey Demise

DCI Woolsey, President Clinton's unlikely neoconservative appointee, effectively restored the D&D effort, eventually at levels that would exceed even those under Casey. Like Casey, Woolsey too had an abiding interest in deception. Shortly after his February 1993 arrival at CIA Headquarters, he reportedly had asked how much and what kind of work was being conducted there on the topic. When he visited a CIA training site, he specifically asked

about training in deception analysis. Learning there was none—cancelled, he was told, due to lack of interest, according to an attendee—Woolsey replied that this approach to intelligence was akin to a navy that did not teach its sailors how to swim. He also invited R.V. Jones, the noted British deception scholar-practitioner, to CIA to present him an award for his scientific accomplishments in technical countermeasures against both German air attacks and defenses in World War II.[27]

Woolsey's time at CIA fortuitously coincided with unconnected stirrings in Congress for elevated attention to foreign D&D. In the fall of 1994, shortly before the November elections, Congressman Newt Gingrich called for a series of briefings on deception and intelligence. Three D&D analysts were assembled for the task, each briefing on separate occasions: David Thomas

from DIA, an NRO analyst, and the present author from CIA. Gingrich was joined by other members, including Representatives Dick Armey and Henry Hyde, along with several congressional staffers.

I concluded from my own interaction with Gingrich that his interest was substantive and not political; he seemed genuinely concerned whether US intelligence was outmatched in its ability to detect and counter strategic deception. He focused primarily on Russia and China. I also gathered from our exchange that Gingrich was discouraged by what he had learned in the briefings and resolved to do something about it.

When Congress reconvened after November and well into 1995, new Speaker of the House Gingrich acted. In a series of letters and in numerous questions for the record on countering foreign denial and deception, Chairman of the House Permanent

DCI Woolsey (near right) at 23 March 1994 meeting about Bosnia in the White House Situation Room. Counterclockwise from the DCI's right: Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General John Shalikashvili, Secretary of Defense William Perry, President Clinton, Secretary of State Warren Christopher, National Security Advisor Tony Lake, UN Ambassador Madeleine Albright. (Photo: William J. Clinton Presidential Library)

Following production of the NIE, the FDDC, empowered for the first time with a solid understanding of foreign D&D conducted by 10 state actors, developed a strategic roadmap to counter it.

Select Committee on Intelligence Larry Combest peppered the DCI, secretary of defense, and some agency heads (NRO was a frequent recipient) about this issue. On-site staff visits, requested briefings, and hearings to monitor progress soon followed. The message was unmistakable: As with the SSCI during the Casey period, HPSCI leadership now also fully grasped the importance of foreign D&D. Supported by influential congressmen and knowledgeable staffers, Congress again helped move D&D back out of the closet and onto a front burner.

In another fortuitous coincidence of timing, the NIC itself had been independently gearing up for the same objective. The new vice chairman of the NIC for evaluation, Ambassador Lynn Hansen, like Woolsey and Casey, arrived at his job already savvy about D&D and its centrality to good intelligence. Hansen's earlier experience as an arms control negotiator had prepared him well for his unexpected new task. He valued intelligence support to policy and insisted that it be right—i.e, uninfluenced by the targets on whom intelligence is reporting and fully capable of identifying attempted deceptions.

Hansen commissioned an internal analysis, akin to a zero-based review, to inventory and assess IC-wide capabilities and make recommendations to address shortfalls.[28] The study results showed a dramatic decline in D&D analysis capabilities since the end of the Casey period. It recommended a substantial increase in billets and concerted leadership attention to elevate the priority of D&D, and to redress the shortfalls.

Concurring with study findings, Hansen moved swiftly to get a memo from NIC Chairman Joe Nye to DCI Woolsey reporting these results and recommendations, along with an accompanying draft DCI action memo to all IC agencies directing corrective actions. Woolsey did not hesitate to concur with the findings and recommendations, or to sign and send an action memo to the IC and to otherwise support the proposed turnaround in assigned resources for D&D that his memo directed.

A significant action called for in the 1994 Woolsey memo was the rejuvenation of the IC-wide effort under DCI leadership to coordinate community actions: This meant replacing the moribund DDAC. NIO/S&T Lawrence Gershwin was named chairman of the new Foreign Denial and Deception Committee (FDDC), and the author became its executive secretary. FDDC's newly expanded subcommittee system was staffed by IC agencies, and monthly meetings of agency representatives were held to report and assess progress, consolidate gains, and undertake new actions.

Though Woolsey left ClA in January 1995, the favorable climate he set carried over for nearly a decade after, notably under DCI George Tenet, who ably extended the period of accomplishments. During this time, FDDC Chairman Gershwin, in his NIO capacity, also initiated for the first time a comprehensive NIE to assess the D&D capabilities of multiple adversary states. The estimate grew out of Gershwin's initiative, but it was also driven by the secretary of defense's request for an NIE, which reflected broader D&D customer interests across the Defense Department and the combatant commands.[a] The scope of the study selected the top threat countries identified in PDD-35.[b] Completed in 1998, the NIE assessed the full range of foreign capabilities to deny US collection against these priority targets and their associated capabilities to deceive US intelligence and thus mislead its customers. It also helped develop a diverse cadre of talented analysts.

a. The Reagan-era spike in White House-level interest in foreign D&D risks obscuring the longer-term demand for such intelligence from military customers. From the origins of the Cold War to the present, the Department of Dcfense, the combatant commands, and the military services have been the largest and most persistent of its customers at strategic, operational, and tactical levels. These D&D intelligence users have demonstrated more continuity of interest in the subject than the more transient political appointees in other national security positions.

b. Presidential Decision Directive-35 then served as the White House document that prioritized collection and analysis. It preceded the National Intelligence Priorities Framework, which began shortly before the establishment of the office of Director of National Intelligence in 2005 and firmly took root after that.

Following production of the NIE, the FDDC, empowered for the first time with a solid understanding of foreign D&D conducted by 10 state actors, developed a strategic roadmap to counter it. Building on a key NIE-generated insight—the D&D implications of the growth of foreign knowledge about US intelligence, and how exploiting that knowledge results in countermeasures to defeat collection—the FDDC roadmap issued in 2000 crafted a comprehensive counter-D&D architecture, or strategy. Requiring community-wide engagement to succeed, the strategy focused on actions addressing intelligence collection, analysis, training, research and development, and security and counterintelligence.[29] With the full engagement and contributions from all major IC agencies, achievements in these five areas aimed to correct resource shortfalls and to prioritize counter-D&D work and its effectiveness throughout the IC.

Although dating the end of this Woolsey-driven period of reinvigorated D&D activity must be imprecise, it is fair to surmise that its productivity—with the notable exception of FDDC's advanced D&D studies initiative (below)—peaked roughly in the early 2000s, and, in all D&D areas other than education and training, its period of decline started shortly thereafter. In the wake of 9/11 and the Iraq WMD failure, the irony of a needed D&D focus for successful counterterrorism and counterproliferation efforts can only be noted here.

Though also short-lived, the D&D restoration started under Woolsey and subsequently led by DCI Tenet and NIO Gershwin would advance considerably

D&D Revival: Effects of the Woolsey Period

Though also short-lived, the D&D restoration started under Woolsey and subsequently led by DCI Tenet and NIO Gershwin would advance considerably, with gains rivaling those achieved under Casey:

Provided evidence-based rationale

The path-breaking NIE laid the substantive foundations for much improved understanding of foreign D&D throughout the IC; defused much of its "political" controversy; established an empirical basis justifying the resources required to address it; and helped legitimize the work, not as a favored topic of a politically conservative customer base but rather as a necessary and integral element of effective intelligence.

Recovered analytic capabilities

During this period many of the capabilities originally started under Casey were restored and in some cases they were exceeded. For example, the number and strength of D&D analytical components in the community, numbers and skills of analysts who populated them, and development of broader awareness of the topic and appreciation for its importance all grew.

Expanded training and education resources

Also greatly improved were the quality and quantity of D&D training and education in the IC, chiefly through the FDDC-sponsored graduate-level Denial and Deception Advanced Studies Program. The DDASP was offered initially at the Joint Military Intelligence College (JMIC) and then at the National Intelligence University (NIU). (See textbox below.) Notably, this program moved D&D study beyond 101-level training to establish graduate-level education designed to cultivate in-depth research skills and substantive expertise in the IC. Its impact was unprecedented in the number of intelligence officers certified in the program; in its academic outreach to the service intelligence centers and to colleges and universities with an intelligence studies program; and in embedding the DD ASP into the Australian Intelligence Community.

The Denial and Deception Advanced Studies Program

From 2002 to 2015, DDASP offered a five-course accredited graduate certificate program at the Joint Military Intelligence College and later the National Intelligence University. Starting with a class of 12 in its first year, at its height the program graduated 60-plus students a year with a total of more than 750 graduates throughout the IC and US government. It expanded to the Five Eyes community through its program offered in Australia and also to the US combatant commands at CENTCOM, SOCOM, and SOUTHCOM. With DDASP graduates becoming senior leaders in the FBI, EUCOM, DIA, SOCOM, CENTCOM, and NSA, and at other government agencies, many of the FDDC initiatives and production ideas in recent years were a direct result of DDASP graduates reaching out to the FDDC leadership.

> ***Through a HPSCI initiative, congressional funding for a major D&D awards program designed and managed by the FDDC was mounted to recognize and reward significant contributions to successful counter-D&D analysis, collection, and leadership.***

A related accomplishment, like DDASP also engineered by FDDC Vice Chairman Kent Tieman, was the establishment of the Barton Whaley Deception Reading Room in the CIA Library. Developed to support in-depth academic research from a multi-disciplinary perspective, its holdings, a gift of America's leading scholar of deception, Whaley's personal library collection added significantly to CIA's previously limited resources on the topic.[a] Finally, although CIA- and DIA-sponsored D&D training courses preceded Woolsey, by this time the other large agencies also offered their own 101-level courses tailored to their unique intelligence requirements. For example, courses at NSA emphasized SIGINT D&D, while those at NIMA and its NGA successor emphasized imagery vulnerabilities; NRO training focused on D&D correlates with orbital dynamics and novel technologies and collection concepts to defeat foreign D&D targeting spaceborne platforms and sensors.

Professional incentives

Through a HPSCI initiative, congressional funding for a major D&D awards program designed and managed by the FDDC was mounted to recognize and reward significant contributions to successful counter-D&D analysis, collection, and leadership. For over a decade beginning in the mid-1990s, hundreds of IC professionals of all ranks and from all agencies were honored with awards, mostly monetary, at an impressive annual ceremony in the 500-seat CIA auditorium. Program speakers included DCI John Deutch, DDCIs General Gordon and John McLaughlin, ADCI for Collection Charlie Allen, and senior IC leaders Joan Dempsey, General Burgess, and Larry Kindsvater. The D&D awards program ended due mainly to a lack of funding to sustain it.

Testing effectiveness of CC&D materials

The FDDC analyzed the technical effectiveness of various materials adversaries could use for denial and deception purposes, notably to conceal and camouflage activities and objects of interest to US and allied intelligence. This work enhanced understanding of foreign use of countermeasures to collection and improved US and allies' abilities to defeat them.

Leaving the fringe for the mainstream

Much assisted by the NIE and greatly expanded training, D&D collection and analysis as intrinsically important attributes of competent agencies were largely "mainstreamed." Notwithstanding that only a relatively small number of analysts could claim D&D as their principal area of subject matter expertise, it was no small achievement that by the end of this period, many, perhaps most, analysts in the IC came to understand that D&D was an accepted, "normal," and even a needed area of intelligence focus. Evidence of this emerging cultural shift was increasingly expressed in routine interactions of D&D experts and non-experts in D&D courses and in FDDC's routine activities, monthly meetings, and annual award ceremonies.

Emergence of a new discipline to support a new, if secondary, mission

Recovering and even extending the Casey-era gains under Woolsey and after, the idea gained traction solidly within the D&D community that countering foreign D&D was integral to both the foreign intelligence and counterintelligence missions. A key element of the still-developing D&D infrastructure to accomplish that was having skilled experts in specialized collection, analysis, and training who collaborated with each other to build new knowledge. Under able IC leadership and that of their own varying agencies, D&D advocates and specialists built the makings of a new intelligence discipline where none had existed before Casey, and which, even after the Woolsey-period gains, was then still too new and too fragile to assume its permanency.

Finally, among notable differences between the Casey and Woolsey periods was the IC's leadership role. FDDC, the NIC's interagency D&D committee, performed much more effectively than did its more secretive and insular DDAC predecessor under Casey. Aided by a broader charter, FDDC expanded D&D knowledge by leveraging the substantive work of the NIE and in building analytical

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a. The collection has recently been relocated to the Intelligence Community's National Intelligence University in Bethesda, MD.

capacity, collection requirements, advanced education and greater training, and outreach to related communities such as R&D, security, and counterintelligence. In this approach, FDDC succeeded in forging a broad IC consensus on many D&D issues as integral to good intelligence. Attention to D&D was good government. But institutionalizing such gains proved more daunting.

Despite these impressive accomplishments, the key failure of the period was the failure of IC leaders to institutionalize counter-D&D work as an intelligence topic worthy of the resources to sustain it over the long haul. Ironically, "mainstreaming" of the discipline would underpin arguments against institutionalization of organizational aspects of the discipline—i.e., "every analyst should be a D&D analyst," a refrain similar to arguments opposing creation of formal warning institutions.

After Woolsey: Stasis and Decline

Seen from a D&D optic, the transition from DCI Woolsey to Tenet was seamless. (Between them, DCI John Deutch's posture appeared D&D-neutral and largely indifferent.) Perhaps reflecting his earlier assignments with the SSCI and the White House, George Tenet (1997–2004) brought to his new job an enlightened appreciation of D&D. The NIE on foreign denial and deception was begun under Tenet, and it was Tenet who took the completed NIE to the National Foreign Intelligence Board for IC approval. Without hesitation, he approved and signed out the comprehensive DCI counter-D&D "roadmap," the March 2000 FDDC

Fully mainstreaming it risks losing the specialized expertise and institutional memory it requires for both effectiveness and institutionalization.

strategy document that mobilized a concerted IC focus on this renewed collection and analysis priority. Perhaps even more so than Casey, he surpassed all previous DCIs in addressing the threat that media leaks of classified intelligence pose to sensitive sources and methods.

Indeed, Tenet vigorously advocated legislation to better hold leakers accountable for their illegal and damaging revelations.[30] An important achievement under Tenet was the inclusion of D&D as a discrete priority, thus assuring some continuing level of resources for counter-D&D collection and analysis. While Tenet didn't need to start from scratch or rebuild the counter-D&D mission as Casey and Woolsey did, he successfully sustained its previous resources and prioritization. He must be credited as a strong proponent who effectively extended the mission and discipline out to the end of his tenure in 2004, even as its demise began a few years earlier.

Unfortunately, lacking influential D&D customers and intelligence skeptics in the Executive Branch or a powerful D&D constituency in Congress—and with the notable internal exception of the ADCI for Collection Charlie Allen—Tenet had few discernible senior-level allies of the kind needed to sustain D&D resources over the longer haul. His successors have done no better. Indeed, for all their plusses, DCIAs Goss, Hayden, Panetta, Petraeus, and Brennan, along with DNIs Negroponte, McConnell, Blair, and Clapper, preoccupied with counterterrorism, warfighter support,

intelligence reform, IC integration and other issues, have generally demonstrated indifference to the subject.

While no fixed date can easily pinpoint the effective death knell of the hard-won counter-D&D capabilities started by Casey and restored under Woolsey and after, they were clearly on life support not long after 9/11 and probably near comatose within a year or two of the 2002 WMD intelligence failure in Iraq. But today champions of this vital intelligence discipline struggle to advance its use.

Three causes account for its decline: Poor organizational fit, overconfidence borne of seeming mainstream acceptance of the new discipline, and lesser urgency when compared with more immediate threats.

- To a bureaucracy D&D is neither fish nor fowl. An intelligence-wide mission, it is not mainly about collection or analysis or counterintelligence. It is all these and more. And its work spans both line and staff functions. But the organizational odysseys of the D&D components at CIA, DIA, and NSA demonstrate persisting managerial discomfort no matter where they are slotted in the line-and-block chart. Unceasing reorganizations seem never to solve whatever issues prompted them in the first place.

- Notwithstanding the "mainstreaming" gains of "every analyst a D&D analyst," abolishing this

specialty has forfeited the advantages of developing and colocating in-depth subject matter expertise in D&D doctrine, techniques, and countermeasures, as well as institutional memory. Such losses in substantive depth, specialized expertise, and needed management focus ensure a much-degraded counter-D&D capability IC-wide.

- Because intelligence priorities are largely threat-related, the more immediate and tangible threats have historically fared better in the resource competition. Here, the D&D value-added must seem remote. Given the infrequency of discovering major deceptions,[a] sustaining steady resources over the longer haul poses a higher bar. Failing to demonstrate relevance to immediate threats, counter-D&D mission proponents have failed to make a compelling case for scarce resources.

Yet, owing to its centrality in achieving information assurance through maximally effective intelligence, I believe the counter-D&D mission must be an integral element of collection, analysis, and R&D no matter how it is organized; that fully mainstreaming it risks losing the specialized expertise and institutional memory it requires for

both effectiveness and institutionalization; and that underestimating the D&D intentions and capabilities of our highest priority intelligence targets can only result in suboptimal intelligence about them.

*L*ooking Forward: The Case for Rebuilding a Battered Discipline

Where the role of intelligence is to penetrate the secrets of an adversary, the process of counterdeception is not a niche activity within intelligence; it is at the core.[31]

The case against any increases for counter-D&D priority and resources is straightforward: Given tight resource constraints, other more pressing priorities, and the perceived adequacy of present capabilities in the absence of compelling rationale for more, the resource status quo would seem about right. Denial is more properly addressed by collectors, and major deception is always a very low probability in any case. These are reasonable arguments.

Still, the perception of adequacy can be questioned, and it would take a solid zero-based review, something akin to a DoD Capabilities Based Assessment to answer it fully, objectively, and empirically.[b] It is true that countering denial is principally

a collector's responsibility. But that ignores the crippling effects of denied collection on analysis. A study by the author of eight major intelligence failures demonstrated that effective denial of collection was a causative factor in all of them.[c] And, to be sure, major deception is infrequent. But it too was a causative factor in six of eight failure cases. A systematic, data-based study of 161 deception cases between 1914 and 1972 has shown that while it is rarely attempted, deception is the silver bullet that, when fired, nearly always hits the bullseye—its success rate exceeds 90 percent.[32]

Persistence of the D&D threat

Foreign D&D did not cease with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Even lacking an updated NIE or zero-based review, recent cases reported in the media suggest that foreign adversaries continue to use D&D countermeasures apace. Notably, intelligence on a half-dozen of the top intelligence priorities—Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, terrorism, and WMD—is encumbered with significant D&D impairments to complete and reliable intelligence. (See textbox on facing page.) What we don't know, or what we judge with low confidence, is nearly always the result of successful denial. Intelligence gaps on priority targets don't happen by accident; they happen on purpose, caused by denial

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a. Cynthia Grabo attributed the "scant attention to deception" largely to the infrequency of its occurrence. *Anticipating Surprise*, 119.

b. A Capabilities-Based Assessment (CBA) is an early step in the JCIDS process, the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System. The CBA conducts analysis to identify capability needs and gaps, and recommends approaches to address the gaps. It becomes the basis for validating capability needs and results in the potential development and deployment of new or improved capabilities. *Manual for the Operation of the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System*, July 2009.

c. Cases included Pearl Harbor, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Yom Kippur War, Iranian revolution, Soviet biological weapons, Indian nuclear testing, 9/11, and WMD in Iraq. James B. Bruce, "The Missing Link: The Collector-Analyst Relationship," in Roger Z. George and James B. Bruce (eds.), *Analyzing Intelligence: National Security Practitioners' Perspectives*, 2nd ed. (Georgetown University Press, 2014), 157–77.

> **Recent or Ongoing Cases Where Collection Denial or Deceptive Practices May Have Impaired Intelligence Analysis and Warning**
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> Russian power projection and expansionism including its:
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> • Covert intervention in the 2016 and 2018 US national elections through weaponizing cyber operations, and its intentions for the 2020 elections.
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> • Seizure of the Crimea in 2014, and its continuing covert support of pro-Russian forces in the Donbass region intended to extend its control over neighboring Ukraine.
>
> • Significant re-engagement in the Middle East beginning in 2015 starting with military support to Syria, after having almost no role in that region since 1973.
>
> Chinese power projection into the South China Sea such as in terraforming reefs into islands; cyber intrusions to steal sensitive and propriety US data; and significant efforts to manipulate perceptions through social media and specific targeting of US universities through the Confucius Institute and the 1000 Talents Program. Related perception management operations target American youth through movies and gaming, and even investing in US K-12 public and charter schools with objectives being a more China-sympathetic next generation.
>
> North Korean intentions and capabilities regarding nuclear weapons and missile basing and deployments.
>
> Iranian intentions to adhere to the 2015 multilateral agreement (the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) to limit its nuclear programs.
>
> Optimally performing counter-D&D capabilities can neutralize and defeat denial countermeasures against collection and expose attempted deceptions, all calculated to impair or degrade US intelligence effectiveness against top-priority targets.

countermeasures deployed by smart intelligence targets.[33]

Successfully countering D&D, for example, is the only viable path to arms control verification of adversary states. Senior consumers who may be unsatisfied with intelligence on pressing or controversial issues in these six topic areas should demand a significant counter-D&D infusion into our present efforts. And intelligence professionals should educate these consumers on the importance of D&D when collection and analysis may be underperforming. That will not only explain why intelligence is

incomplete and uncertain in many cases; it will also highlight our vulnerability to surprise and error—a message reluctantly given and similarly received. Lacking outside understanding and advocacy for addressing foreign D&D, IC leadership has a bigger responsibility to educate customers of its importance.

Alternative Courses of Action

If improving the standing of the counter-D&D discipline becomes a viable option—as is urged here—any of three alternative approaches to

organizing analysis, or some combination of them, could work. Each has its own pros and cons.

(1) Dedicated analytic units

This, of course, was the model tried under the Casey and Woolsey and later. Despite the managerial discomfort and mercurial attempts at "fit," it is an otherwise proven model. The record of production and accomplishments of these components at CIA, DIA, and NSA should be examined closely and impartially to ascertain the pros and cons of their reconstitution.[a]

(2) D&D analytic cells

Well-trained subject matter experts in foreign D&D could be organized in standalone cells to support multiple analytic units in the larger regional and functional line components, or they could be joined with existing division- and office-level tradecraft cells at CIA and at other agencies that have tradecraft support components. Structured analytic tradecraft has proven its worth in adding rigor and mitigating cognitive bias,[34] which are essential goals of counter-D&D analysis as well. Where existing tradecraft cells lack D&D expertise, it should be added. This important skill—like structured analytic tradecraft itself—can challenge conventional wisdom, identify hard-to-detect problems, connect the seemingly disconnected, and underwrite an important insurance policy against surprise and analytic failure.

(3) Integrated D&D expertise

The least disruptive option (perhaps the weakest without a strong management commitment to make it

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a. Often well-provisioned with trained D&D analysts, the various DIA analytic units, for example, appear to have produced substantially, accurately, and with insight for its demanding and diverse military customer base.

Lacking the most effective means to defeat foreign D&D all but assures we cannot achieve intelligence at its best.

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work) is to integrate substantive and methodological D&D expertise into the first-line regional and functional analytical units. Such D&D analysts should be assigned the same responsibilities in these line units as would be assigned to them in the tradecraft cells, namely to mentor and supervise analysts who lack the expertise to assess and counter the effects of adversary denial on the analysis of issues in their assigned components and in exploring and testing the deception hypothesis where appropriate.

An effective counter-D&D analytic capability is, in my judgment, the single most important component of the complex measures required to defeat the D&D countermeasures adversaries deploy against our collection disciplines. When SIGINT is effectively degraded through encryption, landlines, and couriers; when imagery is weakened through camouflage and concealment, underground facilities, and scheduling activities between predictable satellite overflights; and when human intelligence is neutralized by foreign counterintelligence, the result is starved or misled analysis. Weakened analysis—including especially warning intelligence—deprives policy customers of the information advantage and decision advantage that intelligence is expected to bring. When total intelligence budgets reach tens of billions of dollars annually, it is fair to ask for measures of cost-effectiveness. Intelligence at its best will, or should, overcome intended foreign impediments to its effectiveness.

Lacking the most effective means to defeat foreign D&D all but assures we cannot achieve intelligence at its best. Fully-performing counter-D&D analysis will enhance collection through focused expertise in defeating foreign countermeasures. Enhanced analysis through countering denial will better assess the impact of missing information on intelligence judgments, provide collection guidance, and determine when to test the deception hypothesis with powerful counter-D&D analytic tradecraft. And it will support research and development in both collection and analysis by identifying the most and least promising approaches on the drawing boards to overcoming the D&D impairments that diminish collection effectiveness and analytic accuracy and completeness.

As we learned from Directors Casey and Woolsey, once DCI-level leadership legitimated the beginnings and later re-establishment of a concerted counter-D&D effort, the IC agencies successfully focused on issues most relevant to their respective customer bases. As this is an IC-wide issue with no single agency well-positioned to lead the others in this challenge, only forceful IC leadership at the DNI and DDNI level with a well-staffed and highly effective FDDC-like committee can lead the counter-D&D discipline to play its essential role in ensuring fully-performing intelligence. The loss of these capabilities—and the loss of this discipline—invites the biggest risk, namely the potential for being misled or manipulated by our key adversaries, perhaps leading to an unwelcomed surprise on any of the most consequential issues this nation faces.

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Endnotes

1. Cynthia M. Grabo, *Anticipating Surprise: Analysis for Strategic Warning* (US Government Printing Office, 2002), 119. The book is also available online at https://www.ni-u.edu/ni_press/pdf/Anticipating_Surprise_Analysis.pdf.

2. With appreciation to David Thomas for little-known historical insights, and for numerous suggestions throughout in correspondence and telephone interviews of 23 June, 12 July, 26 October, 5 and 20 November, and 7, 11, and 14 December (all in 2018); and to Kent Tiernan in telephone interviews of 23 October 2018, and 16 June and 11 August 2019, each providing a more detailed understanding of the work of Air Force Special Studies Group, including the discussion of the Soviet deception at Chekov and Sharapovo.

3. Special National Intelligence Estimate 100-2-57, *Soviet Capabilities for Deception*, declassified but redacted, was produced by CIA with the Departments of State, Army, Navy, and Air Force, the Joint Staff, and the Atomic Energy Commission participating; accessed at https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC 0000269470.pdf. The Killian Report, presented to President Eisenhower in February 1955, addressed US vulnerabilities to a Soviet surprise attack. The 1946 ONI study is declassified and available in the National Archives.

4. Declassified along with other Penkovsky reporting on the Cuban Missile crisis as the IRONBARK documents and available in the FOIA reading room at www.cia.gov. See also James H. Hansen, "Soviet Deception in the Cuban Missile Crisis," *Studies in Intelligence* 46, No. I (March, 2002).

5. *Deception Maxims: Fact and Folklore* (Everest Consulting Associates and Mathtech, Inc., April 1980), summarized in Michael Bennett and Edward Waltz, *Counterdeception Principles and Applications for National Security* (Artech House, 2007), 34–36.

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10. NSDD-108, "Introduction."

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid., "Decision."

13. Ibid., "Decision" and "Implementation."

14. US Department of Defense, *Soviet Military Power* (Defense Intelligence Agency, 1988), 59–62.

15. Views expressed by several attendees at a conference in 1984 (discussed on "Convening of a major conference joining D&D advocates and opponents" on page 19).

16. Fletcher Schoen and Christopher J. Lamb, *Deception, Disinformation, and Strategic Communications: How One lnteragency Group Made a Major Difference* (National Defense University Press, June 2012).

17. John Lenczowski, "Themes of Soviet Strategic Deception and Disinformation," in Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker (eds.), *Soviet Strategic Deception* (Lexington Books, 1987), 55–75.

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21. Gates, *From the Shadows*, 206. Gates also commented on the "struggle" to get the CIA bureaucracy to do more on Soviet covert action and subversion as "painfully hard and eventually took on a political edge." Ibid.

22. The classified conference proceedings were published by CIA/DI/Office of Global Issues.

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25. On the occasion of the new DCI's visit to a CIA training site, as reported by several who were there.

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27. See *Studies in Intelligence* 38, No. 5 (I 995) for a report on the ceremony and a transcript of R.V. Jones's remarks on 26 October 1993.

28. The analysis was conducted by the author in a NIC/Evaluation staff study.

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Thai Forward Air Guides in the Covert War in Laos

Paul T. Carter

The overall history of Thai engagement in the conflict is murky, and the wisdom of its engagement still uncertain, but the importance of the forward air guides to the prosecution of the anticommunist undercover war in Laos is unmistakeable.

During the Second Indochina War (known to most Americans as the Vietnam War), the Kingdom of Thailand suffered from an externally-supported communist insurgency. Communist People's Republic of China (PRC) and Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV-North Vietnam) targeted four countries: Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and South Vietnam for communist expansion. The communist insurgencies in these countries were "all of one kind; a common origin, a common approach, a common goal."[1] When the war ended in 1975, only one of these Southeast Asian countries—Thailand—had repelled the aggression and retained its system of governance and way of life.

Given the scant record of governments defeating insurgencies since World War II, this was a notable achievement, particularly since two Buddhist, monarchical countries on Thailand's borders—Laos and Cambodia—fell to communism, as did the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam). A 2013 study on counterinsurgency conducted for the US Office of the Secretary of Defense found that more than half of all insurgencies during the period under study were successful: since World War II, 31 of 59 global insurgencies were victorious against the host nations in which they arose.[2]

Thailand, with significant US financial, technical, and military support, employed an array of strategies to defeat internal insurgency and oppose external aggression. These strategies included massive investment in rural economic development in support of security; an increase in internal kinetic (military and police) actions;[a] and the deployment of combat troops to Laos to confront Viet Minh and communist Pathet Lao forces. The Thai government, like the US government, engaged in rapprochement with China, which eventually ceased its support of the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT). The final blow to the increasingly weakened CPT was a Sino-Vietnam split that caused a splinter in the CPT, together with the Vietnamese expulsion of pro-CPT members from sanctuaries in Laos and Cambodia and Thai amnesty for the insurgents. The communist insurgency ended in 1984.[b, 3]

One feature of the engagement of Thai nationals in Laos from the late 1960s to 1974 emerges as worthy of focused attention: in the largest paramilitary operation CIA has ever undertaken, a group of young, CIA-employed, English-speaking men played

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a. King Rama IX was a forceful opponent of communism and rallied the population to confront communism.
b. The Thai still have an ethnic, religious-based insurgency on their southern Malay border.

Key players in the US-led surrogate war in Laos meeting in 1965 at the airfield in Long Tien, the center of CIA operations in the country. Shown from left to right are Hmong irregular force leader Vang Pao; Bill Lair; an unidentified officer—possibly the aircraft's pilot—William Colby, chief of the Far East Division of CIA's Directorate of Plans (now Operations); and CIA Vientiane Station Chief Douglas Blaufarb. Colby would become CIA director in 1973.[4]

Bill Lair was the CIA officer who essentially created the Laos irregular-war effort in 1960 and led it into 1968. He had originally come to Thailand in 1951 and with the Thai improved the capability of the Thai Border Patrol Police. From that unit emerged the PARU. Lair left for the US Army War College in 1968. He would return to Bangkok for another CIA assignment, staying until retirement in 1977.[5]

a unique role. This group—the Thai forward air guides, or FAGs, were key players in the war in Laos.[6] The overall history of Thai engagement in the conflict is murky, and the wisdom of its engagement still uncertain, but the importance of the forward air guides to the prosecution of the anti-communist undercover war in Laos is unmistakable.[7]

Background of Thai Engagement

Following the communist Viet Minh victory against the French at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, Thailand adopted a "forward strategy" in Laos to confront increasing communist aggression from its historical enemy, the Vietnamese. Siam (Thailand)[a] at one time had almost complete suzerainty over most of territorial Laos, previously composed of several small kingdoms with overlapping frontiers

that paid tribute to the Vietnamese and Siamese.

With a fragmented Laos, the Siamese and Vietnamese from the early 1800s asserted themselves territorially, and it had been a bloody, violent affair, with battles reaching south into Siam.

In 1953, communist Viet Minh forces invaded Laos, nearly capturing Luang Prabang, the royal capital. This aggression clearly demonstrated Vietnamese regional expansionist intent. One Thai veteran of the war in Laos remembered witnessing, as a seven-year-old, the Vietnamese communists' capture of Dien Bien Phu, an event that alarmed him, his parents, grandparents, and many Thai.[8]

The events of 1953, especially the establishment of the T'ai Autonomous Area in Yunnan (China) ... the Vietminh's invasion of Laos, together with the

signing of the Korean armistice, heightened the Thai leaders' fear that the communists had now turned their attention towards Southeast Asia, and that the aggression against Thailand was imminent.[9]

The Viet Minh began a systematic expansion in Laos after 1954. In the early 1960s, it had conducted an offensive in southeast Laos, capturing the key village of Tchepone, critical terrain necessary to facilitate use of the Ho Chi Minh Trail logistical complex that supplied communist forces in South Vietnam. Viet Minh forces were also marching toward Thakhek, Laos, across the Mekong River from Nakon Phanom, Thailand, the site of a Royal Thai Air Force base (RTAFB) hosting a large US Air Force (USAF) presence in Udon (also seen commonly as Udorn Thani until 1976). Thakhek had a large Vietnamese community and, as the terminus

a. Siam became Thailand in 1939 and has remained so except for a brief period during 1946–48.
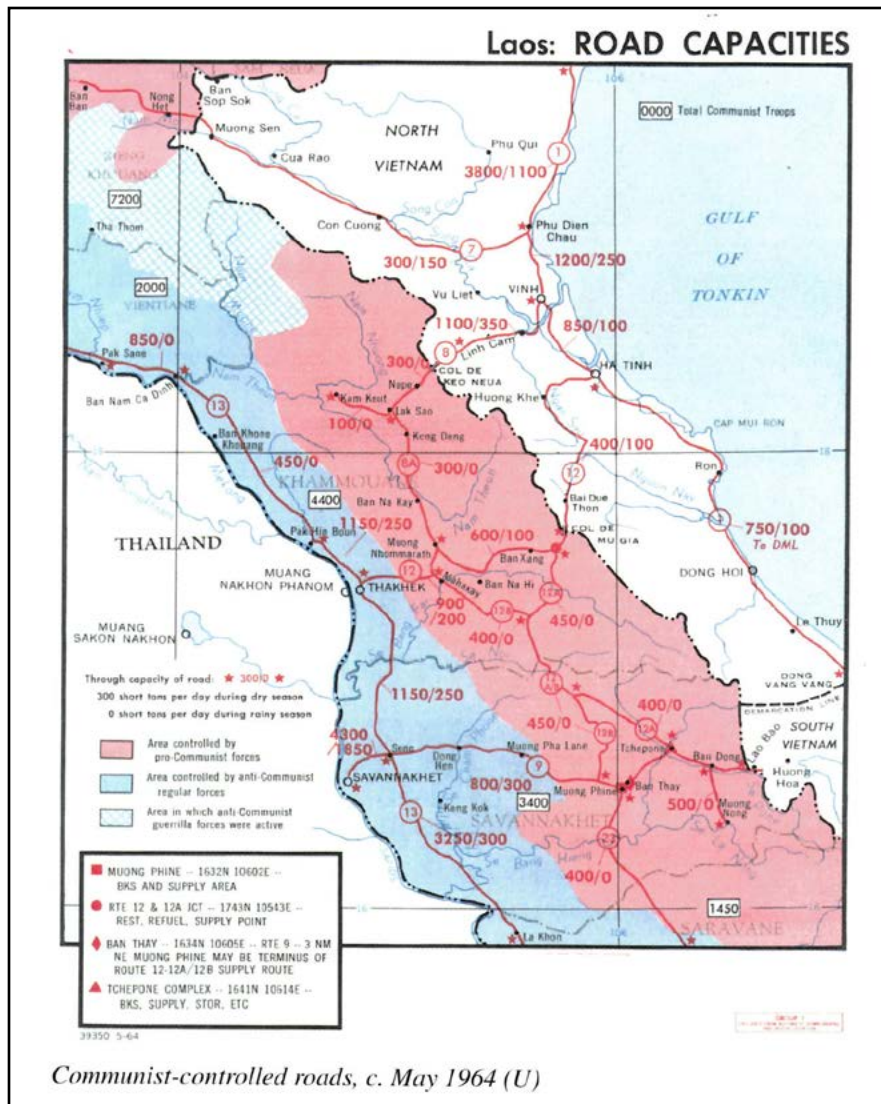
Laos: **ROAD CAPACITIES**

Communist-controlled roads, c. May 1964 (U)

Map is from Thomas Ahern, *Undercover Armies: CIA and Surrogate Warfare in Laos* (Center for the Study of Intelligence, 2007), xxiii. (A declassified version of the book is available at https://cia.gov/library/readingroom/ under historical collections, Vietnam.)

Minh (at this point, more accurately, the People's Army of Vietnam, or PAVN) and Pathet Lao forces controlled approximately one-half of Laos, including the Ho Chi Minh Trail area. (See map above.)

By 1970, the United States had begun its drawdown from Southeast Asia, which alarmed the Thai because they were now more vulnerable to Vietnamese invasion from Laos.

To protect Thailand, the United States and Thailand secretly created the UNITY Program, an initiative to train and mobilize a large Thai force to fight in Laos, financed by the United States. UNITY led to the deployment of up to 16,000 Thai soldiers in Laos by 1972, the largest military expeditionary force the Thai had committed in modern times. Thai battalions were composed of 30 regular Thai Army officer cadre, 23 Thai Army radio operators, and 497 Thai volunteers (550 total). The secret war in Laos presented challenges in tactical and operational decision making, communications, and coordination and deconfliction of military actions. US adherence to the 1962 Geneva Accords ruled out the presence of US Department of Defense (DoD) personnel on the ground to carry out these functions, with an exception—a few USAF personnel in civilian clothes with embassy identification cards.[a, 11]

The war's commander was a civilian, the US ambassador to Laos, and, in effect, ground commanders were CIA paramilitary officers from

of roads leading from two passes (Keo Neua and Mu Gia) over the Annamite Mountains separating Laos from Vietnam, was the Viet Minh's gateway into the Mekong Valley. Thai

Field Marshal Prime Minister Sarit deployed two Thai artillery batteries to Thakhek—the first-ever Thai artillery deployment to Laos—to stop the advance.[10] By the late 1960s, Viet

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a. A Senate briefing in 1971 on the state of the war in Laos offered an accounting of an extraordinary number of US Army attache personnel (127) stationed in Laos at the time. Army attachés wore their uniforms, but "Air Force personnel in the Air Operations Centers do not wear uniforms [unlike Army attachés]. They are called 'Mister' and say they are with the AID Mission if asked.
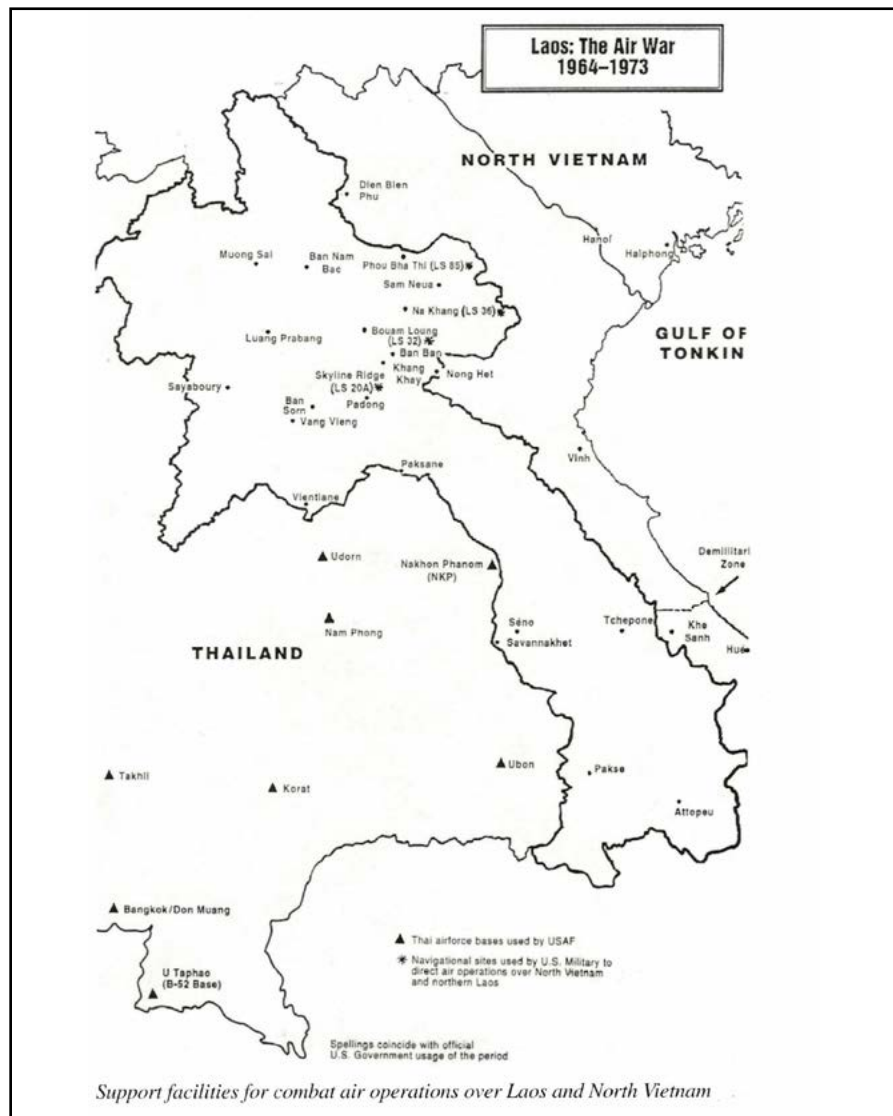
the Special Activities Division.[a] The allied ground combat troops were Thai, Royal Lao, Hmong, and other minority forces. The Air Force component was also Thai, Royal Lao, and Hmong, along with USAF assets based outside of Laos. Aerial forward air controllers (FACs) were Thai, Royal Lao, and USAF Ravens, Air Force pilots who volunteered for this then highly secretive mission.[12]

Origins of the Thai Forward Air Guides

By late 1970, numerous allied and enemy troops were on the ground, and the battle tempo had increased, making the battlefield in Laos increasingly dangerous. In April 1971, a US pilot mistakenly dropped ordnance on a group of Thai troops, killing 16, including two Thai commanders. Clearly, more FACs were needed on the battlefield to coordinate airstrikes. In response, CIA institutionalized the concept of forward air guides, ground-based controllers given a unique, if uncomfortable, acronym—FAGs—to differentiate them from airborne FACs. Commenting on the program, Maj. Gen. Richard Secord, an Air Force officer detailed to CIA in the late 1960s in Laos, stated, "The FAGs—and the designation FAG was not liked—were used on the ground. This arrangement was contrary to the dogma that you had to be a fighter pilot [to be a forward air controller]. You didn't [really] need to be a fighter pilot to be a FAC. Maybe this made better FACs, because they weren't aspiring to become chief of staff. The job takes knowledge of airmanship, even if a man is not a pilot."[13]

CIA began recruiting over 100 military-aged, English-speaking males in Thailand, sending them to a 10- to 14-day combat controller (CCT, essentially FAC) class taught by USAF CCTs at Udon Thani RTAFB. After graduation, the new guides would serve on the Laos battlefield as CIA contract employees.

Laos: The Air War
1964–1973

Support facilities for combat air operations over Laos and North Vietnam

Sketch map of lima sites: Map is from Thomas Ahern, Undercover Armies: CIA and Surrogate Warfare in Laos (Center for the Study of Intelligence, 2007), xxv. (A declassified version of the book is available at https://cia.gov/library/readingroom/ under Historical Collections, Vietnam.)

a. The war in Laos is sometimes grudgingly called "The Ambassador's War" because the US ambassador to Laos (there were several over the years) was in charge of the conflict. This stems from President John F. Kennedy's 29 May 1961 memo to all ambassadors elevating them to the status of the most senior US executive authority in a country, specifying that agencies outside the State Department would abide by the ambassadors' decisions. As Laos was not officially a war zone, there was no DoD jurisdiction and therefore no military commander.

The FAGs played a role in modern warfare so unique and anomalous it had never been seen before the war and has not been seen since. These individuals were given "validation authority" to clear US aircraft to strike targets, perhaps the only time in the history of US warfare that non-US civilians were granted such authority. An FAG's primary duty in Laos was to assist US and allied forces to identify and attack targets, and then to conduct battle damage assessments (BDA) of the effects of the strikes. Because FAGs had developed the skill to coordinate aircraft strikes, they were also called upon to help Thai artillery batteries home in on enemy targets.

FAGs performed secondary roles as CIA liaison with Thai ground forces, and CIA paramilitary officers typically shared with them indications, warning, and other intelligence to inform Thai units. Other duties FAGs performed for CIA and the Thai battalions included coordination of US medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) and logistical aircraft services.

Though the 1971 accidental bombing was the catalyst that led to institutionalizing the Thai FAG program, CIA and USAF personnel in Laos had begun to recognize the need for a ground-based forward air control capability as early as 1965. The absence of US troops due to Geneva agreement constraints meant the allies would have to assume duties US ground forces typically would have executed, including target observation and aircraft coordination. Thai pilots had begun flying strike missions in

Jack Teague, center, at LS-36 with Lao and Thai guides, ca. 1965, at a time before the decision was made to have Air Force personnel wear civilian clothing. Assigned to LS-36 were five other Air Force personnel, two of whom are pictured here as well. (Source: J. Teague)

Laos in 1964 against communist Pathet Lao and PAVN targets. Thai Air Force personnel also began acting as airborne FACs for Thai strike aircraft, and as "back-seaters" in US T-28 attack aircraft.[14]

US airstrikes at the time could only be coordinated by US personnel, albeit with Thai back-seaters. To remedy the shortfall and add precision to airstrikes, in June 1965 the US military inserted two USAF CCTs into airstrip LS-36 (Nha Khang, Laos).[a] They wore civilian clothes and carried US embassy identification. One of them, Jack Teague, pictured above, and an air commando paramedic had Thai assistants, who at the time communicated with the Thai and Lao T-28 aircraft attack pilots, but not with US aircraft. Two CIA paramilitary officers at LS-36 also worked with the new USAF CCTs.[b, 15]

According to a former CIA paramilitary officer operating at LS-36 in 1966, he and another CIA paramilitary officer thought to send English-speaking Hmong road-watch teams to northern Laos to report enemy activity directly to US A-26 Nimrod attack aircraft.[16] These Hmong, dispersed along roads and trained to spot vehicles, porters, troops, and camouflaged truck parks were specifically looking for trucks attempting to infiltrate from North Vietnam under the cover of darkness. They would contact US pilots upon spotting potential targets.

Confirmed destruction of enemy targets showed this approach worked well. As US pilots gained confidence in local ground spotters, CIA paramilitary officers and USAF CCTs decided to expand the concept. According to the former paramilitary officer, CIA decided to place a job advertisement in Bangkok's English-language newspapers promising good pay, travel, and adventure in somewhat vague terms. Two Thai men were recruited as a result of this effort; these initial recruits became known

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a. LS is short for Lima Site, the designation of fixed installations with US personnel.
b. Teague has described himself as the "first modern-era CCT to put in a tour in northern Laos." In Jan Churchill's book *Classified Secret*, Air Force Gen. Heine Aderholt called Teague the "first man to push the FAC program into Laos."

> **The mission was a success, providing validation that locally recruited and trained air guides could perform CCT duties.**

as RED HAT and BLUE BOY, the first Thai forward air guides to work with US aircraft in Laos.[17] RED HAT, having been on a road-watch team previously, possessed some military experience.

RED HAT's first mission began at 1800 hours on 18 October 1966 in northern Laos. It involved two US A-1E Skyraider attack aircraft and a World War II vintage B-26. RED HAT was embedded with a Hmong ground team. "The commo arrangement was crude and unsophisticated. It was simple and quickly cobbled together with materials on hand and did not require outside support," according to the paramilitary officer. Inbound aircraft personnel contacted the CIA paramilitary officers, who then contacted the ground team to see whether they had targets. They then relayed the information to the aircraft and directed the aircraft to contact RED HAT when they arrived over the target area.

Because of the distances involved, CIA paramilitary officers were unable to monitor FAG-to-aircraft radio transmissions, but they were able to hear all US aircraft transmissions to RED HAT. The mission was a success, providing validation that locally recruited and trained air guides could perform CCT duties. Thomas Ahern places validation somewhat earlier and attributes the event to TALL MAN, mentioned below and on facing page.

USAF M.Sgt. Charlie Jones, a CCT in Laos, who in 1966 had trained FAGs, may have trained RED HAT and BLUE BOY.[a]

Honestly, nobody believed the guys I taught learned more than basic stuff about how airplanes bring bombs and guns. However, I trained selected guys, whom Air America helicopters airlifted into remote areas close to Sam Neua. They were equipped with PRC-47s and some VHF radios (Bayside 990s) and HT-1s (radios). Two of these [men] *were especially effective. One was a Hmong called TALL MAN. The other was a Thai called RED HAT. Another was* (a Thai), *BLUE BOY.*[18] (See facing page.)

In 1966 and 1967, another Thai FAG came to serve at LS-36—Somchai Tunkulsawasdi, callsign PYTHON. Somchai remained with the program, took another callsign, SMALL MAN, and served as a forward air guide until the program ended.[19]

RED HAT's last known mission in Laos took place on Valentine's Day 1973.[20] He settled in Udon Thani after the war and died as a civilian some years later. BLUE BOY lost his life at LS-36 on the night of 1 March 1969 during a sustained PAVN attack. US aircraft lost radio contact with him, and it remains unclear how he died: Some speculate he was attempting to escape from the attacking PAVN;

others claim he was killed by counterattacking US aircraft or PAVN artillery; finally, others claim he was captured and tortured to death. "We had civilians come out of the area who claimed they saw BLUE BOY being tortured by the North Vietnamese. He never was reported in any prisoner of war lists, so presumably he was killed or died during the attack," according to Ernest Kuhn, a former Peace Corps officer in Thailand who had joined USAID in 1965.[b, 21]

Recruiting

After the April 1971 fratricide, CIA again used advertisements in Bangkok English-language newspapers to recruit a new generation of forward air guides. (See facing page.) These advertisements directed interested personnel to the Amarin Hotel in Bangkok to be interviewed by one Thai and one American. Most former FAGs said the interviews were fairly easy—the main requirement was, as before, the ability to speak English. If selected, individuals would receive word by telegram within a month, notifying them to report to Thai Border Police headquarters in Bangkok. From there, they were ultimately shipped to Udon Thani RTAFB.

Many FAGs came from other sources, as well. In the late 1960s, the US presence in Thailand was large enough that DoD, State Department, and others employed local English-speaking Thai as interpreters, clerks, document translators, secretaries, and a host of other positions. With the launching of the UNITY

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a. Jones would prepare a FAC information pamphlet, which, he said, the Thai translated into Lao and other local languages.
b. Also killed was Thai Somsak Arkaraporn, interpreter at LS-36. One PARU soldier was captured and repatriated after the war, per Ray Roddy. The only USAID battle fatality in the war was Don Sjostrom, who lost his life during an PAVN attack on LS-36 in January 1967.

The Recruitment Approach and One Result

The push for recruitment in 1971 led to the below advertisement in the *Bangkok Post* in November.

> Male Thai/English interpreter translators needed for field work in Thailand. Preference given to Thai military veterans. Must be at least 20 years old, no criminal record and in good physical condition. Salary begins at 2,400 baht per month and up depending on language ability. Other living and travel allowances are included.
>
> Please ask at Reception Desk, Amarin Hotel between 0800 and 1700, 11 November through 13 November for room number for interview appointment.

A Typical Recruit (Callsign SPACE)

Chalermchai Thamvethin's background is a fairly typical example of a forward air guide. Chalermchai graduated from Bangkok College and taught French and English in high school for five years. His first US Army job was in Korat, where he worked for 3 to 4 years as an interpreter/translator for the US Army 9th Logistical Command. He was 25 or 26 years old when he was first hired by the Army. By word-of-mouth, he heard about "Bill Lair's office," got an interview at Air America at Udon Thani RTAFB, and went to work as an interpreter/translator for the JLD at a Thai Army training camp. From there he was recruited to be an FAG, graduating the course in May 1972.[22]

Tallman and Red Hat: As Told in Undercover Armies

Everything depended on the availability of an English-speaker, and a very brave one, for the North Vietnamese would quickly infer the presence of a forward observer even if they failed to intercept his transmissions. As it happened, Long Tieng had a Hmong intelligence assistant named Moua Chong, who had somewhere—no one knew how—acquired real competence in the English language, and Vang Pao sent him to Na Khang. There, given the call sign Tallman, he learned from the CIA advisers how to direct airstrikes and operate the single-side-band radio that he would take into the field.

When Tallman left, it was not as a singleton agent. For one thing, each of two voice radios (one a spare) weighed 20 pounds. Then there was the truck battery to power them, slung between two porters, plus a separate secure radio system, the old RS-I with its hand-cranked generator. Adding porters to carry rations and taking into account the need for guides and security, the mission required 20 men. Tallman was not the team leader, though his English and his new technical skills made him its indispensable member. His status may also have provoked envy among his teammates and thus contributed to the internal conflicts that eventually led to disaster.

Tallman's first mission, scheduled to last a month, sent him into North Vietnamese-held territory east of Route 6, in the inverted "vee" formed by the road and the border. Arriving at the target area, he found friendly villagers who offered order-of-battle information. They were willing also to sell food, which reduced air supply requirements to an occasional drop by a Porter. With a secure bivouac established, Tallman was to use the hours of darkness to work himself and his equipment-bearers close to the road. From his observation point, he would give precise directions to the A-26 "Nimrod" pilots already orbiting above, waiting to be called.

At the Na Khang command post, [name redacted] and [name redacted] relayed to [name redacted] an encrypted message from Tallman giving a date for his first foray toward the road. On the appointed night, they listened, first anxiously, then with delight when they heard the lead pilot respond to Tallman's first transmission. The pilot acknowledged Tallman's instruction to drop flares at a given point on the road, after which all hell broke loose when the light revealed a major convoy. The A-26s tore into them, and the glare of secondary explosions dimmed the flickering light of the flares.

It all made for an auspicious, indeed spectacular, beginning, and Tallman directed more such strikes during the months of his service. But he was killed in mysterious circumstances: squabbling had apparently turned to violence, and it looked as if his own men had murdered him. There was no immediate replacement, and [name redacted] scrambled to find someone with the courage, brains, and language skills needed to fill his shoes. Desperate for results, it placed an anodyne, "see the world" ad in Bangkok newspapers, and this attracted a bored taxi driver looking for excitement. Against all the odds, the new forward observer, named Red Hat after his trademark baseball cap, not only performed with distinction but went on to survive the war and return to Thailand.[23]

*Interestingly, typical soldier skills such as weapons quali-
fication or medical training were not part of the curricula.*

program in 1970, the United States—
and specifically CIA—needed a larg-
er, more rapid infusion of Thai men
to translate for US Army 46th Special
Forces (SF) company soldiers, who
were training Thai volunteer sol-
diers and their units at Thai military
camps for deployment to Laos. Thai
translators did not work for the DoD,
but rather for the CIA's cover orga-
nization in Thailand, the 4802 Joint
Liaison Detachment (JLD), which
was created in 1962.[24]

Several forward air guides had
served as translators at the train-
ing camps, and, after some months
working and earning trust, their JLD
bosses approached them and told
them to report to the Air America
office at Udon Thani RTAFB to be
interviewed. If they met the require-
ments, these candidates were also
offered jobs as forward air guides.
While Thai translators typically made
2,400 baht per month (about $115 at
the time), FAGs typically were paid
10,000 (about $480 at the time)—a
hefty pay increase. All FAGs knew
before they were hired that the job
required deployment to Laos.

Although it is difficult to obtain
background information on these
men, the alumni organization of the
Thai soldiers who fought in Laos, the
Unknown Warriors Association 333
(UWA 333), records that 45 of them
were civilians with no military expe-
rience; 13 were prior Thai military;
one possibly served with Thai Police
Aerial Reconnaissance Unit and sev-
eral others, like SMALL MAN, had
gone through PARU training, but not
served as such; and 17 were civilians
working for the US military or JLD in
some other capacity.[25]

Training

USAF CCT instructors for the
FAG course came from the 1st De-
tachment, 56th Special Operations
Wing, located at the Air America
facility, Udon Thani RTAFB. The
mission was "to train and qualify
students in close air support tactics,
techniques, and procedures."[26]

Interestingly, typical soldier
skills such as weapons qualification
or medical training were not part
of the curricula. Several FAGs who
had been translators at Thai military
training camps said they had learned
basic soldiering skills by translating
the training from English to Thai for
the Thai soldiers. The training con-
sisted of classroom lectures, practical
exercises on sand tables, map reading
and compass use, air-attack tactics
and control measures, communica-
tions with various type of aircraft,
performing BDA, some basic field
subjects, and providing appropriate
information for air attack. Trainees

also learned to identify airplanes and
helicopters and their battle capabili-
ties and capacities. Each student also
made two helicopter flights, two T-28
sorties, and an AC-47 flight to see
how terrain looked from the air.

Each FAG was given a unique
callsign, e.g., SPOTLIGHT, RACE
CAR, IRON CITY. The names were
assigned according to how well
the guide could pronounce his call
sign during training, because clear
communication and identification
were of paramount importance on the
battlefield.

After classroom training, instruc-
tors conducted a live-fire training
exercise at the T-28 aircraft bombing
range located 20 to 30 miles south-
west of Udon Thani RTAFB. The
exercise required each guide to direct
a US aircraft onto a designated target.
A day at the range typically lasted
6 to 8 hours—enough time for the
students to practice numerous calls
for airstrikes."[27] "We allowed each
student to control one aircraft through
a half-dozen passes, with bombs and

FAG live bombing training with shirtless USAF CCT instructor evaluating his students, ca.
1971. Source: US Air Force Det. 1, 56th SOW, Alumni Association

In combat, FAGs executed multiple, complex tasks simultaneously.

guns. At the same time, other students were nearby, watching and learning from the ongoing action."[28] FAGs had to successfully complete the mission in five minutes, which meant they had (1) identified the target; (2) made contact with the aircraft; and (3) directed the pilot to successfully put live ordnance on the target.[29] Upon successful completion of training, the guides were given USAF certificates of graduation.

Operations in Laos

Upon arrival in Laos, the preparedness of FAGs were again validated by USAF CCTs to ensure they could execute their missions and "then and only then would they be able to work with US aircraft in combat operations."[30] Their callsigns were then registered theater-wide with the US Air Force.

In Laos, FAGs were attached to a deploying Thai battalion; in theater they often rotated among battalions. There the new guides were typically placed under the tutelage of an experienced FAG. Many of the

early guides, however, did not have sufficient tutelage because of the lack of senior FAGs in country. Later, on-the-job training under a senior FAG usually lasted one week.[31]

By this point, FAGs were officially fully employed contract employees of the 4802 JLD (those who had been translators at the Thai military training camps had been JLD employees, as well);[32] however, their employment was secret. The only document proving the FAG-JLD relationship was a $100,000 life insurance policy, with named beneficiaries.[33] This insurance also paid in the event of any severe injury that would prevent future employment.[34] There were no set employment lengths or other binding requirements, and while a few FAGs quit and returned from battle in Laos fairly quickly, others stayed for years.

In combat, FAGs executed multiple, complex tasks simultaneously. For example, in March 1972 when the PAVN was pressing attacks against the Thai, Hmong, and Royal

Lao near the Hmong/Thai and CIA headquarters at Long Tieng, Laos, FAGs coordinated with US helicopters to land and evacuate Thai dead and wounded. At the same time, they synchronized airstrikes in efforts to keep the enemy from firing on the vulnerable helicopters. In addition, they coordinated with the Thai battalion for combat operations and MEDEVAC locations. Such maneuvers would be difficult even in normal conditions, but facing enemy artillery and mounting ground attacks made the maneuvers particularly perilous.[35]

The rainy season in early 1972 was a particularly perilous time for FAGs as the PAVN engaged in fierce combat with Thai and Lao military formations to penetrate farther south than ever. One book that documents US activities through USAF radio transmissions shows just how engaged the FAGs were in these actions. From January through March 1972, 24 FAGs participated in 122 combat actions in which they contacted US reconnaissance or attack aircraft for support. These actions included enemy attacks on friendly troops in the field, efforts to overrun friendly positions, enemy artillery fire, and enemy ground and air penetrations.[36]

For airstrikes, FAGs normally only talked directly to Thai T-28 attack aircraft or the slow-moving USAF C-130 Spectre gunship; they rarely talked to the high performance "fast-mover" jets, such as the F-4 Phantom, and never to B-52s. An exception might occur if a Thai unit was under enemy fire at night, and the high-performance strike aircraft could communicate directly with the

(l to r) BATTLESHIP, USAF CCT Herbert McGhee, WILD BILL, WAR EAGLE, ca. 1972. Source: USAF instructor Bill Fitzgerald.

The Paris Peace Accords ended direct US military involvement in the Second Indochina War in early 1973, but the Thai remained in Laos until May 1974

FAG for fires without airborne FAC involvement. It was a very dynamic process.

After an airstrike, a key FAG task was to perform a BDA. Often, initial strikes would miss their targets, and the guides would have to determine if additional strikes were necessary. If they were, they would adjust their targeting instructions.

Occasionally FAGs accompanied reconnaissance or other ground units to provide air attack capability on their missions. This usually meant moving on foot with an infantry platoon or company from a base camp out into a forward area, where encounters with enemy forces often resulted in heavy combat and casualties—and the need for airborne counterstrikes and MEDEVAC help.[37]

Attachment to a Thai battalion afforded the guides a unique relationship with Thai units: they were able to observe problems units were experiencing and to identify equipment and personnel needs. A key FAG duty was crafting situation reports twice daily—between 0600 and 0700, and then again between 1800 and 1900—for CIA and Thai headquarters.[38] These reports contained ammunition expenditures and requirements, transportation requests, equipment status and needs, medical requirements, personnel status, weather information, and any other factors that bore on the Thai battalions' ability to fight. Additional duties involved coordinating CIA proprietary aircraft (Air America, Continental Air, et al.), other aircraft logistics, and MEDEVAC. All areas involving air coordination were in the FAGs' area of responsibility, and most CIA paramilitary officers would choose one of the guides to serve as operations assistant and to accompany him on the battlefield.[39]

The Paris Peace Accords ended direct US military involvement in the Second Indochina War in early 1973, but the Thai remained in Laos until May 1974, and the United States funded the effort. Burdens on the Thai FAGs increased with the US pullout (and though at least two CIA paramilitary officers remained at Long Tieng, they were prohibited from going forward into the field).[40] Although the United States was finished with the war, Thai and Royal Lao units continued combat with PAVN and Pathet Lao for the next year.

Benefits to Intelligence and Operations

FAG contributions to the war effort and CIA operations were significant, particularly in the longest battle and least publicized allied victory of the Second Indochina War—the Battle for Skyline Ridge in the Long Tieng area, the most lopsided allied victory of the war. The PAVN had opened the assault against Thai, Hmong, and Royal Lao defenders in December 1971—with CIA paramilitary officers on the ground. The battle raged for over 100 days, often with savage hand-to-hand fighting, before the badly outnumbered allies forced an unlikely PAVN retreat.[41,42] The guides performed superbly during this time, directing airstrikes, coordinating logistical drops, and supporting MEDEVAC; several lost their lives in the battle.

On the day of the PAVN attack, SPOTLIGHT reported that his "CIA boss radioed me," warning there was a "100-percent chance" the PAVN would hit their position with infantry

SPOTLIGHT (r) with battalion command group, BC-608, ca. 1972, Laos. Source: FAG SPOTLIGHT.

After the war, with the Americans gone, the guides no longer had jobs, and what they had done was a secret they could not talk about.

and tanks at 1700 hours.[43] SPOT-LIGHT and other guides disseminated this battlefield intelligence to the Thai battalions. FAGs were effective communicators with—and messengers to—the Thai units, largely owing to the sound professional reputation they had built; Thai commanders listened to them and sought their advice and counsel.

FAGs also served as a linguistic and cultural bridge for the allied forces: trilingual (they spoke Thai, English, and Lao) and deeply familiar with the region's common ethnic roots and traditions, they put their advanced military skills into the service of the American and allied forces and were respected for these traits and abilities. It was not unusual for guides working on the front line with Thai battalions to take meals with the battalion commander, his deputy, or members of his primary staff, which demonstrates the position Thai officers afforded them.[44] One CIA paramilitary officer recalls,

> *Relations in our little community of FAGs and were surprisingly good. The FAGs were well paid and well treated by both the* [CIA] *paramilitary officers and the Thai officers, and they* [Thai officers] *knew that the FAGs were a critical part of the operation.*[45]

But there was another reason behind Thai battalion commanders' respect for the guides and preferential treatment: FAGs were the crucial point-of-access to powerful US air capability and assured that optimal access to US reconnaissance and

fighter aircraft, MEDEVAC support, and air logistical resupply would continue.

Using FAGs as trusted communications conduits, CIA was likewise able to effectively communicate operational directives and battlefield information to Thai forces.[a] CIA drew heavily upon the guides to understand what was occurring in the Thai units:

> *The FAGs were also the eyes and ears for the (CIA paramilitary officers), as they were with the battalion commander 24/7. In most cases, the FAG was leaned on heavily by the battalion commanders. Because of their constant presence with the units and their language facility the FAGs were absolutely critical to us keeping a finger on the pulse of what was going on . . . in the field.*[46]

Epilogue: Postwar Predicament

After the war, with the Americans gone, the guides no longer had jobs, and what they had done was a secret they could not talk about. US Naval Academy historian Dr. Richard Ruth who has studied the Thai experience wrote, "Time in Laos for them—strange, deeply personal, and indescribable to outsiders—was akin to a dream for many veterans. It was borne heavily by the FAGs in the postwar years but was impossible to relate to anyone outside a small circle of comrades."[47] The guides were

essentially left out in the cold and forgotten.

Conversely, the war benefited Thai active duty professional officers. With their professional combat experience, many went on to become high-ranking general officers.

Thai historian and author, Dr. Satayut Osornprasop, best describes their predicament, speaking about the Thai volunteers who fought in Laos:

> *They risked their lives fighting in one of the bloodiest and most brutal wars in Southeast Asia in order to obstruct the communist encroachment and infiltration into Thailand. They received so little in return. As the Thai government has always treated its covert operations in Laos with strict confidentiality, very few people in Thailand were aware of the fact that their compatriots were fighting in Laos. In addition, as the Thai government has never formally acknowledged these missions as an "official" expedition, these Thai "expeditionary forces" returned home without an appropriate commendation ceremony. Moreover, all Thai personnel who went to Laos were instructed by the government that their operations in Laos were state secrets, and that they had to "keep their mouths shut." They were under strict orders not to tell even their close friends and families how proud they were to*

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a. Certainly, CIA paramilitary officers communicated effectively with Thai commanders, but multiple demands upon them and their mobility required FAGs for communication.

serve the Thai national interests in Laos.[48]

This was the predicament for FAGs who survived the war—but not all did.

Nearly 10 percent of 123 guides died in combat; the PAVN captured another, Suban Boonyarit (known as CROWBAR), and held him captive for more than four years.

But the lack of recognition has not stopped the forward air guides, a hearty group, from banding together:

they formed an informal fraternity, started a newsletter, and began to meet and record their history. Some of the regular Thai military officers who had fought with the FAGs in Laos joined their group, as they too had no one with whom to share their experiences. Collectively they formed the UWA 333 for Laos war veterans and associates, a group of which I am proud to say I am a lifetime member.

FAGs continued to fight for recognition, and in 1976 Thai Prime Minister Seni Pramoj awarded them

a medal for their efforts. This came with a minimum of lifetime health care benefits to be used at veterans' hospitals, and little else.

The Thai military then granted them office space at Don Muang RTAFB in Bangkok, housing their alumni office. The UWA 333 association also holds an annual convention at the air force base. Today, a memorial, paid for largely by retired Royal Thai Army Officers, is being constructed for the UWA 333 in north Bangkok on military property.

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The author: Paul T. Carter served in the US Defense Intelligence Agency. He is now working toward a PhD at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok.

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Midnight in Chernobyl: The Untold Story of the World's Greatest Nuclear Disaster
Alex Higginbotham (Simon&Schuster, paperback edition, 2020), 560 pp., maps, diagrams, bibliography, index.

Reviewed by J. E. Leonardson

At the end of March 2020, the New York Times published a report on the recent performance of China's national infectious disease reporting system. Created in the aftermath of the 2000 SARS epidemic, it gathered data from hospitals and relayed the information to Beijing, where government health authorities were to spot emerg- ing epidemics and act quickly to stop them. Chinese officials described the system as "world-class: fast, thorough and, just as important, immune from [political] meddling," and it seemed to work as designed, smother- ing an avian flu outbreak in 2013. Unfortunately, it then failed miserably when the novel coronavirus and COVID- 19 appeared at the end of 2019.[a]

The *Times* article came to mind a few weeks later when, locked down overseas, I began reading Midnight in Chernobyl, Adam Higginbotham's history of the 1986 Soviet nuclear disaster and its aftermath. This book is popular history at its best—an engrossing tale of politics, economics, and science as well as the acts of individuals, both squalid and brave—based on prodigious research in archives, thorough command of the secondary sources, and interviews with scores of surviving participants.

Higginbotham is a skilled writer who gives clear ex- planations that make technical details easy to understand. At the same, he brings to life dozens of characters, from the top ranks in Moscow down to the workers laboring at the power plant, many of whom sacrificed their lives battling the fires and cleaning up the site. Truly, this is a book that is hard to put down.

On the substantive side, the strength of *Midnight in Chernobyl* is that it puts the accident in its economic and political contexts. The explosion and fire at Chernobyl, Higginbotham makes clear, were rooted in decisions taken in the 1960s to supply the Soviet economy with cheap power generated in massive nuclear power plants equipped with enormous reactors built to a standard design, called the RBMK. Eventually, the Ministry of Medium Machine Building (Sredmash) came to control the entire Soviet nuclear industry, becoming a powerful state within the state.

Secrecy, of course, was integral to Sredmash. To cut costs, Sredmash took numerous shortcuts in the reactor design and, even as the RBMK was found to be flawed, covered up the defects rather than correct them. Meanwhile, Soviet industry supplied defective compo- nents for plant construction, which itself was rushed to meet the goals of the Five Year Plans, with the result that plants were built as shoddily as any other Soviet building.

RBMK reactors suffered accidents with horrifying frequency, but Sredmash plowed ahead without admitting to any problems, slapped top secret classifications on its failures, and never gave nuclear plant operators full information about how their reactors operated. Instead, Moscow's propaganda portrayed the Soviet nuclear indus- try to be the most advanced in the world and, pointing to the Three Mile Island accident in the United States, the world's safest. Powerful and important on the one hand, and isolated from reality on the other, the apparatchiks running Sredmash came to believe their own claims of infallibility.

The inevitable catastrophe took place in the early hours of April 26, 1986. Minute by minute, Higginbotham details how a safety test at Chernobyl's Reactor Number Four—years overdue because of the rush to get the reactor on line in accordance with Moscow's deadlines— went tragically wrong. In brief, the reactor's operators, not knowing of a critical RBMK design flaw, followed the standard procedures to shut down the reactor but, instead, caused an enormous spike in thermal power. This, in turn, led to an explosion of superheated steam that destroyed the reactor and its building. Fragments of uranium fuel and other components of the reactor were sucked into the atmosphere and formed a cloud of radioisotopes that soon spread across the Ukraine, western USSR, and into Europe. On the ground, tons of radioactive graphite scattered around the plant and started to burn, as did the remnants of the reactor core, continuing to feed the cloud and fallout.

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a. "China Created a Fail-Safe System to Track Contagions. It Failed," *New York Times*, March 29, 2020.

As bad as the accident itself was, Higginbotham details how the Soviet system made things worse. Immediately after the explosion, as they slowly realized what had happened, plant and local officials behaved as apparatchiks always did: they lied. Less than two hours after the accident, Chernobyl's director, Viktor Brukhonov, told Moscow that there had been a fire but everything was under control, a line that was passed all the way up to General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev.

The scale of the accident soon became apparent but the lies continued. The day of the accident, as instruments at an institute in Kiev began to register increased radiation, the KGB sealed the devices "to avoid panic and the spreading of provocative rumors." (172) In the following days, as the town of Pripyat was evacuated and thousands of emergency troops and workers were mobilized, the Soviet government assured the people that all was under control and the radiation release posed no long-term dangers. Kiev's May Day parade went on as scheduled, despite the radiation drifting over the city.

When Scandinavian authorities and then the Western press began asking about a radiation cloud detected over the Nordic countries, TASS responded with a denunciation of the "bourgeois falsification" and propaganda that suggested something had gone wrong in the Soviet Union. (174) Finally, a show trial in the fall of 1986 fixed the blame on Brukhonov and the hapless reactor operators on duty the night of the accident.

Throughout, moreover, the KGB hovered over the investigations and cleanup, ensuring that no unauthorized information leaked out. Not until 1992, after the fall of the Soviet Union, did Moscow allow the complete truth of the accident and its causes to come out. Even then, Russia admitted only to 31 deaths from the accident, all of them among the plant personnel on the scene and firefighters who responded, and denied that the accident had affected the health of the tens of thousands of soldiers and emergency workers who worked heroically for months to contain and clean up the accident, as well as the hundreds of thousands of people in the surrounding areas.

Among the unacknowledged casualties was Valeriy Legasov, the deputy director of the Kurchatov Institute of Atomic Energy and one of the major figures in the book. Higginbotham portrays Legasov as a dedicated communist as well as a leading scientist, one who truly believed the Soviet Union could build socialism under the leadership of educated elites such as himself. Sent to Chernobyl immediately after the accident to help direct the response, Legasov was on the front lines of the firefighting and cleanup efforts.

The experience changed him—Legasov came to see the "true scope of the decay at the heart of the nuclear state: the culture of secrecy and complacency, the arrogance and negligence, and the shoddy standards of design and construction." (322) He became a reformer, trying to change the Soviet scientific establishment from within, but his efforts failed to gain support from his fellow academicians.

Legasov's disenchantment grew as he came to realize that the "profound failure of the Soviet social experiment," which had produced a people who were "technologically sophisticated but morally untethered," was the true cause of the Chernobyl calamity. (325) Thoroughly disillusioned and his health deteriorating because of the radiation he had absorbed at Chernobyl, Legasov hanged himself in April 1988.

How, then, does *Midnight in Chernobyl* connect with China and Covid-19? Media coverage of the pandemic has often made facile comparisons of the two events though, while it will be many years before we know the full story of what happened in Wuhan in 2019, the similarities with Chernobyl are undeniably eerie. Like Sredmash with nuclear power, Beijing claimed to have built a first-rate warning system and, like the Soviet power plants, it seemed to work as designed, until the day that it didn't. The early response in Wuhan, too, was the same— officials in a secretive, ideologically-driven political system suppressed the bad news (and, like the Soviets, used the secret police to do so) that might have angered their superiors and cost them their jobs. At the national level, too, China for weeks carried on as if nothing was happening. Once the truth was undeniable, Beijing responded as Moscow had, with a massive effort to contain the disaster while, simultaneously, going on a propaganda offensive to repair its image of competence and maintaining strict con- trol over the investigations into the start of the outbreak and further research on the virus.

China in 2020, obviously, is not the isolated, decrepit, bankrupt and technologically backward Soviet Union of the 1980s. It is this contrast, however, that makes *Midnight in Chernobyl* much more than a comprehensive history of a particular disaster. It is, rather, a case study of how repressive, one-party regimes respond to unexpected negative events. Higginbotham paints a detailed portrait

of how they will, on the one hand, prioritize hiding their own failings while, on the other, propagandizing to blame others and stifling would-be reformers, like Legasov.

It should not be surprising, therefore, that Russia and Iran behaved essentially this way in the late winter and spring of 2020, combining denial, delay, and repression to hide the truth of their epidemics until the truth overwhelmed their efforts and that Beijing has arrested critics of its response. (It also is no accident that after these tactics failed, China and Iran tried to blame, respectively, the United States and Israel for the pandemic.) These behaviors are eternal in dictatorships and, indeed, much of the above should sound familiar to anyone studying such regimes. Still, analysts and collectors who work on Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, or similar states will find *Midnight in Chernobyl* an indispensable guide to understanding the inner workings and thought processes of these types of governments.

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The reviewer: J. E. Leonardson is the penname of a analyst in CIA's Directorate of Analysis

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Active Measures: The Secret History of Disinformation and Political Warfare
Thomas Rid (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020), Kindle edition.

Information Wars: How We Lost the Global Battle Against Disinformation
Richard Stengel (Grove Atlantic, 2019). 355 pp.

Reviewed by J. E. Leonardson

Active Measures

We live in an age of disinformation. Everywhere we turn, it seems, conspiracy theories, invented stories, and outright lies compete with—and often overwhelm—traditional liberal democratic ideas of objectivity and truth. Many see this as largely a new phenomenon, one that has sprouted in the past decade or two as the internet has provided malign actors with new tools of unprecedented power. Such is not the case, however. State-sponsored covert influence operations (as distinct from their public affairs efforts or open propaganda) began a century ago, pioneered by the nascent Bolshevik regime. Two new books, one by a German-born political scientist and the other by a former US under secretary of state for public diplomacy and public affairs, look at the history of these operations and the challenges that democratic societies face in countering them.

Thomas Rid's Active Measures is a comprehensive history of disinformation and influence operations during the past 100 years. Rid, who teaches at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, begins his account with the Trust, the Cheka's extraordinary operation in the early 1920s to destroy the exiled tsarist opposition. He then follows Soviet and Russian disinformation operations through four major phases—the early and freewheeling influence operations of the 1920s and 30s; the professionalized operations of the first half of the Cold War; the large, bureaucratic active measures of the 1970s and 80s; and then, after a lull in the 1990s, the transition to the internet-based operations of today. Given the Soviet Union's dominant role in creating this form of political warfare, Rid's history is Moscow-centric, though he adds a good deal of information about little-known US operations in Berlin during the 1950s. Curiously, however, Rid has little to say about the Congress for Cultural Freedom and other CIA operations to support Western anti-c0ommunist intellectuals.

Rid emphasizes that the Soviets' most successful information operations did not rely exclusively on lies or forgeries. Instead, they generally were built on foundations of truth that lent credibility to small amounts of added-on falsehoods. The best parts of the book are where Rid describes individual operations to show how this method worked in practice. In one notable case, the KGB leaked documents stolen by Robert Lee Johnson, who had spied for the Russians from the early 1960s, when he was a US Army courier in Europe, until he was arrested in 1964. Later in the decade the KGB leaked to left-wing journalists copies of documents Johnson had provided on US contingency plans for using nuclear weapons in Europe; the Soviets added only one small change of their own, a paragraph "authorizing" local commanders to use small nuclear weapons in friendly and neutral countries. The US Government claimed that Moscow was circulating forgeries but, afraid of violating its own classification rules, would not specify what part of the package was fake, thus leaving the field to the Soviets.

The documents circulated for years, giving the KGB what Rid calls a "disinformation gold mine" that played on anti-US and antinuclear sentiments to sow division in the West. The operation also was typical in how it took advantage of journalists who, while not agents of the KGB or even necessarily sympathetic to Moscow, were anti-American enough not to ask too many questions about what arrived in the mail. Even if the documents contained forgeries, wrote one magazine, they were "near enough to the truth to be accepted"— "truthiness" before its time.

The Soviets continued to refine the art of leak-and-forge and the use of credulous journalists to exploit preexisting prejudices, suspicions, and fault lines in Western politics and culture. Rid's account of how in the 1980s the KGB spread the claim that the US government had created the AIDS virus is especially telling. He points out that accusations of government culpability arose first

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in 1983 among activists in the US gay community who were intensely suspicious of a political system that they believed treated them as outcasts. The KGB, anxious to distract the world from reports about the Soviet use of chemical weapons in Afghanistan, saw an opportunity and quickly planted the claim in an Indian newspaper by sending an anonymous letter from a "well-known American scientist" that placed the AIDS story within the history of unethical government medical experiments in the 1960s and 1970s, thus making AIDS seem to be just the latest such episode.

It took several years for the claim to make its way into the mainstream Western and US media, but by 1987 "tireless repetition" brought it from India to fringe activists in the United States and, finally, to "many millions of American households as prime-time evening news" on a major network. Beyond the gay community, Rid describes how the story resonated especially among African-Americans, whose community had long memories of having been the unwitting subjects of medical experiments. Overall, he concludes, the AIDS story likely was the most successful active measure of the 1980s.

From the 1960s onward, moreover, the Soviets enlisted other bloc intelligence services to assist in their efforts. The East Germans, no one will be surprised to learn, were the most effective, and Rid provides an informative overview of several Stasi and HVA operations that probably will be unfamiliar to American readers, particularly those born after the collapse of the Soviet bloc.

The levels of detail in *Active Measures's* Cold War-era case histories reflect the thoroughness of Rid's research. He combines declassified CIA records and documents released by Moscow (including official SVR histories), with material from East German and other former bloc countries' archives—because of close cooperation of the bloc services, copies of documents still locked away in Moscow or destroyed by one eastern service often are available in another country's archives—and interviews with retired East European intelligence officers.

Unfortunately, much of what Rid describes in the last section of *Active Measures*, where he covers the recent shift in information operations to the internet, comes from media reports and therefore lacks the depth provided by archival research. Still, Rid makes good points, starting with the observation that internet-based operations continue to use the classic method of leaking genuine information (with a small leavening of forgery) to unquestioning

journalists eager for a story, anti-American collaborators such as Wikileaks, and broader audiences looking for confirmation of their beliefs or support for their grievances. Many of these efforts, too, are undertaken by amateur surrogates, such as the young trolls at Russia's Internet Research Agency (IRA) who spend their days posting on social media, rather than intelligence officers specializing in active measures.

Rid's evaluation of internet-based operations' effects also is spot on. Instead of having to wait months or even years for a story to spread, as it took for the AIDS campaign, disinformation now spreads from the far corners to the internet to the mainstream media in days, or even hours. In one case, Rid recounts how the New York Times reported on an advertisement created by the IRA during the 2016 campaign to disparage Hillary Clinton, which then led "scores of news outlets, national and international," to pick up the story and reproduce the image.

The episode, he concludes, "epitomized how mainstream press coverage generated the actual effect of a disinformation operation … social media had actually increased the significance of traditional journalism as an amplifier of disinformation operations." (Emphasis in the original.) Adding to this, Rid points out, are changes in the media environment that have affected traditional, high-quality news organizations. Reporters who used to check their facts carefully now are "worn down by breakneck news cycles [and therefore even] more receptive to covering leaked, compromising material of questionable prove- nance." Indeed, one can only imagine the opportunities created by the recent Covid-19 pandemic.

Information Wars

In contrast to Rid's analytical approach, Richard Stengel's Information Wars is a personal memoir of public diplomacy in the time of internet operations. In fact, Stengel's is three books in one. On one level, it is the former under secretary's account of his time at the State Department. Stengel was the editor of Time when Secretary of State John Kerry personally asked him in 2013 to take the public diplomacy job. After enduring the confirmation process—itself worth a short memoir—Stengel arrived in Washington to face the multiple challenges of modernizing State's public diplomacy apparatus, which was woefully out of date in the age of social media and Twitter—and doing so while under the

sophisticated twin propaganda assaults of ISIS and then Russia. It was, to say the least, a tall order.

Much of what Stengel has to say about State revolves around what he believes to be the department's institutional problems. Stengel never felt at home at State or lost his sense of being an outsider, which enables him to look at it with an unrelentingly critical eye. In Stengel's telling, the department is a place that observes the world rather than acts to shape it; where meetings are ends in themselves; almost any officer can block a policy initiative; and, rather than being final, policy decisions can be endlessly relitigated. In Stengel's view, a few State officers are energetic and dedicated to fulfilling their missions, but he believes the majority to be cautious careerists who are most concerned about arranging their next assignment. Worse, he asserts, the system wastes talent. Commenting on the limited lengths of Foreign Service tours, he notes that "if I spent two years training a correspondent to speak Mandarin, I'd want that darn reporter to spend more than three years in Shanghai." (14)

On a second level, Information Wars is a primer on the new world of digital disinformation and anti-democratic propaganda. This is the least informative part of the book, if only because Stengel's understanding of active measures is superficial. Much of what he points out, such as that disinformation is based on the simple tactics of accusing your adversary of doing what you are doing, planting false stories, and repeating baseless charges nonstop, has been known for decades; Stengel shows little awareness of the long history of active measures or how the Soviets and their allies conducted them during the Cold War, let alone how the US countered and fought back. (In fairness, Stengel is not alone in this. I attended a meeting in 2015 with staffers from the National Security Council who sought advice on how to counter Russian active measures, and it was clear that none of them were aware of this history.)

The third strand of Stengel's memoir reflects his depressing view of the US government's capabilities. It's not news that terrorists and dictators can spread their lies faster and more effectively than ever or that the State Department faces numerous difficulties in dealing with this problem. Unfortunately, however, Stengel believes the US government as a whole has sunk into paralysis and unable to mobilize even a fraction of its vast resources to fight an information war. Hostile messages move too fast

and too nimbly—trolls at the IRA do not have to coordinate their tweets with various desks or agencies before releasing them—for the US bureaucracy to have any hope of keeping up. Still, by the final months of the Obama administration, Stengel was proud of the modest progress he had made, especially in beefing up State's messaging and creating a partnership with the United Arab Emirates to counter ISIS. Stengel feared that the outcome of the 2016 presidential election would undo much of his hard work. He had believed in the United States as an inspirational city on a hill, but "now it seemed to be gone." (286)

In Sum

Anyone reading these two books—and both are worthwhile for their different perspectives—will start to wonder what is to be done about the problem of uncontrolled false information. Rid does not offer explicit recommendations but, true to his academic roots, concludes Active Measures with a discussion of the link between the rise of academic postmodernism, with its denial of absolute truth, and the growing problem of disinformation. Journalists, Rid argues, have become "either unable or unwilling to assess the data on their merits, or in the context of a history that had largely been forgotten," which suggests that if he had to come up with a solution, it would start with working to shift the intellectual climate back toward traditional liberal democratic values the teaching of history.

Stengel, as a policy veteran, looks for more focused solutions. Most of his proposals—greater transparency by media organizations, reforming internet advertising practices and banning clickbait stories, and using artificial intelligence to filter out fabrications—sound useful but are unlikely to work for long, given the ease with which they could be circumvented. More promising is his call to reform the Communications Decency Act, which currently gives web platforms immunity from lawsuits regarding the content posted on their sites. Treating Facebook, Twitter, and various aggregators as traditional publishers, he believes, would force them to begin serious policing of content and be an important first step in fighting the plague of disinformation.

Rid's and Stengel's common implication is that much needs to be done to improve journalists' awareness of

how information operations work so they will not be so easily manipulated. This will not be easy, to say the least, as it will require intelligence agencies, journalists, and technology workers to overcome their suspicions of one another and cooperate over the long term. Whatever the difficulties, however, *Active Measures* and *Information Wars* make convincing cases that democratic societies need to take serious steps to confront and reduce the effects of disinformation and hostile influence operations.

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The reviewer: J. E. Leonardson is the penname of an analyst in the CIA's Directorate of Analysis.

Dorwart's History of the Office of Naval Intelligence, 1865–1945
Jeffrey M. Dorwart (Naval Institute Press, 2019), 327 pp.

Reviewed by CAPT David Belt, USN (ret.)

The Basic Thesis

The literature on America's first permanent intelligence agency, the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI), is largely critical of the institution for its performance from its Civil War beginnings through the World Wars. The latest addition to the literature by long-time historian of this agency, Rutgers University Professor Emeritus Jeffrey M. Dorwart, adds to this chorus, but it also offers a broad treasure trove of specifics that yield many key insights, which today's leadership can apply in the intelligence enterprise.

The ONI, to jog our collective memory, was created to provide the decaying post-Civil War US Navy with the blueprints and technical data, along with intelligence on capabilities and tactics, from more advanced foreign navies in a new era of steel and steam. To that end, the naval attaché agent system was expanded from its modest beginning ranks—officers that included future fleet admirals Nimitz, Halsey, and Rickover when they were junior officers—to some 350 attachés by 1943. Described as "observers" and liaison officers abroad, these officers ranged from open officials to undercover travelers in denied areas. (2) The ONI remained the US government's largest and most active intelligence agency until the creation of the Office of Strategic Services in World War II.

Professor Dorwart's recent addition is essentially a combination of his two existing books on the ONI—the first covering its creation in 1882 through World War I; the second covered the interwar period through World War II. Dr. Dorwart's main theme throughout this and his previous text is what he calls the "conflict of duty" or the "intelligence dilemma"—the phrases that formed the title and subtitle of his first book on this problem within the ONI. Dorwart's exhaustive research shows—in his

The first director of naval intelligence, Lt. Theodorus B.M. Mason (1882–85). A flag officer would not lead ONI until US entry into WW I in 1917.

words—"how the founders and first generations of U.S. naval officers trained to man warships at sea confronted what seemed an inherent dilemma in new missions that interfered with providing technical and operational information to their navy." In this combined text, Dorwart demonstrates how this intelligence dilemma was manifested in various ways throughout ONI's long history. In his and his publisher's words:

The threats in both oceans from powerful enemy navies equipped with the latest technology and weaponry gave an urgency to the collection of information on the strategies, warships, submarines, and aircraft development of potential and actual naval enemies. But at the same time ONI was asked to provide information of possible domestic threats from suspected enemy spies, terrorists, saboteurs or anti-war opponents. This led ONI officers to wiretap, break and enter, pursue surveillance of all types of people from foreign agents to Americans suspected of opposition to strengthening the U.S. Navy or becoming involved in world wars. This history explains that many ONI directors and officers were highly motivated to collect as much information as possible about the naval-military capabilities and strategies of Germany, Italy, Japan, and even allies. ONI officers understood that code-breaking was part of their job as well. But this all led some to become deeply involved in domestic spying, wiretapping, breaking and entering on private property.

Dorwart's argument is that such domestic political focus, and the vast amounts of information inherent to it, overloaded some ONI officers and obscured more strategic security and intelligence issues, thereby hindering their ability to estimate or warn of issues like Japan's war on China or Tokyo's plans for a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor.

The Bigger Lessons

But, the amount of detail in this combined text offers Intelligence Community (IC) leadership today still more than the basic concept that Dorwart spoon-feeds us. Reading between the lines, the text yields other key insights that intelligence leadership today can apply to keep from falling into similar traps for their craft. From my own reading, I came away with two or three more key insights—principles even—that should inform our leadership.

Principle #1: We Must Keep the Strategic Focus

The first principle to be gleaned from this history of the ONI is that the IC enterprise should never fall into the bureaucratic trap of losing sight of the larger strategic and value-added picture while fighting the continual "tyranny of the urgent" back in the always-too-political Washington DC. The IC is daily under pressure to *politicize* its intelligence, either by act of omission or commission, as too much of the literature attests. Senior intelligence officers across the agencies complain about having too little time and too few resources to apply against the strategic intelligence mission area. Why? Because they are always having to produce analysis on the subjects and questions of policymakers, who themselves are often under pressure to introduce legislation by lobbyists for major and often friendly foreign powers and blocks of powers. In acts of omission, the IC in these instances often is forced to ignore the weightier, more strategic, or major security issues that it sees and instead produce the bulk of its analysis on the minor subjects of policymaker requests.

Dorwart's history continually shows how the ONI fell into this trap of effectively losing sight of the strategic threat of foreign enemies and instead spending most of its resources on either *enemies domestic*—to apply the phrase from our oath of office—or on more ancillary, less-important, and often urgent functions.

This strategic distraction within the ONI had begun in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution, as Dorwart begins to describe here:

> *The burdens and complexities of wartime intelligence duty soon drained [intelligence director Roger] Welles's early enthusiasm. War-induced patriotic hysteria, fear of aliens, and an atmosphere of repression and suspicion which settled over the United States during 1917 [the Bolshevik Revolution] filtered down into the Navy Department. Public-spirited informers found enemy aliens and evil spies everywhere. ONI had to investigate each allegation.* (100)

This trend continued between 1921 and 1923 under DNI Luke McNamee, who—despite new congressional restraints and his public statements denying it—"expanded" domestic surveillance (163) on all potential traitors, from Bolshevik to Japanese. In response to a tip that a Japanese spy had entered New York to gain intelligence on US aeronautics technology and capability, the DNI and Third District intelligence officer (DIO) crafted a plan "to break into private offices and ransack luggage in search of the mysterious Oriental agent" (164). Similarly, in 1929, DIO Glenn Howell broke into the Communist Party of America headquarters in New York and vandalized everything, and even stole check books, and then planted evidence to frame someone else for the deed. (169)

The ONI's strategic misfocus reached another unlawful milestone when it did the dirty work of the paranoid and obsessed President Herbert Hoover. In Nixonian-Watergate fashion, an operation in 1930 led by DIO Howell broke into the Democratic Party's office in search of the file purportedly created on Hoover that might destroy his reputation and administration. Dorwart nicely captures the dilemma ONI faced in the wake of this:

> *Whether or not the naval intelligence officers realized the full implications of their situation, they confronted a dilemma particularly American in nature. In order to defend a free and open society, sometimes US intelligence had to pursue secret operations in inimical to that very freedom. Moreover, once crossing the line between lawful conduct and extralegal measures, it became difficult to stop short of criminal activity. On its part, naval intelligence faced its own version of the dilemma. During the First World War, ONI had spawned an apparently inherent and irreconcilable conflict between the bureau's work for the Navy department and its function as a government intelligence agency. Its primary mission was to provide strategic and technical data for Naval war planners, and secondarily to secure the Navy against internal and external threats—often by secret methods. These latter activities might have naval interest, but as in the case of Howell's adventure, might just as likely lead to unrelated and even in illegal acts.* (135)

Dorwart then observes that "The more ONI wandered into peripheral areas, the more it neglected strategic

information," and "To keep pace with the larger and more complex requirements for information and security, ONI expanded, and this expansion diverted the office from its appointed mission and led to entanglement in non-naval matters." (135)

The obvious lesson that Dorwart can't manage to say is that an enterprise can never allow its primary mission area to become distorted by a resource-constrained environment. It can never allow secondary mission creep to result in degradation of the primary mission. Instead, it must continually improve the process so that the performance of both primary and secondary missions can become more effective.

To this end, later, in 1930, DNI Johnson issued orders to rein in the domestic focus and—in Dorwart's words— "urged attachés to stick to naval matters, avoiding the seduction of undercover operations that took time and energy away from basic duties." (173) Dorwart adds that "Johnson recognized that too much information, poorly analyzed, obscured important signals from abroad," and that he "only desired information about submarines, radio communications, and fleet tactics, material of direct and unquestionable naval interest." (173)

But, by December 1934, the ONI's culture was back to majoring in minor things, so to speak, as it released a highly speculative and McCarthyesque report on communists in America to the Committee on Un-American Activities. Characterized by Dorwart as "anything but professional," the report named over 200 American organizations and individuals the ONI claimed were dangerous radicals and, in Dorwart's words, "smeared many of FDR's isolationist and pacifistically inclined friends and supporters." (202)

Seemingly unable to learn, by 1936 the DNI made domestic surveillance the primary part of ONI's mission. (203) Internal security, in Dorwart's words, "had become so prominent during [the highly anti-communist focused ONI director] Puleston's tenure that the War Plans Division of the CNO's office worried that ONI had let down its vigilance of developments overseas and had begun to neglect larger strategic questions attached to its war planning mission." (203)

Because of this misplaced emphasis, not once between 1934 and 1937 did the more gifted [ONI director] Puleston prepare what we would call a national

intelligence estimate on the strategic megatrends in Japan and in Germany. Dorwart concludes that "a careful study of intelligence signals during [Puleston's] tenure would have given him grounds to estimate possible future situations more forcefully" and—overstating the obvious— "it was the intelligence director's business to attempt an informed prediction of future trends and to present any number of possible situations so that war planners could draw up countermeasures and prepare for different eventualities." (205) As a result, one intelligence officer, speaking of this misfocused era of the ONI, observed that "there was very little information concerning the [possibility of] a war in Asia" and "the Japanese occupation of Shanghai in 1932." (206) The ONI was so misfocused that Puleston reported to the CNO in 1936 in reference to Japan and China that "It is believed that the influences for peace outweigh those for war at least at any time in the predictable future." (206) Within three months, the war the ONI director had said was so highly unlikely had exploded.

Such a strategic intelligence failure notwithstanding, by 1939 President Franklin D. Roosevelt gave the FBI, the Army's Military Intelligence Division (MID), and the ONI "sweeping authority" on domestic or internal security matters and charged all three agencies to work together. (235) ONI Director Rear Admiral Walter Stratton Anderson—in the words of Brian Niiya—"met weekly with MID Director General Sherman Miles and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover through 1940 and pushed his agents to put together files on suspect domestic groups, including Nazi, fascist, and communist sympathizers and Japanese."[a] So, while the Japanese Navy was making plans for a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, the misfocused ONI allowed the Army's MID to succeed in its bid to round-up loyal Japanese-American citizens and intern them in camps.

By this point, with running mates like J. Edgar Hoover, ONI Director Anderson admitted, "we were all in disobedience to the law," but with so much bureaucratic momentum and with such an ensconced organizational culture, he felt powerless to do anything about it. (232) Dorwart notes that "[FBI director] Hoover's constant tutelage influenced Anderson's emphasis on domestic security

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a. Brian Niiya, "Office of Naval Intelligence," *Densho Encyclopedia*, March 19, 2013. https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Office_of_Naval_Intelligence/ [Accessed December 23, 2019].

detective work, and the pursuit of America's internal enemies, and eventually at the expense of strategic and naval questions." (233) Indeed, it was not only a complete surprise when Hitler invaded Poland in September 1939, but the German's highly successful blitzkrieg strategy and the signing of the Molotov–Ribbentrop non-aggression pact between Germany and Russia were also strategic surprises to the misfocused intelligence enterprise.

Principle #2: Intelligence Activism Is Our Job

The second key insight that I gleaned from this history of the ONI is that IC leadership can and should have a meaningful impact on the domestic political predispositions regarding strategic security issues facing the nation.

Today, in response to criticism over a lack of strategic intelligence that would have prevented the multiple disastrous and costly U.S. foreign policy blunders since 9/11—Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, Iran, and so on—past IC leadership has complained within IC circles that various administrations did not listen to intelligence and instead followed their own ideologically-aligned think tanks in Washington DC. But, to be fair, some of this analytical marginalization is self-inflicted. We earned it, in my view, by allowing our strategic intelligence mission area to atrophy. But, that is a different book and conversation.

And, this is not the first time the intelligence enterprise has found itself marginalized by the people it was created to serve. Dorwart shows how the ONI at the beginning of World War II was essentially detached from the Navy that it was supposed to serve. In his words, the ONI "was isolated from other divisions of the CNO's office and remote from important parts of US Naval establishment," and—in the words of a British intelligence official—that the ONI "lacked prestige." (258)

But, Dorwart's history shows that some intelligence leaders have not taken their mission so lightly and would not even fathom the thought of allowing their strategic analysis to be marginalized or to passively accept the security predispositions or paradigms of elected officials when they believed that these officials, by ignoring the analysis, would be making the nation less secure. We might call this *intelligence activism*.

Dorwart specifically shows how the ONI leadership resisted the prevailing common sense after the 1921–22 Washington Conference, where some leaders, including
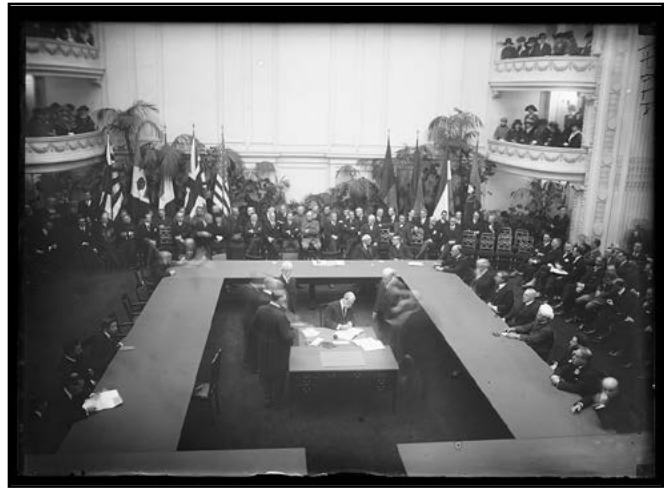
The Washington Naval Conference, held under the auspices of the League of Nations during November 1921–February 1922, led to treaties that caused US Navy leaders to protest publicly. The conference took place in the newly built Constitution Hall of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Photo Library of Congress.

those of the United States, agreed to scrap much of their respective navies. Naval intelligence activism manifested in feisty discourse. In an article by the then new DNI, Luke McNamee, "pacifists and little navy men" at the Washington Conference used "Alice in Wonderland reasoning" to justify why the Navy could be downsized to the point that it could not protect the nation's vital interest from threats from Japan, Germany, and other nefarious powers. Other ONI officers, Dorwart explains, took up this kind of activism to correct what they believed to be this disastrous misunderstanding by "devoting spare time to lectures and articles designed to counteract anti-navy sentiment." (151) Not only did they publish their counterargument in the May 1923 issue of the US Naval Institute's *Proceedings*, but they advanced debates in the National Council and in the Foreign Policy Club in Philadelphia.

But, of course, there can be the poorest execution of a sound principle, as was the case in the ONI's campaign to overturn the Washington Conference. For example, in his article in the *Proceedings*, DNI McNamee waxed hyperbolic under the earliest part of the Red Scare when he charged that those who sought to downsize the Navy must be under the influence of the communists. "I am repeating no idle rumor," he said as he repeated the going rumor, "when I tell you that much of this propaganda has a sinister foreign source" and that its object is "the overthrow

of our government and the ultimate dictatorship of the proletariat." (152)

More even-keeled than McNamee, retired intelligence officer Capt. Dudley Wright Knox, who headed ONI's naval library and historical archives waded into the fight with his 1922 tract, *The Eclipse of American Sea Power*, in which he argued to "nullify even partially the disproportionate sacrifices imposed upon [the United States] by the agreements she subscribed to at the [Washington] Conference." (152) But, even this activism failed the nation; the work was described as "pedantic," "boring, and "academic" in tone, and "ponderous" in style.

The point again is that there is no shame in being activist intelligence officers. To be persuasive in analysis we believe in is our core mission, and we need to be more creative and wise in this mission. That is what we in the Navy since our junior officer days have known as "good staff work," and why we have senior enlisted advisors—the "command master chief"—to keep the "Old Man" or "Skipper" out of doing things she or he would later regret.

Principle #3: Beware of the Popular and Distorting Security Paradigms

The third principle for IC leadership that Dorwart's history illuminated for me is the power of paradigms to construct and shape the strategic security master narratives.

Of course, we saw the power of a security paradigm throughout the ONI's history in its misplaced focus on the subversive radical or enemy within—a kind of perpetual Red and then Yellow Scares. Dorwart continually shows how the ONI's master security frame at the time of greatest threat from enemies foreign was that of enemies domestic. The ONI's focus—in Dorwart's words—was "intelligence doctrine, placing the emphasis on ONI's function in securing the Navy against sabotage, espionage, and subversive activity." Dorwart then adds that "essentially these policy statements envisaged ONI as a security agency. Indeed, domestic security, counter espionage, and protection against internal enemies seemed the most immediate and pressing need for Kirk in March 1941." (261) Again, such a misplaced focus at this juncture was a strategic leadership failure, akin to spending all the enterprise's energies on straightening out the deck chairs on the Titanic after it began to list. And, so we come full circle and wonder why the ONI, tasked with strategic-level intelligence, was relegated to a security

agency, tasked by the Navy to guard navy yards against possible sabotage. (261)

But, this disastrous security paradigm notwithstanding, it was the misplaced security paradigm of "neutrality" that probably cost the United States and the Allies untold fortunes in national treasure. How the ONI allowed Congress to pass the Neutrality Acts of the 1930s seems incomprehensible in light of the strategic security environment with respect to rising totalitarianism in Germany, Japan, Italy, and the Soviet Union. The most cursory analysis of the strategic security environment in the prelude to and beginning of World War II would have burst this security myth. Instead of sound-minded intelligence estimates at this point, the paradigm of neutrality with respect to foreign enemies, and the concomitant obsession with domestic enemies, hindered the production of sound strategic intelligence and intelligence activism that would have functioned as a corrective. The ONI had been so politicized and marginalized by this point that it was evidently unable to challenge these linked false security paradigms.

Given the power of these two security paradigms—paranoia over domestic enemies and neutrality with respect to foreign enemies—it is no surprise that leaders in Washington were shocked when all of Europe quickly fell to Nazi Germany and Britain appeared unable to stand and Japan invaded China. It is no surprise that, in 1941, the ONI was caught flat-footed as Germany continued its blitz through Yugoslavia, Greece, and into Egypt to battle Britain for North Africa, and even invaded their non-aggression partners, the Soviet Union. And it is no surprise that everyone was shocked when Japan conducted a surprise attack on Oahu.

The most interesting thing about Dorwart's history of the ONI was that up to this point he doesn't even mention a single intelligence analysis or estimative product that can be credited with shaping the president's painfully late move out of neutrality. The oddity of this omission by Dorwart can only be compared to a history of Shakespeare without mentioning any of the poet's plays, or a history of the Rolling Stones without mentioning their music.

That said, in a move we might classify as too little and too late, the ONI just before Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor had sort of turned over a new leaf. By late 1941, just a month before the attack, the ONI had

amassed—in Dorwart's words— "one of the most thorough and definitive bodies of information and thought about Japan in any U.S. government agency." (285) Paradoxically, this collection began as far back as the end of World War I, when two Naval attachés warned that Japan might strike first to gain the strategic advantage prior to a formal declaration of war. And as early as 1933, in "Fleet Problem XIV" judged it possible that Japan could conduct an air raid on Oahu. Evidently, this repository of information wasn't enough to break through the existing fixations on domestic enemies and neutrality. The result was—predictably—strategic surprise on "the day that will live in infamy."

In conclusion, these are but three interrelated lessons that one can glean from Dorwart's history of the ONI. Admittedly, they are peculiarly mine. But, the book is of sufficient detail that all aspiring intelligence leaders can readily glean their own lessons to apply across the enterprise.

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The reviewer: Capt. David Belt, USN (Ret.) is a retired Naval intelligence officer. He currently serves on the faculty of the National Intelligence University

White House Warriors: How the National Security Council Transformed the American Way of War

John A. Gans (Liveright Publishing, 2019), 301 pp., 8 plates, illustrations

Reviewed by Matthew J.

In 1947 the United States Congress passed the National Security Act, which created the CIA, Department of Defense, and National Security Council (NSC). Facing an escalating Cold War with the Soviet Union, lawmakers envisioned they were creating an architecture to manage US national security policy and anticipated that the NSC would serve as a coordinating body to manage the increasing commitments that a strategy of global containment would require. Within a relatively short time, the NSC not only coordinated policy among the "interagency," but also became a key driver of US foreign policy, and as John Gans demonstrates in *White House Warriors*, the mission of the organization often depended on who was staffing it at any given time.

Gans focuses on individuals and particular stories as he recounts how NSC staffers navigated conflicts from the 1960s to the present around the world, including in Vietnam, Lebanon, Bosnia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. He describes these individuals as "middle-aged professionals with penchants for dark business suits . . . who have spent their lives serving their country in windowless offices, or on far-off battlefields, or at embassies abroad." (3) He argues that the NSC has taken on increasing importance in policymaking, even, at times, commanding more influence than the Defense and State Departments in foreign policy debates.

Gans also posits that many presidents have preferred an agile NSC, one able to respond quickly to developing events around the globe. This book holds value for analysts, whose products help inform policies implemented by NSC staffers, and operators, who are often reliant on the NSC for covert action authorities, as well as general readers interested in the intersection of intelligence and policy. Better understanding of how the organization functions can help highlight how to approach the NSC, a body that is one of the most important consumers of intelligence.

Following a few pages dedicated to Franklin Roosevelt's approach to foreign policy and how Harry Truman and Dwight Eisenhower conceptualized what an NSC staff should look like, Gans introduces readers to some of the earliest *White House Warriors*, including Michael Forrestal, who served on John Kennedy's lean NSC staff and had access to the Oval Office and ability to influence the young president. Forrestal pushed for escalation in Vietnam and even counseled Kennedy to rethink US support for South Vietnamese President Diem, which Kennedy did without any input from his most senior foreign policy advisers. Diem's overthrow in 1963 was an early example of the immense impact NSC staffers could have and how they had the ability to circumvent more formalized processes.

The 1970s witnessed the rise of influential national security advisors, such as Henry Kissinger, who in concert with his staff implemented a restructuring of the NSC, one in which the national security advisor chaired meetings and held more sway than the secretaries of state and defense. Kissinger's NSC focused less on coordinating interagency players and more on making policy and gained "the power to review and either approve or reject the bureaucracy's ideas." (37) When judging the Nixon administration, Gans makes a well-reasoned argument that its legacy on the NSC was found in how successive administrations did very little to reverse the status of the organization as a foreign policy making body, not just a coordinating agency.

Jimmy Carter continued the tradition of a strong NSC staff, bringing on Zbigniew Brzezinski, who kept several holdovers from the Ford administration, including CIA officer Bob Gates and US Navy Commander Gary Sick. It was Sick who argued in favor of a military operation to free US hostages then being held in Iran, and when he wrote a memorandum for Brzezinski arguing that operation "Desert One" could provide the administration with a solution to the crisis, Brzezinski barely edited it before submitting to the president. (60) During the Reagan

era, NSC staffers pushed for the United States to play a larger role in stabilizing the Lebanese Civil War, a policy choice that ended in tragedy following terrorist attacks against the US embassy and a Marine barracks in 1983. The chapter on Reagan also highlights how the Iran-Contra scandal led to significant reforms at the NSC, an organization that had previously been able to avoid much oversight. In 1986 the Goldwater-Nichols Act stipulated that the chairman of the Joint Chiefs would attend NSC meetings, and one year later, the Tower Commission report recommended the creation of a legal counsel for the body.

One of the commission report's authors, Brent Scowcroft, continued his reform efforts of the NSC into the 1990s, as he became George H. W. Bush's national security advisor. Scowcroft established new types of council meetings that remain today, the Deputies Committee (DC), which included the second in charge at the major agencies and the Principals Committee (PC) for the secretary/director level leadership. Gans writes, "If imitation is the highest form of flattery, the greatest compliment to and legacy of the Bush NSC…is that it would serve as the standard for every NSC that followed." (114) The chapter on the Clinton years focuses almost exclusively on the war in Bosnia, as the breakup of Yugoslavia and he credits the NSC staff with helping achieve the Dayton Peace Accords, which in Gans's view, illustrated the "need for a strong and engaged staff." (139)

The final two chapters primarily cover the Bush 43 and Obama administrations, with a few pages on the earliest days of the Trump presidency. Gans primary argument here is that the post-9/11 period and US interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq ushered in a "wartime NSC," in which staffers took on roles that included traveling frequently to conflict zones and, at times, providing the president with daily intelligence updates. (149) In order to meet these demands, the staff ballooned to several hundred. Under President Obama, the staff continued to play a hands-on role, reviewing plans for counterterrorism operations and pushing forward with a normalization of relations with Cuba. All of these activities caught the attention of Congress, which sought reforms at the organization and in late 2016 imposed a restriction on the number of NSC staffers in policy roles to 200.

Gans concludes by noting that in the NSC's more than 70-year history, NSC staffers have accumulated power and influence, often at the expense of department heads and cabinet members. In many instances, as Gans argues, the staff has not only acted as a coordinating body but has pushed US foreign policy in particular directions and "in conflict after conflict, a more powerful NSC staff has fundamentally altered the American way of war." (209) Debates on the proper role of the NSC will surely continue, but there is no doubt, that the organization, and its staff, will continue to play a key role in managing, executing, and at times driving, key US foreign policy decisions, making it all the more important that intelligence professionals understand the institution's history.

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The reviewer: Matthew J. serves in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

Cold Warriors: Writers Who Waged the Literary Cold War

Duncan White (Custom House/HarperCollins Publishers, 2019), 782 pp., plates, illustrations, bibliographic references, index

Reviewed by Leslie C.

The Russian poet Osip Mandelstam once observed, "If they're killing people for poetry that means they honor and esteem it, they fear it . . . that means poetry is power." This is Duncan White's theme in *Cold Warriors: Writers Who Waged the Literary Cold War*, in which he offers a "group biography" of literary figures across the ideological divide through six decades of competition between communism and liberalism. Of greater relevance here, however, is the book's service as an imperfect history of a type of covert action, wherein East and West used writers as weapons in a sprawling influence campaign.

The United States and the Soviet Union both sponsored writers, openly and clandestinely. In the latter effort, the CIA, working through fronts, underwrote literary magazines and publishers, funded conventions and prizes, and smuggled banned literature behind the Iron Curtain—most famously, Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*. Because of their liberal educations, operators like CIA's David Wisner recognized—in ways the doctrinaire Soviets never could—that "literature that did not look like propaganda was much more effective at winning hearts and minds than polemical material." (435) The Soviets, working through the Comintern and later directly through their security services, organized "gatherings of sympathetic intellectuals . . . in the hope that these intellectuals would help sway public opinion in their own countries." (77–78) Literature seems to be one field in which the Soviets were handicapped. Most writers are jealous of their independence regardless of their politics, and White's narrative offers a look into how a generation of leftists turned on Moscow.

In the struggle between clandestine services, those of open societies are disadvantaged; Soviet communism was, of course, the product of a conspiracy. The West, with time, did turn the party's paranoia and its orthodox zeal against it, and writers could be sharp edges in this effort, though often unwitting of their role. If some felt betrayed when the hidden hand of the intelligence community became evident, they might have taken some comfort from the unexpected fact that "the U.S. government and its various agencies ended up as champions of the experimental literature of the early twentieth century's avant garde." (99)

The book rightly treats the Spanish Civil War as a Cold War ideological antecedent. A conflict against fascism was a magnet for leftists, including such novelists as George Orwell, Arthur Koestler, and Ernest Hemingway, and the poets W.H. Auden and Stephen Spender. Orwell, wounded in combat, later wrote that it became "difficult to think about this war in the same naively idealistic manner as before" (33); while Spender, who "had entered the Spanish War a Communist, striding toward a socialist future . . . began shuffling backward to liberalism." (54) Why this change of heart? The savagery of civil war with its atrocities and assassinations, coupled with a heavy-handed Soviet intelligence apparatus more concerned with enforcing the party line than with fighting fascism, alienated many. The purges and show trials of the late 1930s, and the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact on the eve of World War II, further poisoned the well.

Along this path of disillusion we learn the success of Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* convinced Orwell that "fiction, rather than journalism or memoir, however scrupulous, was the most effective way to communicate the essence of totalitarianism." (94) Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*, now regarded as a classic, was neither critically well-received nor commercially successful upon publication. *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* were cut from different cloth and made Orwell the uncomfortable avatar of an anticommunist liberalism that realized "imaginative fiction was a weapon that provoked disproportionate fear in totalitarian governments." (238)

Similarly disillusioned, though for different reasons, were British intelligence officers turned writers whose experiences in World War II and the early Cold War turned them to satire and dark criticism. Graham Greene was struck by the "absurdity" of "agents selling fictional information to credulous spy services." which became

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.

the foundation for his 1958 novel *Our Man In Havana*. (173) Likewise, David Cornwell—better known by his nom de plume, John Le Carré—shaped the popular view of intelligence as a syllabus of "failed missions, incompetent agents, grubby compromises, and hollow sacrifices." (683) Ironic, because as White writes, "Cornwell's ongoing use of a pseudonym and the seeming precision of the technical language of espionage gave [his work] a sense of authenticity. This frustrated Cornwell, who knew he would not have gotten the book past SIS had it disclosed anything resembling real operations." (488) The duplicity and betrayal of the Cambridge Five hardened in Cornwell, and others, the fear of a West unable to compete in the shadow world. Strange, because in hindsight it appears evident that the Berlin Wall, coupled with Soviet suppression of writers, indicated early a sort of desperation in Moscow.

White is an effective and generally engaging writer, but he is on surer ground earlier in the book. As his narrative progresses into the 1960s and beyond, however, it becomes uneven and at times almost slapdash. Some of his choices are odd, such as his inclusion of a treatment of Harold "Kim" Philby, which he justifies—after admitting that Philby was not a literary figure—with the claim that his story demonstrates "the way espionage and literature become so fascinatingly intertwined. . . . Philby did not write fiction, he lived it." (12) At least CIA counterintelligence official James Angleton, who is also described, had literary bona fides, having dabbled in poetry and edited a modernist journal while at Yale. Likewise the profiles of Mary McCarthy, who became a credulous tool for communist propagandists when she toured Hanoi at the height of the Vietnam War, or the Sandinista poet Gianconda Belli, who ultimately fled to the more congenial environment of Western Europe, pale before the examples of leftists, who, in Orwell's view, exposed the Soviet myth because they wanted to preserve socialism.

White also has a tendency to moral equivalencies, as when he draws a parallel between the Sinyavsky-Daniel show trial and the revelation of CIA funding of liberal journals, and to unintended irony, as when he describes a November 1966 "tribunal" convened by Bertrand Russell and Jean-Paul Sartre to "investigate American war crimes in Vietnam," when Sartre was an apologist for Soviet excesses long after he might have known better. Similarly irritating is the reversion to cliché, as when White suggests life imitated art when Edward Lansdale emerged in Southeast Asia as a "real-life [Alden] Pyle" (374); or when he pushes the dubious yet popular notion that President Kennedy would not have committed America to war in Vietnam based solely on his "better understanding of the complexity of the situation" derived from visiting Saigon in the 1950s as a congressman. (547)

Present also are easily avoided factual errors, such as attributing the Kent State shootings to the police when it was nervous National Guardsmen, or identifying William Calley as a platoon commander when he was a company commander. A reader might ask why this is relevant in a book about the literary Cold War; it is a fair question, and indicative of how in doing too much White loses focus.

Because the book is for a general audience it might be beside the point to note that it is based almost entirely on secondary sources, and some of these are, to be generous, problematic. For example, White's treatment of the Office of Policy Coordination's support for the Congress of Cultural Freedom draws heavily from Tim Weiner's discredited *Legacy of Ashes*. This subject has been better treated, and with more rigor, elsewhere.

I am reminded of a salty instructor in my basic tradecraft course who deftly handled a student's question about moral equivalence between "us" and "them" (e.g., "We recruit spies. They recruit spies. What's the difference?" with the laconic reply, "We do it in defense of liberal democracy. They do it in defense of a monstrous tyranny.") Likewise there is a clear distinction between how Western intelligence services and their Soviet adversaries conducted this type of covert action. As White shows in the book's stronger sections, Moscow clumsily subsidized fellow travelers, made martyrs out of writers like Aleksandr Solzehnitsyn, and alienated the most talented authors who initially supported the Soviet experiment. Though CIA's covert sponsorship of writers was ultimately exposed with the inevitable backlash, it would be disingenuous to argue the efforts were morally equivalent. The CIA, after all, sought influence and not control.

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The reviewer: Leslie C. is a CIA Directorate of Operations officer.

Australia's First Spies: The Remarkable Story of Australia's Intelligence Operations, 1901–45
John Fahey (Allen & Unwin, 2018), 434 pp, glossary and abbreviations, notes, bibliography, index.

Reviewed by Kevin Davies

In my 2018 review in *Studies* of *Cold War Games: Spies, Subterfuge and Secret Operations at the 1956 Olympic Games*, I noted a recent increase in the output of literature about Australia's intelligence history.[a] *Australia's First Spies: The Remarkable Story of Australia's Intelligence Operations, 1901–1945,* along with events such as the recent announcement of the commissioning of the Australian Signals Directorate's (ASD) official history, is another welcome continuation of the trend.[b]

According to the book's author, John Fahey, *Australia's First Spies* arose out of conversation with two of his colleagues, US Navy Capt. Fred Smith (retired) and an unnamed British colleague, who made a cutting, unflattering observation about Australia's intelligence history up to 1945. Having taken this comment to heart, Fahey—a former member of ASD (previously known as the Defence Signals Directorate) and the British and Australian armies—responded to the implied challenge and produced a most interesting insight into Australia's early intelligence activities. (xv) The book delves into many successful and unsuccessful Australian intelligence collection operations during the nation's first 44 years. The descriptions of the operations are at an appropriate level of detail, providing enough information for readers to gain reasonable understanding of the operations, their rationale, and the reasons they succeeded or failed.

Australia was federated on 1 January 1901, and its first intelligence operation was formally approved in May and received a final go–ahead in August. Most fascinating about this operation, discussed in the first chapter, was that its targets were the French and, in what came as a

bit of a shock, the British. Fahey's description of Jersey native Wilson Le Couteur's voluntary HUMINT operation against British and French activities in Vanuatu (then called New Hebrides) was a short, if positively illuminating, opening to the book. The fact that Australia was willing to spy against "the Mother country" also demonstrated the ongoing validity of Lord Palmerston's maxim that, "We have no eternal allies, and we have no perpetual enemies. Our interests are eternal and perpetual, and those interests it is our duty to follow."[c]

From then on, Fahey proceeds to discuss the highs and, unfortunately, many lows Australia's intelligence apparatus recorded as the new nation developed. Among the highs are the contributions the work of the Royal Australian Navy cryptographer Eric Nave made to Australia's intelligence efforts in the years before, during, and after World War II. Fahey clearly shows why Nave should be considered among the world's great intelligence figures.[d] Another positive aspect is Fahey's recounting of the development, and highly successful use, of the Coastwatchers who were deployed into the South West Pacific Area. A bitter element of this story, according to Fahey, is that the Australian Broadcasting Corporation played a role in the deaths of three Coastwatchers. (151)

The book also recounts the almost limitless ways in which Australia, notwithstanding its first government's recognition of the importance of quality intelligence, sabotaged development of an effective intelligence apparatus and operations, even during World War II. The worst of it is that the sabotage occurred at the highest levels of the Australian government and public service. Fahey's first example is the destruction in 1923 of the Pacific Branch,

a. Kevin Davies, review of *Cold War Games: Spies, Subterfuge and Secret Operations at the 1956 Olympic Games*. *Studies in Intelligence* 62, no 1 (March 2018). Available at https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol-62-no-1/cold-war-games.html.
b. G. Hitch, "Australian Signals Directorate emerges from the shadows to commission history of itself." Retrieved from ABC News: https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-07-09/asd-spy-agency-history-announced-john-blaxland/11289904.

c. Oxford University Press. *Lord Palmerston 1784–1865*. Retrieved from Oxford Reference: https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780191826719.001.0001/q-oro-ed4-00008130.
d. For further information regarding Eric Nave, see David Dufty, *The Secret Code-Breaks of Central Bureau: How Australia's Signals-Intelligence Network Helped Win the Pacific War* (Scribe: Carlton North, 2017) and Harry Blutstein, *Cold War Games: Spies, Subterfuge and Secret Operations at the 1956 Olympic Games* (Echo, 2017). The reviewer and Dufty are now friends.

Australia's first strategic intelligence assessment agency. The combination of factors in this destruction included the hostility of then Prime Minister Billy Hughes and the unhelpful (and inept) involvement in the political process of Pacific Branch's director, Edmund Piesse. (70–74) The failure of the Pacific Branch serves as a useful case study in how clashes between politics and intelligence can have devastating effects on a country's national security, even if the consequences are not felt until many years later.

The second example is by far, the more horrifying. According to Fahey, so poor were Australia's security procedures during World War II that ULTRA intelligence was only passed to certain Australian military officials, with members of the Australian government specifically excluded. (239) While Fahey posits that this was done with the approval of then Prime Minister John Curtin, it was shocking violation of the principles of civil-military/ intelligence relations, as well as a pathetic reflection on the attitudes toward security of those members of the government. Given this general attitude to security, it came as no surprise to find that Australia was responsible for what Fahey called the "most egregious breach of [SIGINT] security in Asia during World War II," when the Services Reconnaissance Department effectively told the Japanese that their codes had been broken. (225–26) The fact that the Japanese ignored this intelligence is irrelevant: what mattered was that such a serious breach occurred at all. Consequently, examples such as these, among the other less-than-stellar behaviours Fahey expands on in chapter 20, serve to partially explain why Australia was initially excluded from VENONA. (260–61) While these were the worst, they comprise just two examples of Australia's most senior leadership seeming not to care about the importance of intelligence in the development of effective policy and strategy—even when Australia was in its *greatest* peril.

Despite its sometimes maddening content, the book itself is very easy to read. Technical descriptions regarding SIGINT-related matters are done in a manner that provides readers unfamiliar with the science and technology of topics such as RF, and its associated collection, with enough material to understand what was being done and why. The stories range over an appropriate number of perspectives, from the high-level strategic through individual actions. This helps to ensure that readers can get a sense of the way in which intelligence developed in Australia and the nature of the individuals who were involved in it.

One small criticism is that chapter 14—"The Lions in the Den: Japanese Counterintelligence," which focuses on Japanese World War II intelligence—seems a little out of place. While Japan, rightly, features quite strongly throughout, this particular chapter details things such as *Kempeitai* selection criteria and training and has the effect of temporarily drawing readers away from the focus of the book.

The book is extremely well-researched and the referencing, notes, and bibliography are all of a high standard. Consequently, finding the source material will not be a challenge to those who have the need or interest to dig more deeply. In addition, all graphics are easy to follow and the photos provide help to put faces to some of the names of those who laid the foundation for what is now the Australian Intelligence Community.

In conclusion, *Australia's First Spies* provides a valuable first look at Australia's intelligence history in the period after federation to the end of World War II. It should serve as a jumping-off point for intelligence researchers, as many of the chapters contain stories that deserve further research. Fahey's book is suitable for readers with an interest in intelligence history at any level, and he should be thoroughly commended for this most important contribution to the literature on intelligence and, also, for proving that his British colleague was very wrong.[a]

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a. See also Hayden Peake's review of *Australia's First Spies* in "Intelligence Officers Bookshelf" in *Studies in Intelligence* 63, no. 3 (September 2019).

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The reviewer: Kevin Davies holds a Master of Arts Degree in Defence Studies from the University of South Wales at the Australian Defence Force Academy.

Agent Running in the Field (One Novel: Two Reviews)
John Le Carré (Viking, 2019), 288 pp.

Reviewed by John Kavanagh

Nathaniel, known to all simply as Nat, a 25-year veteran of Britain's Secret Intelligence Service, is facing an uncertain future. Just returned to London from a tour in Tallinn, he assumes his career will soon come to an end. Nat's was a busy career, running varied agent-handling operations under consular and diplomatic cover in Moscow, Prague, Bucharest, Budapest, Tbilisi, Trieste, and Helsinki. He is a seasoned and successful Russia specialist. He deserves to finish his labors at a comfortably secure headquarters desk. But an unexplained untoward incident during his last posting has him on the outs with his seniors. Nat anticipates summary dismissal. It doesn't happen. To his surprise Nat is given a management position. He will take over the helm at the Haven, a London based substation of SIS's Russia Department. Nat is pleased to avoid the sacking he expected, but he has no illusions regarding the relevance of his new workplace, "a dumping ground for resettled defectors of nil value and fifth-rate informers on the skids." An occupational dead end. Nat reluctantly accepts the job.

Thus John Le Carré sets the stage for his 25th novel, *Agent Running in the Field*, Nat's first-person narrative of how the targets, enemies, and obsessions over a decades' long career can return to engage the veteran officer at the strangest times and in the unlikeliest places, such as the Haven. It doesn't take long for the action to start.

Sergei, a former Moscow Centre–trained deep-cover agent under the Haven's care who, as an exchange student, defected to British authorities on his arrival in England has sent out a "must-meet" distress signal. Short on staff, Nat goes to meet him. Sergei, who has been in England for over a year, has never been contacted by his Russian handlers, and it seems obvious that Moscow Centre has assumed his defection and written him off.

But Sergei convinces Nat that Moscow has indeed reached out to its sleeper agent to "bring him back to life." Why? Nat carefully controls Sergei's subsequent covert exchanges with Moscow and the Centre's ultimate intention is revealed: Sergei is tasked to carry out an extensive site-vetting research assignment throughout north London. He must identify and report on three ideal, fully secure clandestine meeting locations.

Moscow Centre plans to bring a covert senior officer to England to hold a daring one-on-one meeting with a British volunteer defector, a senior government official with full knowledge of ongoing Anglo-American intelligence negotiations. The potential intelligence gain justifies the great risk of an in-country meeting. The encounter must be covered, the defector exposed, the secrets secured. Nat's Haven team is marshaled into action. They must cover all three potential meeting sites with full audiovisual monitoring. They must blanket the three neighborhoods with seconded teams of trained discrete watchers. They must identify the Russian officer on arrival and trail him to the meeting. They must deal with the nagging tension of waiting for the operation to unfold. As does the reader. And the ensuing action does not disappoint.

Le Carre's familiar strengths are on ample display here. As always, the closer the story gets to the pavement, to the authentic intricate tactics of classic cat and mouse streetcraft, the more engrossing and instructive the story becomes. The details of Sergei's extensive training at Moscow Centre's deep-cover asset academy is an eye-opening primer on the Centre's selection and grooming of its long-term sleeper assets deployed to the West. Sergei's recalling his strenuous lessons there has Nat again contemplating the inspiring dedication and dogged ingenuity of his Russian counterparts, his career's main target, the source of his triumphs and failures. Sergei's propitious "awakening" has given Nat an unexpected last chance to best his Centre rivals. He is determined to make the best of it despite the obstructions posed by incompetent seniors, political rivals, obtuse bureaucrats, niggling regulations, all patiently handled by Nat.

Women play important roles. Nat's wife Prue, a pro bono civil rights attorney, is a former SIS officer who made up a tandem couple with Nat during an early tour in Moscow. Florence, the one bright light in Nat's

Haven's crew, is a brilliant young probationer whom Nat is happy to mentor. After she survives a grilling by a senior operational "murder board," she impatiently awaits approval for her first operational proposal. Nat steadies her with wise counsel: "A treasury committee has to give its blessing. . . . One mandarin apiece from Treasury, Foreign Office, Home Office, and Defense. Plus a couple of co-opted parliamentarians who can be trusted to do what they're told." And Valentina, the veteran director of Moscow Centre's spy school, provides one of the story's surprise twists and offers a detailed primer on her service's version of the "mad minute" security quiz asset handlers impose on their recruited charges.

The story takes place in the current day, and Le Carré playfully sprinkles in topical material as Nat and his colleagues discuss Big Pharma, Brexit, Putin, global warming, millennials, and the vagaries of American foreign policy. Le Carre offers no slant or bias in these

sections but there is a good amount of humor in it, perhaps more than in any of the author's post-Karla Trilogy books since *The Tailor of Panama* (1996).

The book's main value is the author's depiction of Nat himself, a skilled and proud professional, who is forced by time and circumstance to take the measure of both his career and life. His moody "was the game worth playing" musings are perhaps predictable after two decades of unresolved contests in an arena dominated by shadows. Nat's at the end of the line, but his quiet patriotism and pride in his work buoy him. He enjoys mentoring junior officers, and he recalls advice a mentor once gave him: "If you spy long enough, the show comes round again." As it has for the author, who thankfully continues to use our business as the background landscape for exceptionally well crafted novels.

Another very entertaining, thoughtful spy story from John Le Carre, and warmly recommended.

The reviewer: John Kavanagh is a retired operations officer.

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Same Novel, Different Perspective

By J.E. Leonardson

John Le Carré seems to have written *Agent Running in the Field* in a fit of white-hot anger. For him, the chief villains in his story are the current US administration and the UK's Brexit supporters, but corrupt members of the British elites who do the bidding of Russian oligarchs are not far behind. The plot centers around Nat, a fiftyish and determinedly nonpolitical SIS case officer who is nearing retirement, and his wife, Prudence (Prue), a fashionably liberal lawyer who fights for human rights and against Big Pharma. In the course of an espionage investigation, Nat learns that a spy within British intelligence has given Russia information on secret US-UK negotiations for a post-Brexit trade deal. In the talks, Nat finds out, Washington is taking ruthless advantage of Britain's desperate need for the deal to force London into a treaty that will also destroy the "social democratic institutions of the European Union and [dismantle its] international trading tariffs . . . [and] disseminate fake news on a large scale in order to aggravate" tensions among the states remaining in the EU. (245)

The spy volunteered first to the Germans in an effort to save Europe, but they turned him away; subsequently, the Russians false-flagged him, so he believes he actually was accepted by Berlin. Nat is ordered to confront the spy, tell him the truth of his situation, and then double him against Moscow. Nat, however, decides that he no longer can remain apolitical and casts his lot with the European Union. Instead of following his orders, Nat and Prue help the spy escape, though it is not clear where he will go or what will become of the couple. (There's also a romantic angle, slightly reminiscent of *Casablanca*, as Florence, Nat's former subordinate, and the spy fall in love, marry, and depart together.)

Le Carré makes some good points along the way. His main concern is the corruption of Western institutions and the corrosion of faith in truth and the basic workings of democratic government. One of the turning points for Nat concerns a peeress who is member of an intelligence oversight board who refuses to approve a technical operation in the residence of an oligarch living in London;

she turns out to be an investment manager for, among others, the very same oligarch. Florence, who planned the operation and quit in disgust when it was halted, tells him that the peeress plays the "financial authorities like a harp" and is an expert at finding ways to "circumvent regulations that don't regulate." When Nat asks what he should do with this information, Florence tells him, "Fuck all. That's what everyone does, isn't it?" (157–58)

Le Carré is not entirely cynical, however. A German intelligence officer (and former lover of Nat's) tells him that "not all Americans are Europhobes. Not all Brits are passionate for a trade alliance with Trump's America at any price." It was because they are convinced that the British eventually will return to sanity and rejoin the European family, she tells Nat, that Berlin was "unwilling to engage in spying activities against a friendly nation" and refused to accept the volunteer. (245)

Setting aside whatever one thinks of Le Carré's Europeanist views and fears of a conspiracy between the US administration and Brexiteers in Downing Street, the unfortunate fact is that this novel just does not work. Rather than deliver a crackling espionage yarn that looks at the state of international politics, intelligence, and the people who do the day-to-day work of statecraft as he did in his early novels, Le Carré just leaves the reader with a muddle. The first problem is structural—*Agent Running* moves at such a glacial pace that more than halfway through the reader is still wondering when the espionage will start and what mystery, exactly, will have to be solved. This might not matter too much, as a lot of readers will quit before then, put off by leaden prose and forgettable, cartoonish characters—Prue, especially, seems to be

almost a caricature of a trendy lawyer—whose words Le Carré frequently italicizes so that you will understand precisely how he believes they emphasize their speech. It's a bit much and soon serves only to annoy. Perseverance brings only a modest reward, moreover. The action in the last 50 pages is suspenseful and keeps the reader guessing, but it has taken Le Carré so long to set things up that he has to rush to finish the story and at least one critical question (how did the Russians learn about and so cleverly deceive the volunteer?) goes unanswered. Such plotting is not what readers expect from Le Carré, to say the least.

It also is curious that Le Carré presents Nat's decision to help the spy as an honorable choice. From the start of his career, Le Carré has had a well-deserved reputation for skillful explorations of the ambiguities of intelligence work and some readers may remember that in *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* Smiley was not entirely unsympathetic to Bill Haydon's motives. But if Le Carré wants us to see Nat's choice as an echo of Smiley's understanding of the ambiguities of intelligence work, he does not bring it off—the spy, however unwittingly, is working for Vladimir Putin's regime, one of the main supports for the very people who so anger Le Carré and the beneficiary of their misdeeds.

The problem with this book is that it contains too much complaining as Le Carré indulges himself in an extended tantrum against people and political views he doesn't like. This makes it hard to find a redeeming quality in *Agent Running in the Field*, which settles for simplistic explanations rather than take the opportunity to explore the personalities and motivations of the players in the highest-stakes intelligence contest of our time.

The reviewer: J. E. Leonardson is the penname of a CIA analyst.

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Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf—March 2020

Compiled and reviewed by Hayden Peake

HISTORICAL

Agent Moliere: The Life of John Cairncross, the Fifth Man of the Cambridge Spy Circle, by Geoff Andrews

Cold War Exiles and the CIA: Plotting to Free Russia, by Benjamin Tromly

Cold War Spy Stories from Eastern Europe, edited by Valentina Glajar, Alison Lewis, and Corina L. Petrescu

"Lee Is Trapped and Must Be Taken": Eleven Fateful Days After Gettysburg, July 4–14, 1863, by Thomas J. Ryan and Richard R. Schaus

The Nuclear Spies: America's Atomic Intelligence Operations Against Hitler and Stalin, by Vince Houghton

Return to the Reich: A Holocaust Refugee's Secret Mission to Defeat the Nazis, by Eric Lichtblau

Venice's Secret Service: Organizing Intelligence in the Renaissance, by Ioanna Iordanou

INTELLIGENCE ABROAD

Turkish Intelligence & The Cold War: The Turkish Secret Service, the US and the UK, by Egemen Bezci

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Historical

Agent Moliere: The Life of John Cairncross, the Fifth
Man of the Cambridge Spy Circle***, by Geoff Andrews
(I. B. Tauris, 2020) 302, endnotes, bibliography, photos,
index.

Christopher Andrew and Oleg Gordievsky in their 1990
book, *KGB: The Inside Story*, named John Cairncross as
"the fifth man" of the Cambridge spy group. Although
Cairncross disputed the charge "at length in a statement
for the BBC," (xvi) he soon began an autobiography to
present his side of the events: *The Enigma Spy*, which was
published posthumously in 1997. Although he quibbled
about being called the "fifth man," Cairncross did admit
he was a KGB agent. (90)

During the following 20 years, the British released a
number of declassified documents that provided new
details about Cairncross's KGB contributions. Thus
it was not surprising when a new biography, *The Last
Cambridge Spy*, by British historian Chris Smith, was
published in 2019. It contained nothing that hadn't been
reported by others, though he did provide a source prov-
ing Cairncross gave the KGB "information regarding
atomic weapons"[a] a charge Cairncross always denied.
But beyond that, had Smith left any more to be said?

The appearance of *Agent Moliere* suggests an affirma-
tive answer. Reading it suggests otherwise, at least as
far as Cairncross's role as a KGB agent is concerned.
In fact, this account of Cairncross's espionage activities
adds nothing new, omits some key points, and misinter-
prets others. As to the omissions, there is no mention of
Cairncross's role in Britain's atomic program. As to the
latter, Andrews misunderstand Cairncross's assertion
that he was not the fifth man because he "was unaware
of the other four." But that is how it should have been;
that the other four knew each other was the error. Yet, in
the end, Andrews acknowledges that "it is clear that John
Cairncross was a very significant spy for the Soviets and
generally held in high regard by Moscow Centre." (251)

What then is Andrews's approach to his subject? It soon
becomes clear that his focus is on "unanswered ques-
tions" about Cairncross's motivation and on correcting the

impression given by others that he was "wrongly carica-
tured as a class-conscious working class agitator at odds
with capitalist rulers" and that his scholarly contributions
had not been sufficiently recognized. (5)

To convey the non-KGB personality of John Cairncross,
Andrews has gained the cooperation of Cairncross's wid-
ow, his brother, and various members of his family. He
also draws on the Cairncross papers in the Cambridge and
Glasgow University archives. These furnish material on
his academic life in the United States and Italy. Andrews
also comments on Cairncross's extensive writings on
Moliere (the KGB gave him that codename for a reason)
for which he was justifiably well known.

There are better sources on John Cairncross's espionage
career. For his other life, read *Agent Moliere.*

Cold War Exiles and the CIA: Plotting to Free Russia,***
by Benjamin Tromly. (Oxford University Press, 2019)
329, footnotes, bibliography, index.

In 1950, William Sloan Coffin, the anti-Vietnam War
activist of the 1960s, was a Russian-speaking CIA case
officer tasked with recruiting former Soviets in Germany
to participate in a CIA covert-action program intended
to free Soviet citizens from communist rule. One version
of the program is described by Hugh Wilford in his book
The Mighty Wurlitzer. Cold War Exiles and the CIA takes
a different approach.

University of Puget Sound history professor Benjamin
Tromly analyzes the CIA relationship to the former Soviet
citizens and émigré groups that comprised the anticom-
munists mainly in West Germany and the tourist centers
of Western Europe. These included those who had col-
laborated with the Nazis, Ukrainians who sought indepen-
dence from the Soviet Union, former POWs avoiding re-
patriation, displaced persons (DPs) from Eastern Europe,
and Russian exiles. He places particular emphasis on the
conflicting politics of those involved and "the activities
of the clashing intelligence services in Cold War Europe."
(10)

After a review of the various anticommunist groups that
the CIA and its predecessor action organization, the Office
of Policy Coordination at the State Department, sought

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a. Chris Smith, *The Last Cambridge Spy: John Cairncross, Bletch-
ley Codebreaker and Soviet Double Agent* (2019), 81. Of course, he
was not a double agent, just a KGB agent.

unsuccessfully to unify, it becomes clear why efforts to infiltrate any Soviet Bloc countries failed. The creation of front organizations like the American Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia, known as AmComLib, (96) intended to unite various factions only served to teach the exiles how to stimulate the flow of dollars from their generous if naïve patron. With one exception, AmComLib produced little of substance. The exception was Radio Free Europe. (144ff)

Another group of note was the People's Labor Alliance of Russian Solidarists (NTS). Created before WWII, in the postwar era it sought, with CIA help, to undermine the Soviet Union by forming cells and distributing propaganda. Tromly mentions that the results were disappointing, and the CIA decided not to try and use it as "an instrument of psychological warfare" when it became obvious that the group wanted only to maximize CIA funding. (170–71) Operations to "infiltrate NTS members into the USSR ended in fiasco." (292)

Dissident émigré groups were not the only source the CIA sought to penetrate the Soviet Bloc. After Stalin's death, Tromly writes, "the CIA increasingly focused its human-intelligence operations on the exploitation of different forms of cross-border movement such as tourism, travel by official delegations, and academic exchanges." (289) None of these approaches produced the results anticipated.

Professor Tromly concludes that the CIA gradually learned from its mistakes, "especially the illegal infiltration of agents into Soviet territory. In their place, the United States adopted a more gradual and less inflammatory strategy of cultural infiltration." (295) Overall, *Cold War Exiles and the CIA* makes a strong case against covert action programs conducted by inexperienced intelligence officers and supervised by managers overseen by politicians, all seeking outcomes not supported by operational reality.

Cold War Spy Stories from Eastern Europe, edited by Valentina Glajar, Alison Lewis, and Corina L. Petrescu. (Potomac Books, 2019) 384, end of chapter notes, photos, index.

In their introductory essay, the editors describe how the post–Cold War era has influenced stories about espionage. While each is a professor of German at a different university; Texas State, the University of Melbourne, and the University of Mississippi, respectively, none professes direct experience in the field of intelligence. Thus, a comment like, "We can read Cold War modes of storytelling—remaining attentive to the fictional subtexts in factual spy narratives" (1) raises a question about their grasp of the topic. Yet, whatever that statement means, the 10 contributions to the book are worthy of attention for several reasons.

First, the cases discussed, with one exception, involve services and operations not included in other collections. For example, Axel Hildebrandt, Moravian College, contributes a tale of the Stasi penetrating plans of two East Germans to escape via Poland that ends up in a successful airplane hijacking. Jennifer Miller, Southern Illinois University, examines collaboration between East Germans and Turkish nationals. And Corina Petrescu analyzes the factors that made French Romanian writer, Ana Novac, "a Securitate target." (17) The exception is the article on Markus Wolf, former head of the East German foreign intelligence service (HVA), whose story is well known.

The second reason for attention is that the contributions are well documented and written. The concluding section on "Spies On Screen" will be of interest to those intrigued by that genre.

Examples of particular interest include "The File Story of the Securitate Officer Samuel Feld*,"* by Valentina Glajar. After acknowledging Feld is a pseudonym, Glajar presents the story of Major Feld formerly of the "Romanian Ministry of Internal Affairs, Region Stalin," where he served as chief of counterespionage and interrogation services. (29) His case is of interest because so little has been written about Securitate operations during the Stalin period and because of Feld's unusual career, which led to his dismissal.

Another informative contribution probes the now well-known practice of the East German Stasi to recruit informers of every description. Alison Lewis provides a fine example of the custom in her article "The Stasi's Secret War on Books." After noting that the Stasi employed writers, reviewers, and editors in an attempt to control what was published, Lewis turns to the case of the late poet and novelist Uwe Berger, a one-time Stasi informer "responsible for writing classified book reviews." (100) Her assessment of Berger's career leads her to conclude he took pride in his role, though she points out that his website "made no mention of working for the Stasi." (99)

A final example, the book title notwithstanding, is Julie Fedor's account of the one-time popular dissident Orthodox priest, Father Dimitri Dudko, who, among other issues, opposed KGB infiltration of the church. Six months after his arrest by the KGB for anti-Soviet activities, he publicly confessed to charges that included maintaining "a criminal link with representatives of foreign anti-Soviet organizations." (167) Fedor uses the case to analyze the "functioning, development and culture" of the KGB then and now. (164) The extent of Dubko's subsequent "conversion" is illustrated in his later writings, advocating, inter alia, that "the role played by the Soviet secret police in Russian history be radically reassessed in a positive light . . . and the profound culpability of Soviet dissidents in the Soviet collapse." (177) Fedor argues at length how these and other views are "part of the ongoing process of forging a new historical narrative about the Soviet past.

Cold War Spy Stories is a good example of what professional historians can contribute to the literature of intelligence.

"Lee is Trapped and Must be Taken": Eleven Fateful Days After Gettysburg, July 4–14, 1863, by Thomas J. Ryan and Richard R. Schaus. (Savas Beatie, 2019) 342, footnotes, bibliography, appendices, photos, index.

Civil War historian Thomas Ryan ended his earlier book, *Spies, Scouts, and Secrets in the Gettysburg Campaign* (reviewed in *Studies in Intelligence* 59, no. 4), with Robert E. Lee's successful retreat and escape into Virginia. Many historians have wondered why the Union Army, headed by Gen. George Meade, didn't draw Lee into a decisive war-ending battle before he could get across the Potomac.[a] Among the reasons suggested for the failure were logistics, manpower, as well as command and communications difficulties. One of the lingering mysteries not examined was the role intelligence played during the 11 days of opportunity after the battle. *Lee is Trapped and Must be Taken* fills that gap.

Ryan begins by describing the general situation facing the Union after the battle. Meade had been in command of the Army of the Potomac for only three days before the battle—a battle that was won by defensive operations.

The post-Gettysburg situation reversed these conditions and required offensive action in pursuit of a retreating army he considered still very dangerous. Meade had encountered these circumstances before when others were in command. On this point Ryan cites Meade's fluctuating support of General McClellan for failing to pursue Lee after Antietam. At first he agreed "the country ought to let us have time to reorganize and get into shape our new lines, and then advance." Only after Gettysburg did he observe that McClellan erred "on the side of prudence and caution, and that a little more rashness on his part would improve his generalship." (xxv)

But in the end, Meade would imitate the hesitant, not the rash, McClellan. Even the telegram he received from Secretary of War Stanton on 6 July 1883, warning "that Lee is trapped and must be taken," did not move Meade, an inaction that symbolizes the ever increasing frustration reflected in each succeeding chapter. (75)

Ryan devotes a chapter to each day of the period. On the first day of Lee's retreat, he tells how Meade was concerned about a potential counteroffensive, while some of his subordinate commanders recommended an immediate attack on Lee's vulnerable and long escape line. Meade demurred. To guide his decisions, Meade had the services of the Bureau of Military Information (BMI) headed by Col. George Sharpe, that had functioned well before and during the Gettysburg battle but, Ryan notes, there is no evidence that Meade ever even asked about the "strength of Lee's forces." (17)

In succeeding days, the objective of cutting off Lee's retreat was obvious to all, even Meade. Yet, although he employed his cavalry on reconnaissance missions and engaged in minor skirmishes, he found excuse after excuse not to undertake a decisive battle. For example, when Meade's scouts reported Lee was sending wagons across the Potomac at Harper's Ferry he failed to order action to disrupt the crossing or hinder Lee's logistical chain. And when Washington told Meade "troops were crossing the river," Meade replied that he "not did not agree" with that intelligence and took no action even when informed that "the President is urgent and anxious that he should move against him [Lee] by forced marches." (105)

Variations of these excuses continued and on the ninth day (12 July 1863), before the majority of Lee's forces had crossed the river and when Meade had a sizable advantage in troop strength, Meade told his chief of staff that he "intended to move forward and feel the enemy."

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a. See for example, Stephen W. Sears, *Gettysburg* (Houghton Mifflin, 2003), 480ff.

(208) But he failed to inform his Corps commanders and instead called a council of war that Ryan notes, confirms Napoleon's "disparaging maxim" that such councils were excuses for inaction; and so it was again in this case. (270)

By the 11th day, Meade was again ready to strike, but it was too late. Lee was safe in Virginia—an outcome that intelligence had foretold but only the commanding general had refused to accept. Ryan tells how the situation was clear to Lincoln, who exclaimed, "We had them within our grasp . . . nothing I could say or do could make the army move." (269)

"Lee is Trapped and Must be Taken" leaves the reader exasperated—no fault of the author. Why General Meade behaved as he did is difficult to understand. But Ryan makes clear it was not because he lacked solid intelligence.

*T**he Nuclear Spies: America's Atomic Intelligence Operations against Hitler and Stalin,* by Vince Houghton. (Cornell University Press, 2019) 239, endnotes, bibliography, index.

Why was the United States surprised when the Soviet Union exploded an atomic bomb in 1949? Historian Vince Houghton asserts that it was because "the US government was unable to create an effective atomic intelligence apparatus to monitor Soviet scientific and nuclear capabilities." (179) *The Nuclear Spies* makes his case.

The first five chapters of this six chapter book are devoted to the extensive efforts the US government made during WWII to determine whether Germany had an atomic bomb program. It did not, and Houghton provides a good review of this well-known history. Chapter 6, titled "The U.S. (Mis)Perceptions of the Soviet Nuclear Program," offers a new interpretation of the reason(s) for the surprise.

Quoting physicist Herbert York's description of the Soviet Union in the late 1940s as "a basically backward country" (151)—as indeed it was—Houghton shows that many nonscientists in the US government found it hard to accept that Soviet scientists were capable and sought other explanations after the surprise. These included publication of information useful to the Soviets and the

espionage of Klaus Fuchs and the Rosenbergs, among others. Juxtaposed against these arguments, Houghton acknowledges that some American atomic scientists were aware of Soviet scientific prowess. But he suggests, the postwar intelligence agencies were not centralized or working together, and those concerned with atomic science did not foresee Soviet atomic progress.

The one factor not included as a possible explanation is the failure of the United States to have a wartime intelligence service that conducted espionage against the Soviet Union and a domestic counterespionage service that monitored Soviet intelligence officers and resident communists. Whether or not knowledge of their activities would have alerted US scientists to Soviet interest sooner and stimulated an early start to a scientific intelligence program is arguable, though likely.

The Nuclear Spies concludes that the United States was surprised when the Soviets exploded their atomic bomb because it lacked a scientific intelligence capability. Another explanation is that had the United States paid the same attention to the Soviets as it gave the Germans, there might not have been a surprise at all.[a]

*R**eturn to the Reich: A Holocaust Refugee's Secret Mission to Defeat the Nazis,* by Eric Lichtblau. (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2019) 288, endnotes, photos, index.

Followers of OSS history will remember the 1979 groundbreaking book by Joseph Persico, *Piercing The Reich*, that first told the story of William Casey and his efforts to place OSS agents behind Nazis lines. Several chapters in the book were devoted to Freddy Mayer and his operations in Austria. These operations were unusual for at least two reasons. First they succeeded, where many others operations did not. Second, he wasn't even dropped into Austria until late February 1945. In *Return to the Reich*, historian Eric Lichtblau takes a new look at Mayer's story based in part on interviews with Mayer himself and some of his former colleagues.

a. Two prominent researchers on Soviet espionage against the US nuclear program, Harvey Klehr and John Earle Haynes discovered still another Soviet spy in the Los Alamos complex. See Klehr and Haynes, "Project SOLO and the Seborers: On the Trail of a Fourth Soviet Spy at Los Alamos" in *Studies in Intelligence* 63, no. 3 (September 2019). The article led to follow-on stories in the *New York Times* by senior science writer William Broad, 24 November 2019 and 28 January 2020.

The narrative is chronological and begins in 1933 Freiburg, Germany. Mayer was 11 and just beginning to experience Nazi anti-Semitism that his father, a WWI veteran with an Iron Cross, didn't expect to last. Lichtblau describes the circumstances that proved the father wrong. In 1938, 16-year-old Freddy, with high school English and French, and trained to repair diesel engines, left with his brother, mother, and father for Brooklyn, New York. They found an apartment near Ebbetts Field, and Freddy went to work as a mechanic.

Pearl Harbor changed everything. Freddy volunteered for service in the Army immediately. He was rejected as an enemy alien. When Army personnel demands changed and his brother was drafted, Freddy worked a deal to take his place. In 1943 under wartime regulations, Freddy became a US citizen. When he broke the rules and captured a general during a field exercise, the general recommended he join OSS—he did.

Lichtblau tells how after training at the Congressional Country Club, Freddy and a fellow officer Hans—his radio officer—were posted to Europe There, one mission after another was canceled until they learned of the plan to drop agents behind enemy lines in Austria. All that was needed was one more member for the team, preferably one familiar with Austria. Freddy, posing as a German POW in a POW camp, recruited just the man; an Austrian POW defector—Franz Weber, a member from the Wehrmacht. After a scary, almost fatal, attempt to launch the mission, the team succeeded on the second try. Although neither Freddy nor Franz had jumped before— Freddy didn't tell Franz—all three parachuted safely from a B-24 onto a glacier near Innsbruck on 25 February 1945—seven years after Freddy had fled from Germany.

Return To The Reich goes on to tell how Freddy accomplished his mission to determine and report the local situation. The team reported on train movements, and Freddy, posing as a wounded German officer, determined the location of Hitler's bunker in Berlin. Then they started an underground newspaper and recruited couriers to help.

In April 1945 Freddy, disguised as a French laborer, got a job in a German aircraft factory that was making jet fighters and sent details to OSS headquarters. And then, after a series of mishaps during a resupply mission, the Gestapo learned of Freddy, and he was arrested. Lichtblau describes his confinement and torture, a confinement that surprisingly ended with Freddy convincing his captors to surrender the Tyrolian part of Austria to

oncoming American troops. This extraordinary result took place only after, with great difficulty, Freddy convinced the troop leaders that the offer was genuine.

Of the many unusual aspects of Freddy's OSS service, its short duration and astonishing successes stand out. After the war, he was offered a job in intelligence but declined the honor. He returned to the scene of his adventures once in 1993 for a reunion with his former teammates. Lichtblau describes his postwar life, adding that his one wish was that people would realize that "refugees that got a haven in the US did their best to repay."

Venice's Secret Service: Organizing Intelligence in the Renaissance, by Ioanna Iordanou. (Oxford University Press, 2019) 263, footnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

Inside the Scuola Grande di San Rocco in Venice, one can see a wood carving of the first known image of a spy wearing a cloak.[a] But that is not the only intelligence-related first associated with Renaissance Venice as readers of *Venice's Secret Service* soon discover. The central thesis of this impressive book is that 15th century Venice established the first centralized intelligence service that monitored and assisted in controlling its widespread mercantile empire while becoming "emblematic of good government and governance." (122)

Headquartered in the Doge's Palace on St. Mark's Square—the doge was the head of government—the intelligence service didn't have a name and was administered by the Council of Ten. Its functions included espionage operations, collection, analysis, covert action, cryptography, steganography, and "the development of lethal substances." (3) Like the vaunted Venetian diplomatic corps, its intelligence organization was a branch of the civil service.

After a comparative summary of other Renaissance intelligence services in Europe and the Ottoman empire, historian Ioanna Iordanou, Oxford Brookes University, describes Venice's intelligence organization and principal functions. The latter include the use of secret agents— amateur and professional—with operational examples, and the application of "extraordinary" (191) counterintelligence measures. Application of these measures was accompanied by extensive state secrecy policies and special

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a. See illustration #19, Christopher Andrew, *The Secret World: A History of Intelligence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018).

archives for storing documents. "Eighty to one hundred professional state servants were responsible for transcribing, indexing, and archiving all documents." (109)

Particular attention was paid to secure means of communication in correspondence. Toward this end, the Department of Cryptography produced "a hand-lettered cryptology manual" for use by princes, ambassadors, priests, intellectuals "and even lovers." (129) The department was responsible for breaking enemy ciphers and for training "Venetian state cryptologists." (132) The seeds of professionalism that eventually characterized the cryptographic service were planted by Giovanni Soro, the "official cipher secretary in 1505." Little is known about him beyond his ability "to break multilingual ciphers" and that even the Pope sought his assistance. (140)

In conclusion, *Venice's Secret Service* draws several lessons. The principal one is that "centrally organized intelligence existed long before conventional wisdom dictates." (223) Another concerns "intelligence from below," (224) a reference to the awareness of the public to the needs of the Council of Ten as exemplified by a "whistle blower" policy. The council promoted this policy by the anonymous use of "lion's-mouth letter boxes in which citizens were encouraged to post the names of those who subverted authority" (v) and an official policy of spying on others. (74–75) Finally, it is apparent that the basic functions, though not the technology, of Venetian state intelligence are similar to those in use today.

Fascinating history, well documented and presented.

INTELLIGENCE ABROAD

Turkish Intelligence & The Cold War: The Turkish Secret Service, The US and The UK, by Egemen Bezci. (I. B. Tauris, 2020) 291, end of chapter notes, bibliography, photos, index.

After completing his PhD at the University of Nottingham, Egemen Bezci wrote this book at the Stockholm University Institute of Turkish Studies, before joining the Institute of Political Science at the National Sun Yat-Sen University, Taiwan. Bezci's book mainly concerns the early Cold War period, when the United States and the United Kingdom exercised relatively greater influence in world affairs generally and over Turkey in particular than they do today.

Following a discussion of Turkey's historical background during the Ottoman Empire and the republican government formed after WWI, Bezci compares the intelligence services of the three countries involved, those of the United States, the UK, and Turkey. Of special interest here is his description of the Turkish intelligence services, a topic that has not received much attention in the literature.

Prior to WWI, domestic security and paramilitary matters were handled by "the gendarmerie forces" until the army created a military intelligence unit that also took over "counterespionage." After the war, the country's founding leader, Mustafa Kemal, widely known as Atatürk, "ordered the foundation of a civilian and centralized secret intelligence agency" called "the National Security Service (MAH) in January 1926. The principal targets included Soviet Russia, the Kurds, Armenians, the Greeks and the domestic communists." (42–43) The Syrians would soon be added to the list.

At the outset, Germany's WWI military intelligence chief, Walter Nicolai, provided instruction in German to the new service. After 1927, however, the MAH developed on its own, reporting to the prime minister and focusing on counterespionage. Bezci gives a short description of its initial organization, its sources of personnel, its links to the Foreign Ministry, and its sometimes controversial relationship with the military and domestic police services.

Before discussing Turkey's Cold War role, Bezci explains why Turkey remained neutral for most of WWII while tacitly cooperating with the Allies. (63ff) Then he focuses on the heart of the book, how the Turkish intelligence services worked with the United States, the UK, and NATO against the Soviet Union and Turkey's traditional regional and domestic enemies. This includes general descriptions of intelligence operations and what he calls "intelligence diplomacy," a term he coins to indicate that Turkey used its intelligence services as well as its diplomats to conduct foreign affairs, especially its bilateral relations with Washington and London. Examples include the establishment of relationships concerning "anti-subversion, military intelligence, and covert action early in the Cold War." (102)

As Turkish confidence grew, cooperation was extended to HUMINT operations run from Turkey by the MAH and MI6 against the Soviets. While Bezci gives some examples of the former, he offers no measures of success.

The MI6 operations were run and compromised by Kim Philby. In these areas Turkey was the junior partner but used its geographic position well in order to leverage support and enhance its security, even if that meant exaggerating threats. (262)

   While Bezci draws on many Western sources, he also includes some in Turkish, though he does not document all his facts. Several errors are worth noting, however.

First, the initial Corona photo satellite mission was in 1961, not 1958. (15) Second, Philby served in Turkey from 1947 to 1949, not 1946. (141) And last, the National Security Agency was formed during the Truman not the Eisenhower administration. (152)

   Turkish Intelligence & The Cold War will broaden many readers knowledge of Turkish intelligence. A worthwhile contribution to the literature.

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