

# Studies in Intelligence

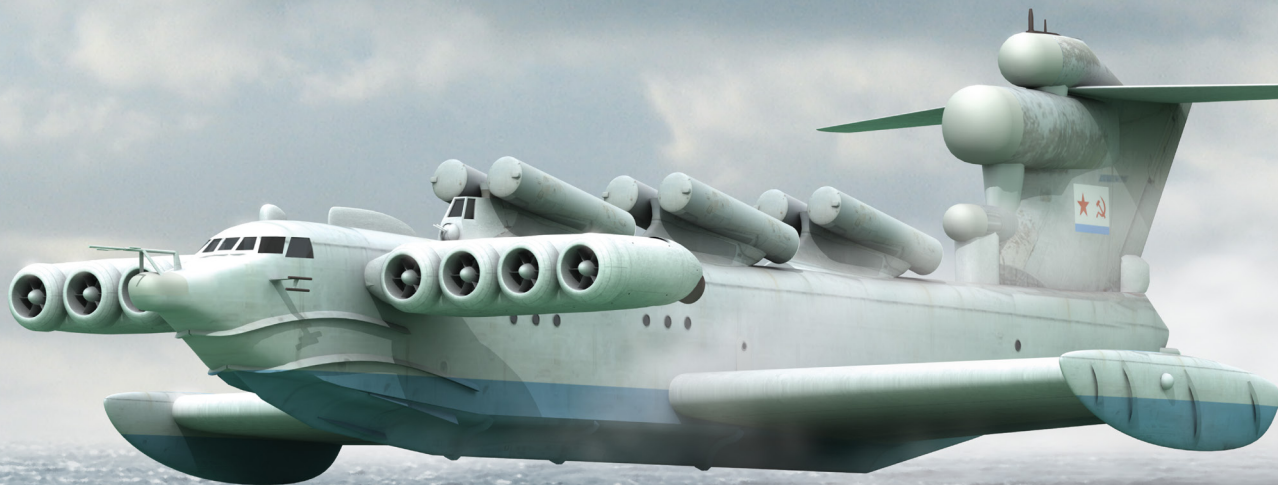
Vol. 60, No. 2 (Unclassified articles from June 2016)

Journal of the American Intelligence Professional

## The Swallow and *Caspian Sea Monster* vs. the *Princess* and the *Camel*: The Cold War Contest for a Nuclear-Powered Aircraft

Intelligence and Punta Huete Airfield: Symbol of Soviet Strategic Interest in Central America

Defeating a Communist Insurgency: The Thai Experience



## Reviews

*Playing to the Edge*

*Destiny and Power*

*The President's Book of Secrets*

*Avenue of Spies*

*Bridges of Spies*

*Stop the Return to North Korea*

*Eisenhower's Guerrillas*

*Sicario*

## Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf

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Cover image: An undated image of a antiship-missile-carrying variant of the *Caspian Sea Monster*. Soviet-era wing-in-ground effect aircraft were intended to carry, literally "below the radar," heavy loads over long distances. The pictured variant, a *Lun*, was smaller than the original sea monster, which crashed in 1980. The *Lun* first flew in 1987, but it was retired in the 1990s to a port in Dagestan. (Sources: Matthew Shechmeister, "The Soviet Superplane Program that Rattled Area 51," WIRED June 10, 2011 at <http://www.wired.com/2011/06/ekranoplan/>. Soviet Navy photo.

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The mission of *Studies in Intelligence* is to stimulate within the Intelligence Community the constructive discussion of important issues of the day, to expand knowledge of lessons learned from past experiences, to increase understanding of the history of the profession, and to provide readers with considered reviews of public media concerning intelligence.

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The Editorial Board welcomes readers' nominations for awards.

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# Studies in Intelligence

Vol. 60, No. 2 (Extracts, June 2016)

## Contents

### EDITORIAL POLICY

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#### *In Memoriam*

**Jack Davis (1930–2016)** vii

#### *An Intelligence Estimative Record*

**The Swallow and Caspian Sea Monster vs. the Princess and the Camel: The Cold War Contest for a Nuclear-Powered Aircraft** 1  
Raymond L. Garthoff

#### *Intelligence and Policy*

**Intelligence and Punta Huete Airfield: A Symbol of Past Soviet/Russian Strategic Interest in Central America** 13  
By Robert Vickers

#### *Counterinsurgency*

**Defeating an Insurgency—The Thai Effort against the Communist Party of Thailand, 1965–ca. 1982** 25  
By Bob Bergin

#### Intelligence in Public Literature

**Playing To The Edge: American Intelligence in the Age of Terror** 37  
Reviewed by Hayden Peake

**Destiny and Power: The American Odyssey of George Herbert Walker Bush** 41  
Reviewed by Thomas Coffey

**The President's Book of Secrets: The Untold Story of Intelligence Briefings to America's Presidents from Kennedy to Obama** 45  
Reviewed by Jason U. Manosevitz

**Stop the Return to North Korea** 49  
Reviewed by Stephen C. Mercado

**Avenue of Spies: A True Story of Terror, Espionage, and One American Family's Heroic Resistance in Nazi-Occupied Paris** 53  
and

**Eisenhower's Guerrillas: The Jedburghs, the Maquis, & The Liberation of France** 55  
Reviewed by David A. Foy

<b><i>Bridge of Spies</i></b>	<b>59</b>
and	
<b><i>Sicario</i></b>	<b>61</b>
Reviewed by James Burridge and John Kavanagh	
<b>Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf</b>	<b>63</b>
Compiled and reviewed by Hayden Peake	



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**Jay Watkins** is a CIA officer and a member of the Editorial Board of *Studies in Intelligence*.







## In Memoriam

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### Jack Davis (1930–2016)

**CIA Analyst (1956–1979), National Intelligence Officer (1979–1982), Intelligence Educator—Office of Training and Education (1983–1990) and Independent Contractor (1990–2015)**

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Students of the profession of intelligence, especially regular readers of *Studies in Intelligence* will immediately recognize the name Jack Davis, CIA analyst and Trailblazer Award recipient in 2013 for his work in shaping and refining CIA's analytical practices.

Jack died on 13 February, ending a long trial with Parkinson's and amyloidosis (protein deposits [amyloids]) in his heart. He passed away quietly, in his bed at home, the night after having had a nice dinner and conversation with his son and daughter in law.

Jack began learning his trade as an analyst on Latin America in 1953 in CIA's Directorate of Intelligence (DI). His journey through analysis continued through a multitude of assignments and CIA offices, including the Office of National Estimates and the National Intelligence Council, where he served as the National Intelligence Officer for Latin America.

In 1969, in the midst of a flourishing analytical career, Jack offered a portent of his future as a "grandmaster of analysis" publishing in *Studies in Intelligence* an article entitled "Distant Events Shape the Craft of Intelligence: The *Bogotazo*." The article spoke of CIA analysis of Colombia in early 1948, when communist rioting in Bogota surprised many in Washington and noted that the seven-month old CIA appeared to have suffered its first intelligence failure for not warning of that "South American Pearl Harbor." In describing the events that led to bloodshed and destruction and the early "Cold War jitters" of the day, Jack addressed for the first time the burden of expectation with which the



DCIA John Brennan presenting the Trailblazer medallion to Jack Davis in September 2013.

CIA was born and which it would carry to this day.

After 30 years as a practitioner, Jack was asked to become a teacher and mentor of analysts and their managers in CIA's Office of Training and Education (OT&E). The record doesn't make clear whose idea it was to send Jack to OT&E, but almost certainly playing a role was the newly installed Deputy Director for Intelligence Bob Gates, who was intent on launching a concerted effort to upgrade the quality of CIA analysis. Whether Jack was Gates's choice or

someone else's, the decision was inspired.

Jack's first assignment was to create a course for analysts and managers of analysis called "Intelligence Successes and Failures." It was, and continues to be, a most serious effort to reflect on analytical tradecraft and the relationship of analysts and their analysis with the policymakers. Jack taught the course from its inception in 1983 into retirement—frequently delivering it to other Intelligence Community components. During this same period, Jack also managed a difficult negotiation with Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government to establish a pioneering joint seminar in Cambridge on the relationship of intelligence to policy.

Once into retirement, Jack was asked to record the analytical tradecraft experiences of a lifetime. He did so through a series of "DI Tradecraft Notes" and "occasional papers" published by the Kent School during 2002 and 2003. Jack's papers came in such a "goodly number" that the papers could hardly be called "occasional." Jack also became one

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of the most prolific contributors ever to *Studies in Intelligence*. Jack's name appears on eight articles—all but “The Bogotazo” published after his retirement.<sup>a</sup>

During his teaching career, Jack became an unexpected pioneer in the digital revolution that was building in the 1980s. Although he was a self-confessed extreme introvert, Jack realized the interpersonal communication potential of systems then coming on line and established a digital network he called “Friends of Analysis.” “Friends” began as a fairly basic texting system that eventually evolved into blog capabilities common today. “Friends of Analysis” allowed Jack and a multitude of analysts to explore tradecraft methods and to share analytic and writing experiences.

In 2013, Jack's ascendance to “grandmaster” was acknowledged with his recognition as a CIA Trailblazer. The *What's News* account of the award reads:

*Jack Davis is a key reason the DI's analytical tradecraft has become the gold standard for US intelligence. In a career stretching back to 1956, Davis has provided groundbreaking leadership in the development, documentation, and teaching of this tradecraft. His writing and teaching has provided generations of analysts with fresh and actionable insights. His online discussion boards have enhanced collaboration in CIA and the Intelligence Community. Because much of his writing and teaching has been unclassified, Davis has played a leading role in building appreciation in the US and abroad for the profession of intelligence.*

In inviting its work force to the 2013 Trailblazer ceremony, the Director of Intelligence described Jack in this way:

*As a staff officer from 1956 to 1990 and as a consultant since then, Jack has transformed the way we think about, prepare, and deliver all-source analysis. Through his teaching and his example, he has enhanced the DI's tradecraft and the utility of its insights. Having served with Sherman Kent, Jack has promoted, extended, and advanced the principles Kent laid out for our profession, starting with rigor and relevance. A superb scholar and writer, Jack understands the business of analysis as few others do, and has conveyed its theory and practice as few others can.*

In 2006 Jack received a Directorate of Intelligence Certificate of Appreciation, the first ever extended to a retiree, which read,

*Your colleagues and your country are better for your wisdom and insights. Your work will enrich and inform future generations of intelligence analysts.*

If evidence of that statement were needed, it is worth noting that in 2014, the most read *Studies in Intelligence* article posted to [cia.gov](http://cia.gov) was Jack's first, “The Bogotazo.” In working decades to help his colleagues and juniors bear the burden of expectation he described in that article, Jack carried more than his own fair share. For Jack, improving intelligence was the work of a lifetime, and he must certainly rest in peace now, having achieved so much for so many.

—Andres Vaart

Managing Editor

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a. A bibliography of Jack's work appears at the end of this tribute.



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***Selected Bibliography of Jack Davis Work***

(In the digital versions of this issue, the titles below are hyperlinked to cia.gov where available.)

"The Bogotazo", *Studies in Intelligence* Volume 13, No. 4 (1969) PDF [617.1KB]

"The Kent-Kendall Debate of 1949", *Studies in Intelligence* Volume 36, No. 5 (1992) PDF [1.9MB]

"Combating Mindset", *Studies in Intelligence* Volume 36, No. 5 (1992) PDF [780.0KB]

"Bridging the Intelligence-Policy Divide" (co-authored with James A. Barry), *Studies in Intelligence* Volume 37, No. 3 (1994) PDF [2.5MB]

"A Policymaker's Perspective on Intelligence Analysis", *Studies in Intelligence* Volume 38, No. 5 (1994) PDF [611 KB]

"The Views of Ambassador Herman J. Cohen", *Studies in Intelligence* Volume 39, No. 2 (1995) PDF [140 KB]\*

"Facts, Findings, Forecasts, and Fortune-telling", *Studies in Intelligence* Volume 39, No. 3 (1995) PDF [130 KB]\*

"Paul Wolfowitz on Intelligence-Policy Relations", *Studies in Intelligence* Volume 39, No. 5 (1996) PDF [561.6KB]

"Improving CIA Analytic Performance: Strategic Warning", Sherman Kent Center for Intelligence Analysis, Occasional Papers: Volume 1, Number 1 (2002) PDF [29.4KB]

"Improving CIA Analytic Performance: Analysts and the Policymaking Process", Sherman Kent Center for Intelligence Analysis, Occasional Papers: Volume 1, Number 2 (September 2002) PDF [28.6KB]

"Improving CIA Analytic Performance: DI Analytic Priorities", Sherman Kent Center for Intelligence Analysis, Occasional Papers: Volume 1, Number 3 (2002) PDF [27.9KB]

"Sherman Kent and the Profession of Intelligence Analysis", Sherman Kent Center for Intelligence Analysis, Occasional Papers: Volume 1, Number 5 (2002) PDF [49.0KB]

"If Surprise is Inevitable, What Role for Analysis?", Sherman Kent Center for Intelligence Analysis, Occasional Papers: Volume 2, Number 1 (January 2003) PDF [48.4KB]

"Tensions in Analyst-Policymaker Relations: Opinions, Facts, and Evidence", Sherman Kent Center for Intelligence Analysis, Occasional Papers: Volume 2, Number 2 (2003) PDF [46.7KB]

"Sherman Kent's Final Thoughts on Analyst-Policymaker Relations", Sherman Kent Center for Intelligence Analysis, Occasional Papers: Volume 2, Number 3 (2003) PDF [108.1KB]

"Analytic Professionalism and the Policymaking Process: Q&A on a Challenging Relationship", Sherman Kent Center for Intelligence Analysis, Occasional Papers: Volume 2, Number 4 (October 2003) PDF [29.6KB]

\* Unclassified but not released to the public.





## The *Swallow* and *Caspian Sea Monster* vs. the *Princess* and the *Camel*: The Cold War Contest for a Nuclear-Powered Aircraft

Raymond L. Garthoff

**Little noted publicly—though it was the subject of continuous intelligence interest—was a competition between the United States and the Soviet Union from the mid-1950s into the early 1960s to develop a nuclear-propulsion system for aircraft.**

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### Introduction

Little noted publicly—though it was the subject of continuous intelligence interest—was a competition between the United States and the Soviet Union from the mid-1950s into the early 1960s to develop a nuclear-propulsion system for very long-range and long-endurance strategic bomber and reconnaissance aircraft. Nuclear scientists involved in the competing American and Soviet nuclear weapons development programs recognized the possibility that nuclear power could be harnessed not only for generating electric power but also for propulsion of surface ships and submarines—and even for powering aircraft. In the United States, as early as 1942, Enrico Fermi envisioned the use of nuclear power to propel aircraft. In June 1952, Aleksandr Kurchatov, chief designer of the Soviet atomic bomb, and other Soviet scientists thought nuclear-powered “heavy aircraft” could be built.<sup>1</sup>

The United States initiated its Nuclear Energy for Propulsion of Aircraft Project in May 1946. That research program was ended in 1951. However, renewed efforts would be undertaken by a growing number of governmental and private contractor organizations. In 1951, the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and

the US Air Force (USAF) placed contracts with General Electric and Convair (General Dynamics). In the next few years, the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee and the National Reactor Testing Station in Idaho, as well as Pratt & Whitney and Lockheed, were brought into the program.<sup>2</sup>

A number of proposals for producing an aircraft to be equipped with a nuclear propulsion engine as a flying-testbed were advanced but never approved. From July 1955 to March 1957, the Air Force flew two modified B-36 bomber aircraft 47 times testing massive radiation shielding by carrying as a “passenger” a three-megawatt test reactor, but no test of a nuclear propulsion reactor actually took place.<sup>3</sup>

Unknown at the time in the United States, the most significant consequence of these efforts was the impact they had on Soviet weapons planners. A post-Cold War Russian account of this period revealed that Soviet intelligence had determined that a US Air Force NB-36H (modified bomber) test flight in late December 1955 had been a successful test of radiation shielding of a nuclear reactor on board the bomber. The Soviets concluded that the flight was a step forward in a program to develop a nuclear-propelled bomber.

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The NB-36H in a test flight over Texas accompanied by a B-50. It was meant to test shielding of a reactor that was to power an aircraft nuclear propulsion engine. Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NB-36H\\_with\\_B-50,\\_1955\\_-\\_DF-SC-83-09332.jpeg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NB-36H_with_B-50,_1955_-_DF-SC-83-09332.jpeg).

This interpretation stimulated Soviet scientists working on aircraft nuclear propulsion (ANP).<sup>4</sup>

From 1952 to 1955 in the USSR there had been discussions and studies, even including the construction of full-scale mockup of



An image purporting to be of the *Swallow*, a modified Tu-95 designated the Flying Atomic Laboratory. Date and provenance of photo unknown. Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Tu119side.jpg>.

a nuclear-powered bomber. The mockup was based on studies by leading Soviet aircraft and missile designers Vladimir Myasishchev (the designer of the *Bison* bomber), Andrei Tupolev (credited with the *Bull*, *Badger*, and *Bear* bombers), Semyon Lavochkin (the designer of the *Burya* strategic cruise missile), and Sergei Korolev, who designed many missiles, including the first Soviet intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) and *Sputnik*, the first artificial Earth satellite to have been launched. But ANP had not been a Soviet priority until 1955.<sup>5</sup>

From 1956 into 1961, the re-invigorated Soviet ANP program focused on development of an ANP testbed aircraft termed “Aircraft 119” or *LAL* (*Letayushchaya atomnaya laboratoriya*, the Flying Atomic Laboratory). It was affectionately called the *Swallow* (*Lastochka*). The *Swallow* was an adaptation of the largest Soviet bomber at the time, the four-engine turboprop Tu-95 (NATO code-name *Bear*). It was created in a large hangar at a nuclear complex near Semipalatinsk in Kazakhstan.

Extensive experimentation and analysis were undertaken in the laboratory, and multiple delays were experienced in working on the reactor. The *Swallow* finally took flight with a reactor on board (but not providing propulsion) in the summer of 1961. These flights, like the NB-36H flights in the United States, were successful, but it quickly became apparent that the problem of shielding the interior of the aircraft from the reactor’s radiation was too great. In addition, the success of conventionally powered long-range aircraft and the development of ICBMs weakened the case



for trying to obtain nuclear propulsion of aircraft.<sup>6</sup>

At the same time as the Soviet Union pursued the quest for nuclear-powered aircraft, the United States had been active. From the effort's early beginnings in 1946, US interest had focused on developing a more advanced and powerful nuclear turbojet engine for a strategic intercontinental bomber. The principal program sponsored jointly by the AEC and the Air Force during 1958–61 was dubbed the *CAMAL* system, shorthand for a nuclear "Continuously Airborne Missile-launching And Low-level" penetration system (the use of *Camel* in this article is an exercise of poetic license).

ANP in general, and the *Camel* in particular, had ardent supporters

in the Air Force and AEC. It enjoyed special attention and strong bipartisan support from the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy in the Congress. There also were doubters. A series of special commissions and senior officials in the Department of Defense and the White House sought on several occasions to limit or discontinue the costly program. But it persisted.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, the US Navy from 1955 had pressed for a program to develop a nuclear-powered turbo-prop flying-boat for long-endurance reconnaissance and early-warning missions. The requirements for such a system were less demanding than for an intercontinental penetrating bomber, and there were somewhat fewer demanding conditions for a seaborne aircraft.

Still, the basic problems of large reactors and radiation shielding remained. Britain had three mothballed seaplanes called the *Princess* class, which it was prepared to sell to serve as testbeds for a nuclear turboprop system to power a seaplane. Funding and authorization of the program, however, were eventually denied, so the *Princess* seaplane testbed never actually served its intended purpose in the US ANP program. The Navy, however, continued research on a turboprop nuclear engine for some years.<sup>8</sup>

The focus of these and many other strategic efforts, of course, remained on ensuring a strategic strike capability for deterrence and, if necessary, for waging global nuclear war. Strategic bomber aircraft had been the principal deterrent in the 1940s and 1950s, but by the 1960s ballistic missiles were rapidly becoming the strategic weapon delivery system of choice. Nuclear-powered bomber aircraft remained a distant and less-than-assured alternative, and it became apparent that even technical success in developing them was unlikely to yield results justifying the costs, which in the United States had mounted to about \$7 billion by 1961.<sup>9</sup>

Other considerations remained, including the interests of those who were incurring the expensive development costs and stood to gain from hoped for procurement of the systems. Not least among these considerations was the very fact of competition with the Soviet Union. Knowledge (or at least belief and fear) that the Soviet adversary was working to develop the same capabilities fueled the competition. So both intelligence—and even incomplete intelligence—on the adversary's



One of two experimental reactors for development of aircraft nuclear propulsion on display at the Idaho National Laboratory as of July 2009. Photo: Wtshymanski released to Creative Commons 3.0, December 2009.

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***The launch of the first artificial satellite of Earth (Sputnik) in October 1957 led to the creation in public and political minds of the infamous “missile gap.” Largely unnoticed publicly, a lesser concern over an “ANP gap” also arose.***

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pursuit of the same weapons played a role in perpetuating ANP efforts.

Reaction in the United States to the publicly unexpected Soviet successes in launching the first ICBM in August 1957 and the first artificial satellite of Earth (*Sputnik*) in October 1957 led to the creation in public and political minds of the infamous “missile gap.” Largely unnoticed publicly, a lesser concern over an “ANP gap” also arose. This article is, to my knowledge, the first account of how an “ANP gap” influenced (and was influenced by) national intelligence estimates (NIEs) and fed a largely internal but sometimes intense debate over ANP among those most concerned in the United States.

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***The Intelligence Estimative Record***

The annual top secret national intelligence estimate on the Soviet Union published on 12 November 1957 (NIE 11-4-57, *Main Trends in Soviet Capabilities and Policies, 1957–1962*) for the first time in such estimates referred to ANP, stating on page 31:

*No positive evidence of Soviet research specifically devoted toward nuclear propelled aircraft has been obtained. However, we estimate that they are probably now engaged in development and testing of reactor components and subsystems.*

The NIE also suggested that by 1962 the Soviet Union might be able for

propaganda purposes to demonstrate some nuclear-power contribution to an aircraft test flight.

Over the following four years, 1958 through 1961, 11 NIEs addressed at least briefly the subject of a Soviet ANP program.<sup>a, 10</sup> Two NIEs were issued in 1958, and they were the most alarmist concerning possible Soviet capabilities.

The first, the Special NIE 11-7-58 issued on 5 June 1958, raised the possibility of an early Soviet test flight of a nuclear testbed for a future bomber. The Air Force, however, placed a dissenting footnote expressing its “belief” that “an aircraft nuclear propulsion system could now be undergoing flight tests in a prototype airframe.” (p. 5)

NIE 11-4-58, issued on 23 December 1958, went a step further. It expressed the belief that “within the next few years the USSR could fly an airborne nuclear testbed.” This time the intelligence chiefs for the Joint Staff and Navy took a footnote expressing the belief that such a testbed

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a. Eight of these 11 estimates included footnotes of dissent by the assistant chief of staff, intelligence, USAF, proposing even earlier Soviet achievements than those estimated as possible in the main text. All of the dissents from 1958 through 1960 were taken by Maj. Gen. James Walsh, and the one dissent in 1963 was taken by Maj. Gen. Jack Thomas; both generals were known as “hard-liners” in evaluating Soviet capabilities and intentions. No dissents were taken by Maj. Gen. Robert Breitweiser, who served as the chief of USAF intelligence from 17 July 1961 through 14 March 1963.

could be flown “during 1959,” and the Air Force separately even stated that “an aircraft nuclear propulsion system could now be undergoing flight tests in a prototype airframe.” (p. 37) In addition, the estimate referred to a newly identified bomber prototype (code-named *Bounder*):

*The possibility for development of BOUNDER with a more advanced propulsion system exists, and the design intent for a nuclear-powered vehicle cannot be excluded at this time. However, present information is inadequate to permit an estimate of BOUNDER’s probable development.* (p. 38)

The *Bounder*, later abandoned by Moscow as a failed attempt to find a successor to the marginally effective *Bison*, was never considered as a nuclear engine testbed. The Air Force after some time ended consideration of it as a part of the Soviet ANP program.

A hiatus in attention to ANP in NIEs occurred between December 1958 and February 1960, owing to the delayed approval (on 9 February 1960) of the two principal relevant estimates of 1959, NIE 11-8-59 on Soviet strategic attack capabilities and NIE 11-4-59 on overall Soviet military capabilities and policies. On the subject of ANP, these two NIEs contained precisely the same language, which emphasized the lack of concrete basis for any firm pronouncement. The NIEs noted that ANP had the potential to provide “a significant improvement over present Soviet heavy bombers,” but they acknowledged on page 17 that

*although there are indications of Soviet interest in nucle-*



*ar-powered aircraft, no specific Soviet program directed toward the development of such an aircraft has yet been identified. We believe that the Soviets have such a program underway, but believe it unlikely that they will have any nuclear-powered bombers in operational status within the period of this estimate [to mid-1964].*

The Air Force dissented in both estimates:

*The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, believes that in view of the tactical and psychological advantage of a nuclear-powered bomber, the state of Soviet aviation and nuclear technology and the evident Soviet interest in the development of such an aircraft that a small number of nuclear [-powered] bombers may appear in operational status by the end of the period of this estimate.*

No other agency joined in this or any of the other similar Air Force dissents in later estimates.

In 1960, three NIEs referred to ANP prospects: NIE 11-60 (12 April 1960), NIE 11-8-60 (1 August 1960), and NIE 11-4-60 (1 December 1960). All posited possible ANP testbed flights sometime in the few years after their publication, but no nuclear-powered aircraft in operational service was foreseen during the five years projected by these estimates (through 1965). There was no evidence of concrete activity on ANP in the Soviet Union to report. All of these estimates included the now standard Air Force dissenting footnotes predicting a possible oper-

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***The first two sentences were replaced with one sentence indicating that the IC's judgment about modest possible Soviet advances in producing a nuclear power plant depended not on what the Soviets could do in the future but on whether in the past "the Soviet ANP program that was initiated in 1956 had progressed..."***

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ational flight by the end of the NIE time horizon.

Following the 1959–60 period of marking time in estimates of the Soviet ANP program, 1961 began a gradual dismissal of ANP. NIE 11-8-61 (7 June 1961) stated rather lamely on page 21:

*There are indications that the Soviets have been engaged in an effort to produce some sort of aircraft nuclear propulsion (ANP) system. We estimate that in 1960 the Soviets were capable of flying a nuclear testbed with at least one nuclear power unit providing useful thrusts during a phase of the flight, but there is no evidence that testbeds or prototypes have actually been built.*

Two more NIEs in 1961 addressed ANP using identical paragraphs except for an interesting change in the second, which based remaining uncertainty not on *future* Soviet progress but rather on knowledge of *past* Soviet efforts. The first, NIE 11-4-61 (14 August 1961), stated on page 4:

*There have been fragmentary indications of a Soviet program to develop an ANP system over the past five years. If active and successful development is pursued, such a program could produce an aircraft nuclear power plant as early as 1963-1964. This might permit a first militarily useful nuclear-pow-*

*ered aircraft to become available in 1966. However, the lack of evidence of the program, the decreasing frequency of Soviet statements on progress, and the apparent general level of their reactor technology indicate that the effort may have encountered serious obstacles. Therefore, we believe it unlikely that the Soviets will obtain a militarily useful nuclear-powered aircraft during the period of this estimate [to 1966]. However, considering the propaganda impact, the Soviets might at any time fly an aircraft obtaining part of its thrust from nuclear heat.*

The second, an estimate on Soviet nuclear programs, NIE 11-2-61 (5 October 1961), reproduced (p. 13) this entire paragraph with one change: the first two sentences were replaced with one sentence indicating that the IC's judgment about modest possible Soviet advances in producing a nuclear power plant depended not on what the Soviets could do in the *future* ("if active and successful development is pursued" in the earlier NIE), but on whether in the *past* "the Soviet ANP program that was initiated in 1956 [had] progressed with no major setbacks," and had been "supported continuously at a high level"—all of which were said to be "uncertain." The wording of the rest of the paragraph of course cast heavy doubt on whether these criteria had been met. There were no dissents to either estimate.

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**The final reference in NIEs to a possible Soviet ANP program (in mid-1963) was encapsulated in a single sentence: “The Soviet aircraft nuclear propulsion program appears to have been delayed and may have been cut back or even canceled.”**

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There was no reference whatsoever to ANP in the final relevant estimate in 1961, SNIE 11-14-61, *The Soviet Strategic Military Posture, 1965–1970* (21 November 1961), notwithstanding its longer time horizon, through 1970. In addition, no references to ANP appeared in any of the relevant estimates of 1962. NIE 11-8-62 (6 July 1962) substituted (p. 9) a new concern over possible Soviet development of directed energy weapons (such as laser-particle weapons).<sup>a</sup>

After two years of silence on ANP in NIEs, Air Force intelligence (under a new chief) reintroduced a footnote to NIE 11-8-63 (18 October 1963) noting (p. 37) that a “possible nuclear-powered bomber” might be introduced in “about 1968.” It was an unusual dissent because it did not object to a specific judgment in the NIE. Rather, it objected to the absence of any reference at all in the NIE to a Soviet aircraft nuclear propulsion program.

The final reference in NIEs to a possible Soviet ANP program was

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a. Concern—most strongly expressed by the Air Force—over Soviet “particle beam” or “directed energy” weapons became a major concern of NIEs in the 1970s and 1980s, fueling far more expensive US research and development costs than had ANP. Only after the collapse of the Soviet Union was it discovered (and verified on site) in 1992 that the suspected directed energy weapons development center was actually investigating a possible nuclear-powered rocket for an eventual mission to Mars.

encapsulated in a single sentence in the conclusion of an estimate dealing with Soviet nuclear energy programs as a whole, NIE 11-2-63 (2 July 1963):

*The Soviet aircraft nuclear propulsion program appears to have been delayed and may have been cut back or even canceled.*

Although hesitant and not conceived as an obituary notice, in effect it was.

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**The US ANP Lobby**

Unlike the well-known missile gap, public interest in the “ANP gap” was slight. There were, however, active constituencies for a US ANP program. Within the Intelligence Community there were persistent advocates who saw possible Soviet pursuit of ANP as an additional spur to the US counterpart, particularly from 1957 to 1961, as well as a possible future capability that should be matched and exceeded. Within the Joint Atomic Energy Intelligence Committee, the Air Force and AEC members were the strongest and most consistent alarmists over possible Soviet progress on ANP.

In the broader defense policy community, the strongest supporters of the US ANP program were the Air Force, the Navy, and some in the AEC—as well as the private contractors who conducted most of the

research and development, primarily Pratt & Whitney (of United Aircraft) for the Navy, and Convair (of General Dynamics), and General Electric for the Air Force. The AEC was of course a central body, in particular its Aircraft Reactor Branch and its National Reactor Testing Station in Idaho (where one of 16 separate—and widely separated—independent test centers was devoted to ANP). Finally, the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy of the Congress (and especially its Subcommittee on Research and Development) was an active and vigorous (and bipartisan) proponent of the ANP.

We noted earlier that NIEs addressed ANP for the first time in the wake of Soviet successes in 1957 in testing an ICBM and orbiting *Sputnik*. Although the ensuing debate about ANP was largely internal, advocates of an American ANP program seized on aroused public concern about Soviet technical and military prowess to spark a brief firestorm of public attention to an alleged ANP gap.

Their vehicle was a sensational article published on 1 December 1958 in the trade journal *Aviation Week*. Entitled “The Soviet Nuclear-Powered Bomber,” the article argued (in the words of the journal’s editor) that “once again, the Soviets have beaten us needlessly to a significant technical punch,” owing to “the technical timidity, penny-pinching, and lack of vision that have characterized our own political leaders.”

The article stated flatly that “A nuclear-powered bomber is being flight tested in the Soviet Union.” (p. 27) It cited what it claimed to be precise details and dimensions of the aircraft and its engines, stating it

was not a mere flying testbed such as those contemplated (but never flown) by the United States in the *Princess* and *Camel* projects. It even provided artist's sketches of the airplane and its engines. Finally, the article stated that the Soviet nuclear-powered aircraft had been completed six months earlier and now had been observed test-flying in the Moscow area.

From the tortuous intelligence assessments made on a top secret basis from November 1957 to July 1963 reviewed above, it is evident that the heart and most of the bones and flesh of the *Aviation Week* article were manufactured out of whole cloth to mobilize support for the US ANP program rather than to inform on the state of the Soviet ANP program. Yet the article did disclose some secrets found in NIE 11-4-58, which described the *Bounder*, recently observed at the Zhukovsky Flight Test Center near Moscow, although not in flight—much less nuclear-powered flight (the article appeared more than three weeks before NIE 11-4-58 was issued on 23 December; the source of the security leak was never traced or, at least, never publicly disclosed).<sup>a</sup>

a. The editor of *Aviation Week* later made a weak defense of his journal's claim that a nuclear-powered flight had actually occurred. While acknowledging it may have been overstated, he argued that "Whether or not this aircraft has actually flown on nuclear power ... is not really the point." (!) He went on to contend that the point was that the United States was falling behind in a race for a nuclear-powered bomber. (Cited in *Hearing*, 192-93.)

The *Bounder* was not actually test-flown until 27 October 1959, and thereafter for a total of 19 test flights, ending on 9 July 1961. It was then consigned to a classified aviation museum.

*Radio Moscow* on 1 January 1959 predicted that the Soviet Union would fly a

President Dwight D. Eisenhower angrily declared in a press conference on 10 December 1958 that "there is absolutely no intelligence to back up a report that Russia is flight-testing an atomic-powered aircraft." Six months later, AEC Chairman John A. McCone, testifying before the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, not only denounced the *Aviation Week* claims but also acknowledged the thin basis for the NIEs: "I think any statement made by anyone as to when the Soviet [Union] might fly a [nuclear] plane is purely a matter of conjecture. I know of absolutely nothing. I don't know of anyone in the Government that has any dependable information concerning the Soviet nuclear-powered [aircraft] program."<sup>11</sup>

From the mid-1950s on, a number of articles in the Soviet press mentioned the possibility of nuclear-aircraft propulsion.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, Soviet officials and press articles on several occasions in the latter half of the 1950s acknowledged that the Soviet Union was examining the question of a nuclear-powered aircraft, although there was no formal announcement or acknowledgment of the Soviet ANP program.

Perhaps the most authoritative statement came in November 1959 from Vasily Yemelyanov, the head of the Main Administration for the Utilization of Atomic Energy of the USSR (Glavatom). Yemelyanov was in the United States as the head of a

nuclear-powered civilian airplane during the year—which of course it did not. This broadcast was cited as supporting the claim of a "successful" Soviet program in a rebuttal to criticism of the *Aviation Week* article of 1 December 1958.

delegation of Soviet nuclear scientists. At a press conference following a visit to the AEC's National Reactor Testing Station in Idaho (although not including the ANP reactor test facility there), he was asked if press reports that the Soviet Union had flown a nuclear-powered aircraft were correct. He said they were not: "If we had flown an atomic powered aircraft we would be very proud of the achievement and would let everyone know about it."<sup>13</sup>

I was serving as the interpreter for the Soviet delegation and had interpreted his reply to the newsman. Later, in private, I asked Yemelyanov about the Soviet ANP program. He told me that indeed the Soviet Union had underway a program to develop ANP—"it would be foolish not to"—but that he did not (despite his position) know the status of the program because it was "entirely in the hands of the military." His nuclear reactor specialists were no doubt consulted, and indeed had developed the reactors for Soviet nuclear submarines, but his claim to be uninformed on the state of the military ANP program was probably true.<sup>b, 14</sup>

### *Two Silent Deaths*

After the flight tests of the *Swallow* in mid-1961, the Soviet leadership decided to cancel the ANP program. The Soviet decision undoubtedly was driven by the same inherent difficulties and growing doubts

b. I was assigned from CIA to serve as interpreter for both the visit to the Soviet Union of an American delegation headed by AEC Chairman McCone in October 1959 and the reciprocal visit to the United States of a Soviet delegation in November.

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**In 1958, in the post-Sputnik period of alarmist concern, the Air Force, the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, and the AEC had succeeded in thwarting an initial National Security Council decision to cancel the US ANP program.**

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in the United States of the ultimate practicality and cost effectiveness of the effort. In fact, in the United States cancellation had been considered for three years.

In 1958, in the post-Sputnik period of alarmist concern, the Air Force, the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, and the AEC had succeeded in thwarting an initial National Security Council decision to cancel the US ANP program. In June 1959, President Eisenhower agreed to sharp cutbacks in the program. In 1960 the program was further curtailed, and a decision was taken to leave the fate of the program to the incoming administration. The new administration of President John F. Kennedy reviewed the issue in early 1961, and on 28 March, impressed by the success of the US ICBM program, it decided to cancel the entire US ANP program.<sup>15</sup>

In the Soviet Union, when Nikita Khrushchev moved in December 1959 to establish a new military service arm, the Strategic Missile Forces, he cut back the role of strategic bombers (including cancellation of the *Bounder*—never procured beyond the test plane). Interest in long-range manned bombers, with or without nuclear-powered engines, waned.

1961 was the turning point. Discussions of ANP, even on a theoretical basis, came to an end. The US-Soviet ANP competition was over.

The Soviet abandonment of ANP, like the program's earlier commence-

ment and pursuit, was not publicized. The change in US intelligence assessments—as noted earlier, beginning in 1960 and becoming more definitive in 1961 and 1963—was gradual because there was no concrete information beyond the absence of data on an existing program and because the Air Force was reluctant to accept the absence of evidence itself as evidence of change. In addition, until the final cancellation of the US ANP program, there was reluctance to undercut competition from the Soviet Union as part of the rationale for a US program. In fact, changing US intelligence estimates of the Soviet ANP program correlate more closely to doubts about and eventual cancellation of the US program than to what little was known of the Soviet program.

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***Aftermath—Not Entirely Useless Efforts***

Without addressing the subject further here, it is appropriate to note that although both powers abandoned pursuit of ANP in 1961, their programs to develop nuclear-powered surface ships and submarines continued apace. Research and development work on nuclear propulsion of unmanned rockets also continued, increasingly focused on nuclear propulsion of unmanned spaceships for long-range expeditions, such as to explore Mars. In both countries, the earlier work on nuclear propulsion for aircraft contributed to their work on possible nuclear propulsion for space

exploration (in the Soviet Union, this included using the facilities of the former *Swallow* “nest” near Semipalatinsk).

From the mid-1950s to the mid-1970s, a series of US programs to develop nuclear-powered unmanned rockets, mainly for use in space exploration or warfare—projects *Pluto*, *Orion*, *Rover*, *Nerva*—cost more than \$3.9 billion (in 1996 dollars). From 1984 to the mid-1990s, Strategic Defense Initiative projects SP-100 and *Timberwind* cost another \$557 million.<sup>16</sup> But beginning in 1991, there was increasing US-Soviet and US-Russian cooperation in space exploration. During 1991–92, the United States even purchased a Russian reactor for spaceships and considered a joint effort in space exploration. Both countries, however, soon decided the costs of nuclear propulsion in space were prohibitive as well.<sup>17</sup>

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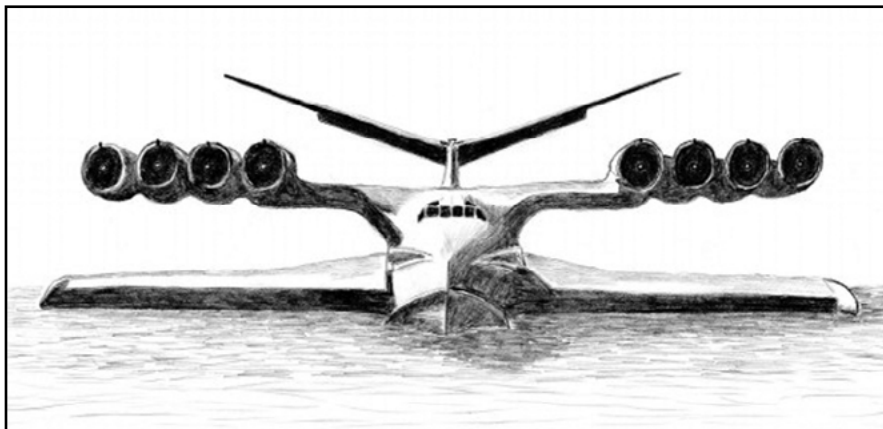
***The Caspian Sea Monster***

The fourth member of the menagerie of projects mentioned in this article's title, the *Caspian Sea Monster*, deserves brief discussion owing to the suspicion held for several years by some US intelligence specialists that the unusual aircraft given this designation in the United States was involved in the Soviet ANP program. First sighted next to a dock on the Caspian Sea littoral during 1958–61, the strange-looking, large aircraft was readily identified by CIA analysts as a reconfigured Tu-95 *Bear*. It was powered by four turbojet engines and modified with pontoons for sea duty.

At the time it was a subject of interest, it was never observed in flight or known to have been flown. At one point, it was suspected of being intended to test radiation shielding as was done with the US NB-36H in the 1950s and the Soviet *Swallow* in 1961. US analysts probably did not become aware of the *Swallow's* function until long after the Soviet ANP program had ended, but the Soviet need for such experimentation was understood. In addition, the United States, under the *Princess* program, had planned for a seaplane with nuclear-powered turboprop engines.<sup>a</sup> Moreover, US intelligence analysts in 1960 had received the translation of a Soviet work on nuclear propulsion that disclosed and described a 1950 Soviet proposal for a gigantic seaplane propelled by four nuclear-powered turboprop engines (although that proposal had not been pursued).<sup>18</sup>

Thus, it was appropriate to regard the mysterious *Caspian Sea Monster* as a “program of interest,” if not a formal suspect, in examining Soviet activities relating to ANP. Some doubted the monster had a role in the program, a question that remained unresolved because of the aircraft’s apparent inactivity. At the time, assumptions of its purpose went unchallenged by any other explanation of its existence. It remained an enigma and faded from attention

a. Even after the demise of the US ANP program in 1961, some efforts to restore parts of the program resurfaced, notably a US Navy contract with Lockheed to develop concepts for converting Lockheed’s huge C-5A transport aircraft to nuclear power. (See Schwartz, *Atomic Audit*, 125.)



An artist's rendering of the *Caspian Sea Monster*. Source: K. E. Cepreev, 22 March 2013, Creative Commons.

after it appeared that the Soviet ANP program had ended.

Only later, in the late 1960s, was the *Sea Monster's* raison d'être discovered. In 1966 a new and even larger seaplane was identified, also in the Caspian Sea. This truly monstrous newcomer was given the same name that had been bestowed on its predecessor. The new *Caspian Sea Monster*, flight tested in the autumn of 1966 and subsequent years until it crashed and sank in 1980, was soon identified as a hovercraft or hydroplane, a “surface effects” craft that flew low above the sea or land. It was powered by conventional turbojet engines (the reliable Dobrynin VD-7, the same engine used to power the four-engine *Bison* bomber).<sup>19</sup> CIA analysis of this giant seaplane concluded that the original *Caspian Sea Monster* had in fact been an unsuccessful attempt to devise a large hydroplane and had not ever been intended to serve as a testbed for the ANP project.<sup>b, 20</sup>

b. In a post-Cold War essay concerning Soviet science and technology Clarence E. Smith noted: “Although it [the purpose

### ***Were ANP Projects Disinformation?***

Did the United States or the Soviet Union ever conduct a disin-

of the *Sea Monster*] took many years to resolve, by the late 1960s we were able to conclude that the Soviets had two different classes of such [surface effect] vehicles being studied.” This reference clarifies an erroneous understanding of the origin of the designation of the “Caspian Sea Monster” that appears in the Wikipedia article cited in note 19 about the aircraft first tested in 1966.

This understanding holds that the designation derives from attributing to a KM marking on the aircraft the interpretation “Kaspian Monster” rather than the correct interpretation “Korabl' Maket” (Ship Prototype). In fact, the CIA designation for the aircraft first test-flown in 1966, like the name given the earlier aircraft, derives from the location it was sighted and its strange appearance. The error appears to stem, at least in part, from the fact that all published discussions of the *Caspian Sea Monster* (at least all of the dozen I have been able to find, most included in Wikipedia) other than this article and Smith’s chapter in *Watching the Bear* refer only to the second giant hovercraft first identified in 1966, their authors evidently unaware of the existence of an earlier *Caspian Sea Monster*.

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**Thus, it was appropriate to regard the mysterious Caspian Sea Monster as a “program of interest,” if not a formal suspect, in examining Soviet activities relating to ANP.**

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formation campaign to induce the adversary to undertake unproductive ANP projects or unnecessary countermeasures? Such deception operations are among the most secret and least likely to be acknowledged even long after they have expired. In the case of such a campaign centered on a major military system, neither country would be likely to embark on a disinformation campaign without first ruling out the danger of accidentally priming real achievements, which both countries had, in effect, done by cancelling their ANP programs as impractical.

We do not know if the United States undertook a disinformation campaign related to ANP, but no indication that it did, or that it even considered such a deception effort, has surfaced. On the Soviet side, however, there is clear relevant evidence. Thanks to a period of relative openness in the early 1990s, when many former highly secret Soviet archival records became available—some only briefly—many Soviet Cold War se-

crets, including deception campaigns, have been revealed. One of them was a proposal made on 14 November 1961 by Minister of Defense Marshal Rodion Malinovsky and General Pyotr Ivashutin, chief of the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff, “to promote a legend about the invention in the Soviet Union of an aircraft powered by a closed-circuit nuclear engine, with successful flight tests demonstrating the high technical performance of the power-plant and its reliability....” The disinformation “legend” would be: “On the basis of the M-50 Myasishchev aircraft [*Bounder*], with consideration of the results of its flight tests, a strategic bomber with a nuclear engine and unlimited range has been designed.”<sup>21</sup>

It is conceivable that the claims in *Aviation Week* in 1958, the subsequent brouhaha in the United States about the *Bounder*, and a *Bounder* fly-by at a Soviet air show in July 1961 witnessed by Western observers led Soviet military intelligence leaders to think that a deception built

around that story might be effective. We do not know whether this disinformation proposal was approved, but there is no indication that it was ever undertaken. Indeed, the July 1961 flight was *Bounder*’s last. Test flights had proved the aircraft was not worth producing, and in light of the new emphasis on ICBMs as the principal strategic nuclear weapons delivery system of the future, the program’s cancellation was inevitable and came quickly. Although US intelligence did not know in late 1961 that *Bounder* would never fly again, Soviet military leaders would have known the aircraft could not easily be resuscitated after 1961 to tempt the United States to raise the stakes in a game that had in fact ended.

The competition over ANP collapsed when both the United States and the Soviet Union canceled their ANP programs. The *Princess* had never left storage docks in Britain; the *Camel*, which had never, so to speak, gotten off the ground, was clearly dead; the *Swallow* was retired from its nuclear nest; and the *Caspian Sea Monster* was never even in the game.



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**Endnotes**

1. For Fermi's recognition see R. W. Bussard and R. D. DeLauer, *Fundamentals of Nuclear Flight* (McGraw-Hill, 1965), 1; for Kurchatov's statement see Mikhail Rebrov, "Legends and the True Story of the 'Swallow'," *Krasnaya zvezda (Red Star)*, Moscow, July 7, 1993, 2. The earliest non-fiction reference to possible nuclear propulsion of aircraft that I have found was in a Russian *Popular Science*-type journal a decade before the "atomic age": O. Petrovsky, "An Isotope Gun," *Tekhnika molodezhi (Technology for Youth)*, Moscow, Vol. 1, 1935.
2. *Aircraft Nuclear Propulsion Program, Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Research and Development of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, Congress of the United States, Eighty-Sixth Congress, First Session on the Aircraft Nuclear Propulsion Program, July 23, 1959* (United States Government Printing Office, 1959), 113–14. Hereafter cited as *Hearing*.
3. *Hearing*, 32, 151, 178.
4. Rebrov, *Krasnaya zvezda*, July 7, 1993. Rebrov, a retired colonel in the Technical-Engineering Service (an identification not made in the cited article), used authorized interviews and conducted research in now declassified Soviet records.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Hearing*, 6-7, 13-14, 22-33, 70–75, 160–63.
8. *Ibid.*, 49–57.
9. See Stephen I. Schwartz, ed., *Atomic Audit: The Costs and Consequences of U.S. Nuclear Weapons Since 1940* (Brookings Institution Press, 1998), 123–24.
10. Three estimates appeared in the annual 11-4 series on overall Soviet military capabilities and policy: NIE 11-4-58 (December 23, 1958), NIE 11-4-59 (February 9, 1960), and NIE 11-4-61 (August 24, 1961); two in variants: NIE 11-60, *Trends in Soviet Military Capabilities in the Period 1965-1970* (April 12, 1960), and NIE 11-14-61, *The Soviet Strategic Military Posture, 1961–1967* (November 21, 1961); three in the 11-8 series on strategic attack capabilities: NIE 11-8-59, *Soviet Capabilities for Strategic Attack Through Mid-1964* (February 9, 1960), NIE 11-8-60, *Soviet Capabilities for Strategic Attack Through Mid-1965* (August 1, 1960), and NIE 11-8-61, *Soviet Capabilities for Long-Range Attack* (June 7, 1961); one in a new series: NIE 11-2-61, *The Soviet Atomic Energy Program* (October 5, 1961); and two in "Special" NIEs on bomber development: SNIE 11-58, *Possible Soviet Long-Range Bomber Development, 1958-1962* (March 4, 1958), and SNIE 11-7-58, *Strengths and Capabilities of the Soviet Long-Range Bomber Force* (June 5, 1958). (All these estimates were classified Top Secret except SNIE 11-58 and NIE 11-60, classified Secret.)
11. *Hearing*, 65.
12. For translations of most, if not all, of the extensive Soviet publications on the overall subject of nuclear-powered aircraft during 1957–59, after which few if any appeared, see the 1959 *Hearing*, 209–413. For writings by a prominent Soviet military expert during 1956–59 on overall trends in military applications of advanced technologies including discussion of ANP, see Maj. Gen. G. I. Pokrovsky, *Science and Technology in Contemporary War*, translated and annotated by Raymond L. Garthoff (Praeger, 1959), especially 82–87 and 140–41.
13. The newspaper account of Yemelyanov's comments in Idaho appeared in Carl Hayden, "Red Scientist Tells [of] Work for A-Plane," *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 10, 1959.
14. I have described these visits in some detail in "Intelligence Aspects of Cold War Scientific Exchanges: US-USSR Atomic Energy Exchange Visits in 1959," *Intelligence and National Security* 15, no. 1 (Spring 2000), 1–13.
15. See Robert F. Little, *Nuclear Propulsion for Manned Aircraft, The End of the Program, 1959–1961* (USAF Historical Division Liaison Office, April 1963), 1–13; James Killian, Special Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, *Sputniks, Scientists and Eisenhower* (MIT Press, 1977), 178–84; and Peter J. Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap* (Cornell Univ. Press, 1995), 168–70.
16. For information about these programs, including costs, see Schwartz, *Atomic Audit*, 165–66, 292, and, for a reference to the contribution of ANP to these programs, 480.
17. For discussion and sources on the US-Soviet/Russian work on nuclear propulsion for spacecraft, see Raymond L. Garthoff, *The Great Transition: American-Soviet Relations and the End of the Cold War* (Brookings Institution Press, 1994), 449–50.
18. Roman G. Perel'man, *Yaderniye dvigateli (Nuclear Propulsion Engines)* (Moscow, 1958); translation as R. G. Perel'man, *Soviet Nuclear Propulsion* (Triumph Pub. Co., Washington, 1960), 31.
19. See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caspian\\_Sea\\_Monster](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caspian_Sea_Monster), also for 10 references therein to the *Caspian Sea Monster*. To see the aircraft in "flight" go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8Nu94khHoo>
20. See Clarence E. Smith, "CIA's Analysis of Soviet Science and Technology," in Gerald K. Haines and Robert E. Leggett, eds., *Watching the Bear: Essays on CIA's Analysis of the Soviet Union* (CIA Center for the Study of Intelligence, 2003), 125.
21. This disinformation proposal was made in a memorandum to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on November 10, 1961 (in St.2/35c, 14 November 1961, TsKhSD [Central Repository of Soviet Documents], Moscow, Fond 14, Opis 14, Delo I and II, 10-14); cited by Vladislav M. Zubok, "Spy vs. Spy: The KGB vs. the CIA, 1960-1962," in the *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 4 (Fall 1994), 30 and 33 (with a slightly varying translation).







## **Intelligence and Punta Huete Airfield: A Symbol of Past Soviet/Russian Strategic Interest in Central America**

*By Robert Vickers*

***The status of the Punta Huete airfield and the possibility that Moscow might send jet fighters and other Soviet military aircraft there were key national security issues during the administration of President Ronald Reagan (1981–1989).***

About 60 km by road northeast of Managua, Nicaragua, sits an airfield with one of the longest runways in Central America. Officially known as Punta Huete, its presence is a little remembered but important legacy of the Cold War. It was constructed in the early 1980s—soon after the leftist Sandinista regime took power—with Soviet funds and Cuban technical assistance. Punta Huete was designed as a military airfield, with a 3,050 meter runway capable of handling any aircraft then in the Soviet inventory. It also had revetments for fighter aircraft.

The status of the airfield and the possibility that Moscow might send jet fighters and other Soviet military aircraft there were key national security issues during the administration of President Ronald Reagan (1981–1989). As a result, the US Intelligence Community (IC) monitored Punta Huete closely, and the administration made heavy use of intelligence to support its policy of attempting to limit Soviet influence and military presence in the region.

The airfield was never completed during the Cold War and the MiGs were never delivered, however, and Punta Huete lay abandoned and unused after the Sandinistas lost control of Nicaragua's government in February 1990 and after the Soviet Union collapsed the following year.

Nevertheless, the episode is an excellent example of the role that intelligence played in support of US strategic policy in Central America during a period of intense competition for global influence between Washington and Moscow. Since then, the Sandinistas have returned to power in Nicaragua, and Punta Huete has finally been completed with Russian financial assistance. Strange though it may seem, this raises the possibility that Punta Huete may once again become a high priority for US intelligence as Moscow renews its strategic interests in the Western Hemisphere.

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### ***The Beginning***

The Sandinista regime came to power in Nicaragua in July 1979 by overthrowing the country's long-time dictator, Gen. Anastasio Somoza.<sup>1</sup> The Sandinistas had already established close ties with Fidel Castro, beginning with a covert visit by insurgent leaders Daniel and Humberto Ortega and Thomas Borge to Havana in September 1978. Soon after the visit, the Cubans began covertly providing arms to the Sandinista insurgency via Costa Rica. Once the Sandinistas seized power, Daniel Ortega became head of the ruling junta. His brother, Humberto, became defense minister, and Borge became

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

chief of internal security as minister of interior.

From the regime's inception, the most important foreigner in Managua was Cuba's ambassador, Julian Lopez. The ambassador was considered Fidel Castro's personal representative and was in charge of all strategic aspects of military relations between the two countries. He was also included in all strategic decisions regarding the Soviet Union and Nicaragua, including military agreements. The Soviets preferred that all such agreements be handled by a tripartite commission of the three countries, and Havana's approval was required.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, when Defense Minister Ortega led a delegation to Moscow in May 1980, the Soviets agreed to help train and equip the new Sandinista armed forces, but the details were to be worked out by the tripartite commission. In November 1981, after negotiations were complete, Ortega returned to Moscow to sign a full scale military aid treaty with the Soviet Union, the details of which remained secret. Nevertheless, the regime publicly announced that with foreign assistance, Nicaragua intended to build a military force of 200,000, including active duty members and militia.<sup>3</sup>

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### **Growing US Concern**

When President Reagan took office in January 1981, he and his senior national security officials were



Daniel Ortega and Fidel Castro review troops greeting the latter's arrival in Managua to help celebrate the regime's first anniversary in July 1980. The relationship with Cuba was Nicaragua's most important at the time. Photo © Bettman/Getty.

already extremely concerned about what they saw as growing Soviet and Cuban influence in Latin America, especially in Central America and the Caribbean. They were particularly worried, in view of Fidel Castro's strong support to the Sandinistas, that Nicaragua could become another Cuba.

When William Casey became the director of central intelligence (DCI) a week after Reagan's inauguration, he made it clear that he wanted a strong, new intelligence focus on Cuba and Central America.<sup>4</sup> One immediate result was a national intelligence estimate (NIE) titled *Cuban Policy Toward Latin America*. Produced in June 1981, it was the first estimate in nearly a decade to cover the topic of regional Cuban influence.<sup>5</sup>

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a. All the NIEs and intelligence products cited in this article have been declassified,

The estimate focused on what were seen to be more aggressive Cuban and Soviet policies in the region, which were judged to include more military support for leftist insurgents and greater assistance to the new revolutionary governments in Nicaragua and Grenada. It noted:

*Castro has more influence and prestige at stake in Nicaragua than he has ever had in a Latin American country [and] Cuban support, especially in the military and security fields, is already increasing, including more sophisticated equipment supplied from Cuban inventories and transshipped from the USSR.*<sup>5</sup>

This NIE was followed by another in September 1981, titled *Insurgency and Instability in Central America*. Its key judgments included the following assertion:

*The principal objectives of Cuba and the USSR in Central America are to consolidate the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua, and to use Nicaragua as a base for spreading leftist insurgency elsewhere in the region. Indeed, by virtue of its location, cooperation with Communist and other radical advisers, and support for Central American insurgencies, Nicaragua has become the hub of the revolutionary wheel in Central America.*

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with varying degrees of redactions. They are available in the FOIA Electronic Reading Room in [www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov).

The estimate went on to state that a secret defense pact had been concluded between Managua and Havana, and that as a result, Nicaragua already had the largest standing army in the region. By this time, US intelligence satellites and aircraft had begun to detect the arrival in Nicaragua of Soviet heavy weapons, including tanks and artillery. Reports also began arriving of Nicaraguan pilots training in Bulgaria and of Soviet and Cuban plans to provide MiG-21s to the Sandinistas. The estimate added that the aircraft could arrive in Nicaragua by early 1982.<sup>6</sup>

Concerned about this intelligence, Reagan met with his National Security Council (NSC) in November 1981 to discuss countering the Soviet and Cuban actions in the region. Discussions were also held about Soviet provision of additional MiG-23 (Flogger) fighter aircraft to Cuba and the potential delivery of MiG-21 (Fishbed) fighters to Nicaragua. The results were two national security decision directives (NSDDs): NSDD 17—Cuba and Central America and NSDD 21—Responding to Floggers in Cuba issued in January 1982.

NSDD 17 tasked senior government officials to develop military contingency plans against Cuba and Nicaragua and a public affairs strategy to inform the public and Congress of the situation in the region. NSDD 21 explicitly stated that the United States “will not tolerate the introduction of fighter aircraft into Nicaragua.”<sup>8</sup> Later in the year, Reagan and his security team agreed that if Nicaragua acquired MiGs, the US military would attack and destroy them. In addition, both the Nicaraguan and Soviet governments were warned that the United States strongly opposed



Daniel Ortega during a highly publicized visit in May 1982 to Moscow and a meeting with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev, who promised a visit to Nicaragua. None of the public statements alluded to any aid beyond diplomatic support to the Sandinista leadership. Photo: © Tass/Getty.

the delivery of the aircraft to the Sandinistas.<sup>9</sup>

The next step was a press briefing at the State Department in March 1982, at which Deputy Director of Central Intelligence Bobby Inman and Deputy Director of Defense (Intelligence) John Hughes addressed the growing threat to the region of Nicaragua’s increasing acquisition of advanced Soviet weaponry. They used declassified SR-71 imagery and other intelligence to make their case. They highlighted the reported training of 50 Nicaraguan pilots on advanced jets in Bulgaria, and they showed photos of the extension of runways at several airfields in Nicaragua that would make them capable of supporting MiG-21 fighters.<sup>10</sup> At the time, US intelligence was still unaware that construction of Punta Huete Airfield was about to begin.

Then in June 1982, DCI Casey approved two more estimates done

at his request. The first was a special NIE (SNIE) titled *Short-Term Prospects for Central America*. It focused on the threat the IC believed moderate democratic governments in the region faced in the growing strength of the Sandinista regime and its “continued cooperation with Cuba in promoting Marxist revolution elsewhere in Central America, together with its military buildup toward dominance in the region.” The SNIE added that, with Soviet and Cuban assistance, Nicaragua had already built the strongest ground force in the region and that once it received MiG fighter aircraft, it would have the best air force as well.<sup>11</sup>

The second SNIE was the first done on Soviet policy in the region in more than 11 years. Titled *Soviet Policies and Activities in Latin America and the Caribbean*, its key judgments began by stating that Soviet activity and interest in the region had ex-

panded significantly in the past few years and that Soviet leaders shared Fidel Castro's perspective that the prospects for the success of revolutionary regimes in Central America had increased. Moreover, both governments viewed the consolidation of the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua as central to promoting leftist gains in the region. The estimate noted that, while recent US warnings to Moscow of the consequences of delivering fighter aircraft to Nicaragua may have prompted a deferral of the deliveries, "preparations for their arrival were continuing." These included on-going expansion and upgrading of some Nicaraguan airfields and reported training of Nicaraguan pilots to fly MiGs. The key judgments concluded that "over the longer term, there is a possibility that the Soviets will seek access to naval and air facilities in Nicaragua" and that "such access would have a significant impact on US security interests, especially with regard to the Panama Canal."<sup>12</sup>

As a result of administration concerns about the escalating threat to US strategic interests in Central America, Reagan addressed a joint session of Congress on the situation in April 1983. After stating that the region was of vital importance to the United States because of its location adjacent to the Caribbean Basin and the Panama Canal, he noted the continued Soviet military presence in Cuba, including a combat brigade and visits by Soviet submarines and military aircraft. He then warned that the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua, assisted by Cuba and the Soviets, had become a destabilizing presence in the region as a result of its support for the Salvadoran guerrillas and other leftist insurgent groups and because of its continued military



The inset map above shows the relative locations of Managua and Punta Huete—about 25 kms across Lake Managua. It appeared in SNIE 83.3-3-85, *Nicaragua: Soviet Bloc and Radical Support for the Sandinista Regime*, March 1985.

buildup. He noted that Nicaragua now had the largest army in Central America, equipped with Soviet tanks, artillery, and aircraft, and was assisted by 2,000 Cuban military and security advisers. He ended by calling for the withdrawal of all foreign military advisers and troops from the region, and he asked Congress to provide \$600 million in new US economic and security aid to US allies in Central America to help them resist externally supported aggression.<sup>13</sup>

**Discovery of Punta Huete Airfield**

In July 1982, US intelligence analysts examining images taken over Nicaragua by a recent reconnaissance satellite mission identified the beginning phases of construction of what by the end of the year could clearly be interpreted as a large new airfield.<sup>14</sup> Named Punta Huete, it was located on a peninsula on Lake Managua well away from large population centers (see map above).



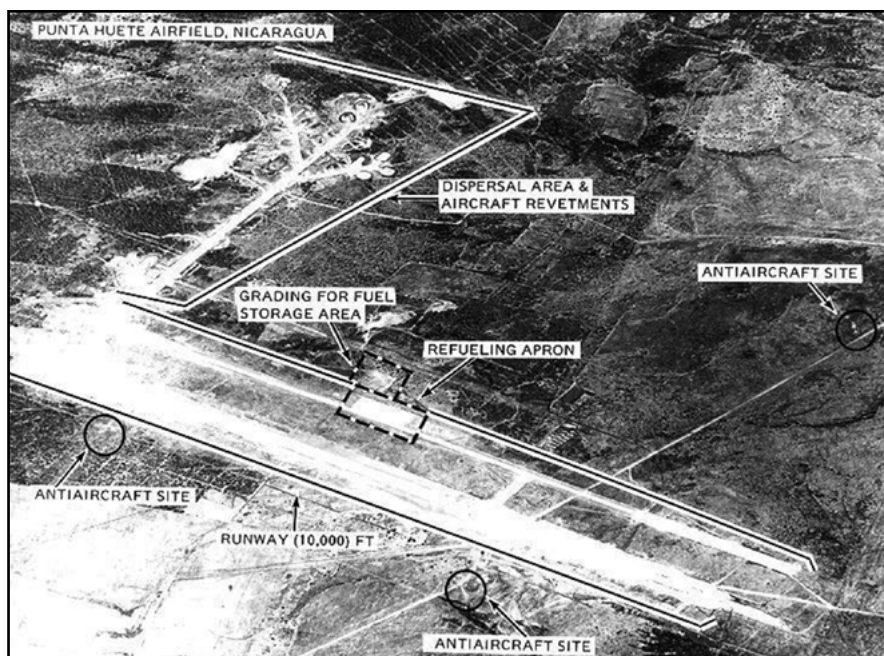
The IC continued to monitor the construction closely, employing satellite imagery and photos taken by SR-71 reconnaissance missions. The development of Punta Huete was also brought to the attention of senior policymakers, who continued to see the delivery of MiG fighter aircraft to Nicaragua as a provocative Soviet and Cuban move to upset the regional arms balance.<sup>a</sup>

The construction of Punta Huete continued at a slow but steady pace over the next few years. By late 1984, pavement of a 3,050 meter runway and taxiway was complete, and 16 aircraft revetments were under construction. No support facilities had been built yet, but three anti-aircraft artillery sites defended the airfield.<sup>15</sup>

US warnings to the Soviets and Sandinistas against the delivery of the MiG-21s grew more public and intense as the airfield neared completion. In a defiant response, Defense Minister Humberto Ortega publicly announced in September 1984 that the military airfield at Punta Huete would be ready to receive both aircraft and the pilots to fly them by no later than early 1985 and that Nicaragua was seeking MiG-21s from the Soviet Union to station at the new airbase.<sup>16</sup>

The issue of MiG deliveries came to a public head soon after. On 2 October 1984, a US intelligence satellite monitoring the Soviet arms export port of Nikolayev in the Black Sea spotted the Soviet freighter *Bakuriani*

a. The author of this article was involved in this issue during this period, first as the CIA's senior military analyst for Central America in the early 1980s and then as the NIO for Latin America from 1984 to 1987.



An overhead image of Punta Huete airfield that was used in an unclassified joint State and Defense Department booklet on Soviet and Cuban military activity in Central America. The document was published in March 1985.

moored near a dock on which were seen crates that could contain up to 12 MiG-21s. Several days later, the ship had left, and the crates had disappeared. Intelligence analysts came to a preliminary conclusion that the crates had probably been loaded onto the *Bakuriani* and that the ship was bound for Nicaragua. Their suspicions were heightened when the ship took a long route around South America, passing below Cape Horn rather than going through the Panama Canal, where its cargo would have been subject to inspection.

News of the potential delivery leaked to the press on the eve of the November 1984 US presidential election. The Soviets and Sandinistas denied the ship was delivering MiGs, and when the *Bakuriani* arrived in the Pacific coast port of Corinto, Nicaragua, on 7 November, no MiGs would be unloaded. Instead, the ship delivered Mi-24 (Hind) helicopter

gunships, useful for the Sandinistas in their escalating conflict with US-armed Nicaraguan insurgents, the Contras.<sup>17</sup>

### *A Soviet Strategic Military Base in Nicaragua?*

Despite the false alarm, Reagan administration concerns about the military potential of Punta Huete airfield by no means diminished. In March 1985, as a continuation of the administration's effort to maintain public support for its regional policies as outlined in its NSDDs, the Departments of State and Defense jointly issued a monograph titled *The Soviet-Cuban Connection in Central America and the Caribbean*. The introduction to the 45-page document promised to provide "information about Soviet and Cuban military power and intervention in Central

**Soviet Aircraft of Concern in Central America and the Caribbean.**



The MiG-21 (Fishbed) (above left) was repeatedly promised to the Nicaraguan Air Force. It never materialized. The Soviet Union had supplied fighter/interceptor aircraft—MiG-23 Floggers (above right)—to Cuba, and there existed concern that some would be shipped to Nicaragua. (Official US government photos)



(Above left) What was initially suspected in November 1984 of being a shipment of MiG-21s to Nicaragua turned out to be a delivery of lethal attack helicopters, Mi-24 (Hind), also known as Flying Tanks. (Above right) A US Navy F-14 fighter escorts a Soviet Tu-95 (Bear) reconnaissance flight as the Bear overflies US naval activity in the Atlantic. (Official US government photos)

America and the Caribbean.” It went on to address its concerns about Cuba, Grenada, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Fidel Castro personally.

Richly illustrated with declassified photographs, it highlighted Soviet supply of more than 200 MiG-21 and MiG-23 fighter aircraft to Cuba and Soviet use of San Antonio de los Baños Airfield outside Havana as a base for the periodic deployment of Soviet long-range Tu-95 Bear-D naval reconnaissance aircraft. These aircraft, operating out of Cuba,

collected intelligence on US military installations on the Atlantic coast and monitored US naval activities in the Atlantic and Caribbean.

The report included declassified photos of both San Antonio de los Baños and Punta Huete Airfields. It concluded that once the Soviets completed Punta Huete, its runway would be the longest military runway in Central America, one capable of accommodating any aircraft in the Soviet inventory. This included the Tu-95, which would then be able to

operate in the eastern Pacific Ocean and reach the US west coast.<sup>18</sup>

At about the same time, the IC published another SNIE on the region, *Nicaragua: Soviet Bloc and Radical Support for the Sandinista Regime*. The estimate stated that Soviet Bloc military and economic support to Nicaragua had increased dramatically in 1984. It provided details of Soviet Bloc arms deliveries, Soviet Bloc military advisers in Nicaragua, and Nicaraguan military trainees abroad. It also stated that the

delivery of the Mi-24 gunships to Corinto the previous November was the first direct Soviet seaborne delivery of combat arms to Nicaragua. Previous arms deliveries had arrived primarily via Cuba, Bulgaria, and other Soviet Bloc countries.

The SNIE went on to update the status of military facilities in Nicaragua being built with Soviet Bloc assistance. These included Punta Huete Airfield. After noting that training on MiGs of Nicaraguan pilots continued in the Soviet Union, the estimate concluded that while “the Soviets have refused to provide the MiG-21 aircraft desired by Nicaragua because of concern about a US response,” the Sandinista air force would be greatly strengthened should it eventually receive them.<sup>19</sup>

### ***The NSC Reviews the Subject***

On 10 January 1986, the NSC met to review the situation in the region. In his opening remarks, NSC Staff Director and National Security Advisor John Poindexter noted that Nicaragua was the one significant problem area in the region and that it was a symbolic test of US ability to deal with Soviet influence in its own backyard.<sup>20</sup>

DCI Casey followed by observing that the meeting was the first the NSC had held on the subject of Central America in 15 months. He took note of the four assessments the IC had produced in that time and launched into a disquisition on the strategic significance of Soviet activities in Cuba and the danger of its gaining a military foothold in Nicaragua, particularly when Punta Huete Air-

### ***DCI Casey took note of the four assessments the IC had produced in [the past 15 months] and launched into a disquisition on the strategic significance of Soviet activities in Cuba and the danger of its gaining a military foothold in Nicaragua.***

field and other facilities then under construction were complete and capable of handling all classes of Soviet aircraft. He further put Soviet activity in Latin America into a global context of Soviet efforts to consolidate and advance their positions around the world, including Afghanistan, Libya, Mozambique, Angola, and Vietnam.<sup>21</sup> Casey then gave the floor to the chief of the Central American Task Force for a detailed report on the US supported Contra insurgency in Nicaragua.<sup>22</sup>

Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger added that Nicaragua was developing into a Soviet base and another Cuba unless the United States could restore it to a friendly government. Secretary of State George Shultz concluded that the United States had laid down a marker on the introduction of MiGs to Nicaragua, but the administration needed to do more with Congress to provide funding for covert military support to the democratic resistance to the Sandinistas.<sup>23</sup> The meeting ended with an agreement not to leak any of its contents to the public.

By mid-March, a vote had been scheduled on a military aid package for the Nicaraguan resistance and efforts to prevent a communist takeover in Central America. To urge its passage, Reagan went on nationwide television on 16 March and detailed the risks his national security team had discussed in January and closed with an appeal to the American people to support congressional passage of the \$100 million measure.<sup>24</sup> The

speech was an instant public relations success, but it took another three months, and one failed vote in the House of Representatives, before the president would win passage of the aid bill and end the cutoff that Congress had enacted in December 1982 under the first Boland Amendment.<sup>25</sup>

Meanwhile, the administration continued to try to get the Soviet Union to agree not to provide MiG-21s to Nicaragua, either directly or via Cuba. Elliott Abrams, who was the assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs at the time, recalls at least three meetings in late 1985 and early 1986 with Vladimir Kazimirov, his counterpart in the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At each meeting, Abrams warned of the negative consequences to US-Soviet relations if MiGs were delivered to Nicaragua. Each time, Kazimirov refused to even discuss the issue, saying it was an internal matter between Cuba and Nicaragua, and that Moscow had good relations with both countries.<sup>26</sup>

### ***Another Assessment of Soviet Strategic Interests***

In response to policymaker concerns, the IC continued to monitor the MiG delivery issue and the status of Punta Huete closely. According to Peter Clement, a senior CIA Soviet analyst at the time, the continuing interest in Moscow's actions in Central America led in November 1986 to a new CIA intelligence as-

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**“In the longer term, if the Sandinista regime can be consolidated, it promises to create a platform for further extending Soviet influence and supporting the left in Latin America.”**

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assessment titled *Soviet Policy Toward Nicaragua*.<sup>27</sup> It presented a sober and cautious analysis of Soviet views and intentions concerning Nicaragua and the region.

Its key judgments provided the CIA view of Soviet strategic objectives in Central America—which remain relevant to this day—and an outlook on Moscow’s likely short-term actions.

*Over the last few years, the Soviet Union has seized new opportunities to increase its influence in Latin America at the expense of the United States. Nicaragua is a key element in this policy, second only to Cuba in importance. While seeking over the long term to establish a firmer strategic position in the region through consolidation of the Sandinista regime, the Soviets hope to exploit the Nicaraguan conflict to isolate Washington diplomatically and encourage the Latin American left.*

*The Soviets are playing for time. They see short-term risks to their interests in precipitating a US military move against Nicaragua—and are thus wary of provoking Washington by allowing the Sandinistas to obtain jet fighter aircraft in the near term.... We expect the Soviets—in conjunction with their Warsaw Pact partners and Cuba—to continue, and indeed increase, their military and other assistance to the regime.<sup>28</sup>*

The assessment then detailed by-then-familiar perspectives on the Soviet strategic view of Nicaragua and the MiG-21 delivery issue. It stated that “Moscow seeks to build a Marxist-Leninist state in Nicaragua that is militarily strong...and responsive to Soviet political interests.” It added:

*In the longer term, if the Sandinista regime can be consolidated, it promises to create a platform for further extending Soviet influence and supporting the left in Latin America. Inevitably, Moscow will press Managua—as it has Cuba, Vietnam, and other Third World regimes—for military concessions, such as air and naval access rights.*

The assessment concluded by weighing the potential pros and cons to Moscow’s strategic interests of eventually delivering the fighter aircraft, but it rejected the idea that the Soviets would be willing to trade off their Nicaraguan interests for US concessions in other theaters of regional conflict, such as Afghanistan.<sup>29</sup>

By mid-1987, the Reagan administration updated the press on the status of the Punta Huete Airfield and its continued concerns about its eventual use as a base for Soviet reconnaissance aircraft. Administration officials said the runway at Punta Huete was complete, but work on support facilities such as fuel storage tanks was still under way but that little current activity was apparent. While US officials doubted

the Soviets would use the airfield anytime soon, they again reminded the press of the site’s strategic importance, observing, as the March 1985 booklet had not, that from Punta Huete, Soviet long-range reconnaissance and antisubmarine warfare aircraft could fly missions as far north as Canada and even as far west as Hawaii. One-way missions from the Soviet Far East could navigate past the Alaskan, Canadian, and US west coasts to Punta Huete and refuel there for return trips. Nevertheless, the officials believed the Soviets still did not want to provoke the United States by delivering MiGs to Punta Huete to help protect the airfield, such as they had done in Cuba before they began deploying reconnaissance aircraft to San Antonio de los Baños.<sup>30</sup>

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***A Defector Provides New Insights into an Old Issue***

What the IC and the Reagan administration did not know at the time, but which would be revealed in greater detail in late 1987, was that it was not Moscow that was delaying the delivery of the MiGs to Nicaragua. Rather, the obstacle lay in Havana. In late 1987, Roger Miranda, a senior Sandinista official who was chief of the Defense Ministry Secretariat and a close aide to Humberto Ortega, defected to the United States. He soon revealed startling new details about the strategic relationship among Managua, Havana, and Moscow, including the construction of Punta Huete Airfield and the MiG-21 issue.<sup>31</sup>

Miranda said the Sandinistas wanted the Mig-21s for two reasons: to defend the country from a potential attack by the United States and/or US



allies and as a symbol of firm Soviet commitment to Nicaragua's defense, much as it had done for Cuba. He confirmed that the Soviet Union had agreed in the secret November 1981 treaty to provide a squadron of 12 MiG-21 aircraft by 1985, as well as to construct a new airfield to support them. Moscow would send special construction equipment for the airfield, which would be built near Managua with the help of Cuban advisers. Moscow also agreed to train Nicaraguan pilots to fly the aircraft. This would consist of three years of training in Bulgaria followed by a final year in the Soviet Union.<sup>32</sup>

Miranda said the construction of the airfield posed many problems. Cuba, which had much experience building military airfields at home and abroad, sent a team of advisers and some equipment but refused to provide cement. This critical component was in short supply in both Cuba and Nicaragua. The initial airfield construction phase began in late 1981, according to Miranda, but work proceeded slowly. He said that for years, the project used a high percentage of Nicaragua's production of cement at the expense of other important national projects.<sup>33</sup>

Nevertheless, Miranda said, everything went smoothly until early 1984, when Fidel Castro suggested to Sandinista leaders that they should forget the MiG-21s and have the Soviets deliver Mi-24 attack helicopters instead. Castro said the Mi-24s would be much more valuable fighting the Contra insurgency, which represented a growing threat to the government. Castro argued that the US invasion of Grenada in 1983 showed that the Cubans could not defeat the Americans in a conventional air war and that the

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***Miranda added that the MiG-21s came up again in late 1987, when Soviet negotiators turned up in Managua and offered to deliver the fighters in 1992 as part of a new military aid agreement.***

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Sandinistas should follow the leads of Vietnam and Cuba by changing its defensive military strategy to concentrate on an all-out conventional and unconventional ground conflict. He claimed that the United States was not going to kill millions of Cubans willing to defend their country. Castro added that if the Sandinistas agreed, he would send Cuban instructors to Nicaragua to retrain the MiG-21 pilots to fly the helicopters.<sup>34</sup>

Miranda said that Humberto Ortega was the most outspoken opponent of Fidel's proposal. Ortega agreed the helicopters would be more useful in fighting the Contras but that it was far more important to receive the MiGs as a signal of Moscow's commitment. He added that if the United States attacked the planes, it would violate Nicaraguan sovereignty but, even more importantly, defy the Soviet Union. This might bring Moscow to a firm commitment to defend Nicaragua, much as the Cuban missile crisis had led to a firm Soviet commitment to defend Cuba. Ortega concluded that Managua should not let Castro decide the issue as an intermediary but instead should approach the Soviets directly to confirm their position. Ortega did so in March 1984, when he went to Moscow and got a Soviet commitment to deliver the MiGs in 1985 as promised. Nevertheless, the MiGs were never shipped, and Mi-24/25 helicopters began arriving instead. Obviously, Castro's influence on Moscow prevailed.<sup>35</sup>

Miranda added that the MiG-21s came up again in late 1987, when Soviet negotiators turned up in Mana-

gua and offered to deliver the fighters in 1992 as part of a new military aid agreement being negotiated among Moscow, Havana, and Managua. According to Miranda, the Sandinistas wondered what lay behind the new offer and even questioned its timing, but they nevertheless accepted it. The final agreement called for a continued supply of military aid to the Sandinistas through 1990 to help defeat the Contras and a massive expansion of the Sandinista armed forces between 1991 and 1995, including the MiG delivery. The objective on the Nicaraguan side, according to Miranda, was still to eventually obtain a Soviet defense umbrella. Miranda never stated what position the Cubans took on this latest Soviet offer, but presumably they did not object. Miranda added that the Sandinistas themselves were convinced that they now had the upper hand and that by 1991 both the Reagan administration and the Contras would be gone.<sup>36</sup>

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***The Soviet Arms Flow Continues***

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As a result of the new military aid agreement, Soviet arms deliveries to Nicaragua in 1988 continued at the same high levels reached in 1986 and 1987. These were all closely monitored by US intelligence. At the same time, the US Congress voted to cut off all military aid to the Contras in early 1988, primarily because Daniel Ortega agreed at a summit of all five Central American presidents to open direct cease-fire talks with the Contras. The two Nicaraguan sides agreed to that cease-fire in March 1988 and

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***Soviet arms deliveries to Nicaragua came to an end later in 1990, not because of US efforts but as a result of the surprising defeat of the Sandinistas in the promised national elections of 25 February 1990.***

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agreed to negotiate a political settlement. After prolonged and inconclusive talks with the Contras during the rest of the year, Daniel Ortega agreed at another Central American summit in February 1989 to hold free and open democratic elections no later than 25 February 1990.<sup>37</sup>

During the last months of the Reagan administration and in the early months of the George H. W. Bush administration, US officials sought an agreement with President Mikhail Gorbachev and Soviet officials to end the arms flow from the Soviet Union and Cuba to Nicaragua and to leftist Central American insurgents, particularly in El Salvador. In the last meeting of Elliott Abrams and his new Soviet counterpart, Yuri Pavlov, Abrams urged him to reduce military aid to Nicaragua. Pavlov refused, saying Moscow would cut off arms to Nicaragua only if the United States stopped all military aid to El Salvador and the rest of Central America.<sup>38</sup> Gorbachev later agreed not to send new Soviet arms to Nicaragua, but the flow of older weapons continued, mostly indirectly via Cuba. Thus, despite repeated US efforts through the rest of 1989, Soviet arms deliveries to Nicaragua that year continued at the same high levels as the previous few years.<sup>39</sup>

Soviet arms deliveries to Nicaragua came to an end later in 1990, not because of US efforts but as a result of the surprising defeat of the Sandinistas in the promised national elections of 25 February 1990. The Sandinistas were so confident they would win that they invited international

observers to observe election process. The winning democratic opposition formed a governing coalition headed by President Violeta Chamorro, widow of a prominent oppositionist, but as a result of a transition agreement with the Sandinistas, Humberto Ortega retained his position as the minister of defense.<sup>40</sup> Ortega held the position until he retired in 1995, but Soviet and Cuban influence in Nicaragua declined dramatically during his tenure.<sup>41</sup>

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***The Bottom Line***

The Punta Huete episode and the possibility the Soviets would provide Mig-21s to the Sandinistas and deploy their own strategic aircraft to Central America showcase the interrelationship of intelligence and policy. In this instance, that relationship was fraught with controversy because of the covert US attempts to undermine the Sandinista regime through the Contras and because of claims that national intelligence was being slanted and misused for policy purposes.

While the record of the IC—as seen in released US intelligence assessments, a number of which are cited here—shows a strong consensus among senior US policy officials about Soviet Union aims in the region, the record also indicates that IC support was both timely and generally accurate. Indeed, the revelations of Sandinista defector Roger Miranda and statements of senior State Department official Elliott Abrams indicate

that the US Intelligence Community may have understated Soviet determination to gain a strategic military foothold in the region through the Sandinistas.

Ironically, the rise of President Putin to power in Russia in 2000 and the return of the Sandinistas to power in Nicaragua in 2006 renew the possibility that Moscow may again seek military access to Nicaragua for the same strategic reasons the Soviet Union sought access to Central America. As US relations with Moscow have grown strained, Moscow has shown new interest in the region. In September 2008, two Russian Tu-160 strategic bombers made a surprise visit to Venezuela, the first ever flight to the region of such an advanced aircraft. Soon after, a Russian naval task force, following a brief stop in Cuba, visited both Venezuela and Nicaragua for the first time.<sup>42</sup>

In 2010, the Sandinistas finally made Punta Huete operational as a commercial airfield, with Russian financial assistance.<sup>43</sup> Additional visits of ships and aircraft would follow. A particularly notable one was a second stopover of Russian Tu-160s in October 2013. After stopping in Venezuela, the bombers made a highly visible landing at Sandino International Airport outside Managua rather than at the more remote Punta Huete Airfield.<sup>45</sup> Moscow subsequently announced that it was seeking military air and naval access agreements with eight countries, including Nicaragua, Cuba, and Venezuela.<sup>46</sup>

Putin made his first visit to Latin America in July 2014, stopping briefly in Havana and Managua on his way to Brazil. There he attended the World Cup soccer final and par-

anticipated in a summit of the leaders of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. Putin made clear that the purpose of his trip was to demonstrate that Russia was a global power

with strategic interests in the Western Hemisphere.<sup>47</sup> Since then, Moscow's attention has been focused on the Middle East and the Syrian crisis. But should he again turn his attention

to gaining military access to ports and airfields in Latin America, Punta Huete awaits.



### Endnotes

1. Three excellent books provide detail on the rise of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, the extent of Soviet and Cuban support, and US policy toward the regime. They are Robert Kagan, *A Twilight Struggle: American Power and Nicaragua, 1997–1990* (The Free Press, 1996); William M. LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard: The United States in Central America, 1977–1992* (University of North Carolina Press, 1998); and Roger Miranda and William Ratliff, *The Civil War in Nicaragua: Inside the Sandinistas* (Transaction Publishers, 1998).
2. Miranda and Ratliff, 99.
3. Ibid. 102 and 115–17.
4. Interviews with Martin Roeber and Patrick Maher, former national intelligence officers for Latin America, 27 October 2014.
5. Director of Central Intelligence, NIE 85/80/90-81, *Cuban Policy Toward Latin America*, Volume I, 23 June 1981, 4; Volume II, 11. These and other unclassified US intelligence estimative products cited are included in *National Intelligence Council, Revolution and Subversion in Latin America: Selected US Intelligence Community Estimative Products, 1947–1987*, NIC 2010-001, September 2010.
6. Director of Central Intelligence, NIE 82/83-81, *Insurgency and Instability in Central America*, 9 September 1981, 1, 9.
7. These NSDDs are available on-line at <https://reaganlibrary.archives.gov/archives/reference/NSDDs.html#.V1HEyDZf0fk>
8. Ibid.
9. LeoGrande, 376.
10. A full transcript of the briefing is available in the *New York Times*, March 10, 1982.
11. Director of Central Intelligence, SNIE 82/83-82, *Short Term Prospects in Central America*, 8 June 1982, 1, 12.
12. Director of Central Intelligence, SNIE11/80/90-82, *Soviet Policies and Activities in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 25 June 1982, 1–4, 10.
13. The full text of the speech is available on-line in the Reagan archives at the University of Texas ([www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches](http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches)).
14. Glenmore Trenear-Harvey, *Historical Dictionary of Air Intelligence* (Scarecrow Press, April 2009) 124. Trenear-Harvey wrongly states the airfield was first discovered in 1980 rather than 1982.
15. Department of State and Department of Defense, *The Soviet-Cuban Connection in Central America and the Caribbean* (US Government Printing Office, March 1985) 27. The document is available in multiple places on the web in various qualities. See, for example, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a154114.pdf>. It is still available for purchase.
16. LeoGrande, 377.
17. Ibid. 377-378. See also Philip Taubman, "U.S. is said to studying ways to increase pressure on Nicaragua," *New York Times*, 11 November 1984 and Reuters to *New York Times*, "Sonic shake cities in Nicaragua for the fourth day," *New York Times*, 12 November 1984.
18. *The Soviet Cuban Connection in Central America and the Caribbean*, 27–28.
19. Director of Central Intelligence, SNIE 83.3-3-85, *Nicaragua: Soviet and Radical Bloc Support for the Sandinista Regime*, 15 March 1985, 4.
20. National Security Council, "National Security Council Meeting, Subject: Review of US Policy in Central America," January 10, 1986, 2. The declassified (and slightly redacted) record of the meeting can be obtained at <http://www.thereaganfiles.com/19860110-nsc-128-central.pdf>.
21. Ibid., 2–4.
22. Ibid., 4–5.
23. Ibid., 5–8.
24. Transcript of President Reagan's Speech, *New York Times*, March 17, 1986, A12.
25. Linda Greenhouse, "House votes, 221-209, to aid rebel forces in Nicaragua; a major victory for Reagan," *New York Times*, June 26, 1986. See also Kagan, 426–27.
26. Interview with Elliott Abrams, former assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, 11 November 2014.

27. Interview with Peter Clement, former deputy director for analysis, CIA, 4 November 2014; CIA, *Soviet Policy Toward Nicaragua*, Intelligence Assessment, SOV 86-100061X, November 1986. Available at [http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document\\_conversions/89801/DOC\\_0000499318.pdf](http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000499318.pdf).
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29. *Ibid.*, 1, 4–5.
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31. Miranda and Ratliff, 127–32.
32. *Ibid.*, 127–28.
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## Defeating an Insurgency—The Thai Effort against the Communist Party of Thailand, 1965–ca. 1982

By Bob Bergin

**While terrorist acts dominate today's news, many current and recent terrorist groups were spawned in broader insurgencies.**

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### *Foreword*

by Jay Watkins

This article analyzes the factors that led to the rise and fall of a communist insurgency in Thailand that took place 40 years ago. It is relevant to contemporary readers and intelligence professionals because, while terrorist acts dominate today's news, many current and recent terrorist groups were spawned in broader insurgencies: the Taliban in Afghanistan; FARC in Colombia; Lord's Resistance Army in Congo and the Central African Republic; Kosovo; Chechnya; Palestine; Syria; Yemen; Somalia; Nicaragua; El Salvador; and South Sudan, to name a few. Historical antecedents provide insights and a framework that can lead to better analysis and more effective counterinsurgency policy responses.

Insurgencies were not unusual in South East Asian politics after WWII. In the vacuum of the defeated Imperial Japanese Empire, British, Dutch, and French colonial empires succumbed to rising nationalism. Ideology played a role as Cold War protagonists solidified their spheres of influence.

Even in America's protectorate, the Philippines, the communist Huk rebellion in Luzon and Muslim separatists in Mindanao challenged

US counterinsurgency planners in the 1950s and 1960s. A notable counterinsurgency expert from that era, Colonel Edward Lansdale, and Philippine President Magsaysay were successful against the communists because they had true empathy for the Filipino people and a deep sociocultural understanding of their aspirations. The British also were successful in the Malay insurgency (1948–1960) by establishing a policy of inclusion in this multiethnic state, holding local elections, and granting Chinese residents citizenship.

You will find in this article that a small coterie of influential Thai leaders also devised a successful strategy aimed at the core discontent and aspirations of the insurgents, particularly the idealistic student followers. Instead of a brute-force military campaign, the Thai government offered amnesty, repatriation, and jobs to communist sympathizers, and freedom rather than detention.

This case study demonstrates that a keen understanding of the factors that underlie insurgencies leads to the development of means to address, directly and compassionately, the discontent that fuels insurrection.



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### ***In early 1950s, Thailand was drawn into the Cold War and became a bastion of the free world's struggle against the spread of communism in Southeast Asia.***

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#### ***Introduction***

No two insurgencies are alike. Each is distinctive in time and place: the means used to defeat one may not be effective with another. Marxist objective conditions of economic and social injustice will exist in each case, but the issues specific to each insurgency call for a unique approach.

In dealing with the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) insurgency, the government of Thailand first looked to British success in the Malayan Emergency, but found that what worked in Malaya did not apply in Thailand. The Thai then turned to the US way of counterinsurgency they had learned in Vietnam, and found it counterproductive. Finally, the Thai devised their own approach and resolved the CPT insurgency in a Thai way.

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#### ***The CPT Contradiction***

A Chinese scholar described the Thai insurgency as “three vital, separate insurgencies” in the North, Northeast and South Thailand, with each set in the poorest rural border areas, “mainly populated by ethnic minorities, most alienated from and resentful of the Thai government, such as the Meo tribesmen in the North, the Thai-Lao and Vietnamese refugees in the Northeast, and the Malaysian Muslims in the South.”<sup>1</sup>

From the start, the Thai themselves did not lead the insurgency in Thailand. When it began its armed

struggle, the CPT recruited among a diverse group of tribal people and refugees who were outside Thai society. Following the Bangkok student uprisings of 1973, ethnic Thai students streamed into the CPT, but they did not stay with the party long.

Before 1973, few ethnic Thai joined the CPT, and only one is known to have reached a position of leadership—Politburo member Pin Bua-on, who fell out with the party when he rejected the armed struggle. “The predominantly non-Thai composition of the CPT was a possible explanation for the Party’s failure to publish even a partial list of its central committee membership.”<sup>2</sup>

The hope that the intake of university students in 1976 could “contribute to changing the image of the party from Sino-Thai to Thai” did not materialize, and many students left because the party was dominated by Chinese.<sup>3</sup> Many factors contributed to the CPT’s collapse, but the party’s major flaw was a contradiction: the Communist Party of Thailand was not a party for the Thai.

The CPT was one of Asia’s oldest communist parties, and the most secretive. Ho Chi Minh, as an agent of the Comintern,<sup>a</sup> assisted at its birth. For most of its existence, the CPT was small and clandestine, its leadership unknown and hidden in the jungle, or in China. The party raised its own finances and sustained

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a. The Comintern, or “Communist International,” was an organization of the communist parties of the world, founded by Lenin in 1919.

itself with little outside support. With few points of entry, the CPT was an exceptionally difficult intelligence target.

The Thai government had little interest in the CPT until 1965, when the party embraced armed struggle as the way to social and political justice. In early 1950s, Thailand was drawn into the Cold War and became a bastion of the free world’s struggle against the spread of communism in Southeast Asia; by 1953, US military aid was equivalent to two-and-a-half times the Thai military budget.<sup>4</sup> The establishment of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) in Bangkok in February, 1955, drew Thailand deeper into the US-led anti-communist collective.

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#### ***China’s Role***

*“The entire Chinese effort was really a form of exotic communication....”*<sup>5</sup>

The CPT first proclaimed its “commitment” to the doctrine of armed struggle in 1952, but its insurgency did not get under way until 1965. China had paid scant attention to the progress of communism in Thailand until the early 1960s. The People’s Republic of China (PRC) supported the CPT, but as a senior Thai intelligence official noted, that support was minimal:

*The Chinese provided some financial support, and some arms and ammunition, but the CPT was a self-reliant party, collecting its own finances, and relying on arms captured from the Thai police and army. The biggest element of Chinese support*

was ideological training for the leadership which was done at the Marxist-Leninist Institute in Beijing and later enabling the VOPT (Voice of the People of Thailand) to broadcast from Kunming.<sup>6</sup>

Insurgent strength in 1965 was estimated at 1,200 and the growth of the insurgency seemed almost painfully slow.<sup>7</sup> It was only when the United States became deeply involved in Vietnam and started to use Thai airbases to support its Vietnam effort that the PRC stepped in to support the CPT and the insurgency grew. The US Air Force presence in Thailand would expand to the use of seven Thai airbases and over 40,000 American personnel in-country.

China's propaganda organs had been pointing to the threat posed by the US presence in Thailand from the early 1960s. David Tsui observes that, according to *People's Daily*, US imperialism would use Thailand as "a springboard to attack China;" and the *Peking Review* asserted, "A major aim of US imperialism in Thailand is to maintain a nuclear bomber base there for attacks against China."<sup>8</sup>

In 1965, the Thai government created the "Communist Suppression Operations Command" (CSOC) under Gen. Saiyud Kerdphol, whose background "included covert operations in Laos against the communists."<sup>9</sup> The Royal Thai Army (RTA) opposed Saiyud's classical counterinsurgency methods.<sup>10</sup> The RTA measure of success was reflected in body counts. More insurgents were being created than destroyed. In Bangkok, another approach was being formulated.

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***It was only when the United States became deeply involved in Vietnam and started to use Thai airbases to support its Vietnam effort that the PRC stepped in to support the CPT and the insurgency grew.***

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### ***The "Peace-Line" and the Role of the Intelligence Agencies***

Police Special Branch (SB) was also called on to help find a solution to the communist problem. Police Special Branch Col. Ari Kaributra headed the effort. To get a better grasp of the problem, Ari started talking with communist detainees held at Lard Yao prison near Bangkok. He found them very open in their discussions of communist theory and its application to Thailand. Among them was former member of Parliament and former secretary general of the CPT, Prasert Sapsunthorn, who had fallen out with the CPT when it moved to armed struggle.

He agreed to help SB develop a political strategy to defeat Thai communism. Over time, other arrested CPT members were recruited for this effort, which became known as the "peace-line." Peace-line thinking would have great significance in the future fight against the insurgency, but for many years there was little support in the Thai establishment for a strategy that used political rather than military means to resolve the communist problem.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Thai insurgency was the province of the Royal Thai Army. The RTA made the decisions, and counterinsurgency was essentially the US model used in Vietnam. The RTA had primary responsibility for collecting intelligence on the insurgency—the tactical information that was useful to the army's counterinsurgency operations.

The intelligence services outside the military—Police Special Branch and the Directorate of Central Intelligence (DCI—now the National Intelligence Agency (NIA))—focused on the CPT leadership. Both organizations were tasked with collecting intelligence on the party's structure and capabilities, and its plans and intentions. This was an exceptionally difficult task, given that the Central Committee members were mostly anonymous and hidden in the jungle or living in China.

The party itself was small (at its peak, actual party members probably never exceeded 2,500), and it was composed of small, tight cells. CPT members were well-versed in—and exceptionally strict about—employing basic tradecraft. Aliases were used as a matter of course, and little was ever committed to paper, which meant that documents seized during arrests were essentially propaganda and worthless for intelligence purposes. A senior intelligence official recalled:

*Working against the party's leadership was difficult and tedious as even the rank and file members practiced strict security discipline. Technical operations were generally not fruitful. When success came, it was usually only after painstaking investigations and lengthy surveillance of individuals we could identify as party members—and it always required a bit of luck.<sup>11</sup>*

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***The unpopular war in neighboring Vietnam was going badly, a weakening Thai economy was exacerbated by increased labor unrest and strikes, and public discontent with the government had grown strong.***

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As a result, the civilian intelligence organizations did not seem to have much of a line on what was happening, and consequently did not look very good. But then the situation changed dramatically.

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***Enter the Students***

*“Military engagements with communist forces were reduced during the 1970s as political events took center stage, particularly in Bangkok.”<sup>12</sup>*

In early October 1973, 13 members of the National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT) were arrested while distributing anti-government leaflets in Bangkok. The government announced that a communist plot had been uncovered, and that the 13 were charged with treason. The government’s credibility was low.

The unpopular war in neighboring Vietnam was going badly, a weakening Thai economy was exacerbated by increased labor unrest and strikes, and public discontent with the government had grown strong. Over the next week, “hundreds of thousands of students and others gathered . . . in massive demonstrations against the government.”<sup>13</sup>

On 13 October, the 13 students were released. After the king granted an audience to a group of student leaders, the latter declared victory and told the protesters to go home. Most did, but a large group stayed overnight. As they started to disperse

at daybreak on 14 October, a clash with the police occurred. It may have been accidental, but fighting broke out and police and soldiers began shooting. Soon there was fighting all over the city and government buildings were burning.

To add to the chaos, RTA colonel Narong Kittikachorn—son of the prime minister and son-in-law of the deputy prime minister—“directed foot soldiers and tanks to fire into the crowds. Narong himself shot into the crowds from above in a helicopter.”<sup>a, 14</sup> Seventy people were reported killed and over 800 wounded. The exact number was never determined.<sup>b</sup> “The shedding of young blood on Bangkok streets undermined any remaining authority of the junta, and allowed the king and other military factions to demand that the ‘three tyrants’ . . . go into exile.”<sup>15</sup> Praphat and Narong fled to Taiwan; Thanom to the United States.

In the days and weeks following 14 October 1973, Bangkok descended into chaos. The military and police disappeared, and boy scouts directed traffic. Students commandeered busses and careened through city streets as protests became daily events. A semblance of order gradually returned, but protests expanded

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a. From long before these events, the three together were popularly known as “sam thorarat: the three tyrants.” (Ettinger, 667.)

b. The next day, the government announced that “insurgents and terrorists had slipped into the ranks of the demonstrators, necessitating drastic action by the military and police.” (Morell and Chai-anan, 147.)

as factory workers joined in and farmers came from the countryside. An alliance of students, workers, and farmers was formed—“a political coalition, unprecedented in Thailand.”<sup>16</sup>

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***The CPT Role***

When the events of October 14 were later reviewed, there was much speculation about the CPT role in fomenting the “student uprising,” but there was no evidence that the CPT was in any way involved.<sup>c</sup> A senior Thai intelligence officer noted: “The CPT was caught off guard by the events of 14 October as was everyone else—although later the party would take advantage of the situation that 14 October created.”<sup>17</sup> The party’s already limited capabilities in Bangkok had been virtually demolished on 10 August 1972, when Police Special Branch undertook a mass roundup of CPT cadre in the city and “nearly all of the CPT’s urban cadre were arrested.”<sup>18</sup>

It is uncertain how much of what occurred in the months following the “uprising” could be attributed to CPT manipulation. Prior to 14 October, the party “viewed students as soft-minded intellectual bourgeois,” and ignored them.<sup>19</sup> After the uprising

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c. “Prior to October 1973, the CPT had virtually no influence on university, secondary, or vocational students. . . . Most university students . . . come from middle-class or lower middle-class backgrounds. Their principal (and often only) ambition has been to obtain a higher education to qualify them to enter the government and advance through a subsequent bureaucratic career. This pervasive middle-class norm captured the aspirations of nearly every student.” (Morell and Chai-anan, 286.)



ing, the CPT reassessed the students, saw fresh potential, and moved in to take advantage. Party assets in Bangkok were limited, but perceptions of the extent of CPT influence were amplified by what became a public debate between party members over revolutionary strategy. Former Politburo member Pin Bua-on was a “peace-line communist” in contact with police Special Branch.<sup>a</sup>

Under the pseudonym Amnat Yuthawiwat, Pin wrote books arguing against the armed struggle; the CPT responded with pamphlets, articles, and a book justifying it.<sup>b</sup> This open intellectual confrontation between communists had mixed results. It brought attention to the CPT and put pressure on the party to explain itself, but it added to an atmosphere in which revolution became fashionable among the young.

But the young overplayed their hand, and set the stage for a response from the political right. “The students, at least some of the extreme leftist groups, have done some very stupid things,” said Dr. Puey Ungphakorn the rector of Thammasat

a. Pin cooperated with Special Branch when his interests coincided with theirs. The highest-ranking ethnic Thai in the CPT, Pin was trained at the Marxist-Leninist Institute in Peking and considered the CPT’s theoretician. Ettinger writes that Pin was “smarter by at least half than the brightest of the CPT leadership.” (Ettinger, 668.) Those who knew Pin believed his strong political views could not be shaken. (See also Morell and Chai-anan, 288.)

b. *Rebutting Thai Revisionism* by central committee member Atsani Phonlachon attacked Pin directly as a revisionist. In 1976, Pin was denounced as a traitor to the CPT on VOPT, the party’s clandestine radio station. (Ettinger, 673.)

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**. . . if Thailand lost the fight, the whole peninsula would fall to the communists. Thailand’s situation had suddenly become critical. . .**

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University: “They have pushed too hard, demonstrated indiscriminately on too many issues . . . This strategy had turned off many in the center. As for the public support they had after October 14? It’s gone.”<sup>c</sup>, 20

Government authorities and members of the public began to see the students as a potential fifth column that would link urban protest groups with the CPT insurgents.<sup>d</sup> “Our situation looked so bad that the rich Thai started leaving the country—they were expecting the CPT to win.”<sup>21</sup>

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### ***The Right Wing Responds***

As the fight against the communists in neighboring Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia was being lost, “the sense of panic in the Thai elite and middle class” increased: “When the Americans departed Southeast Asia in 1975, Thailand was alone. We were the single front-line country

c. Dr. Puey, rector of Thammasat University and advocate of progressive reform, was admired by many students and their leaders. His words are from an interview with Morell and Chai-anan, p. 174.

d. A survey conducted in Bangkok in April 1976 showed that “a broad segment of the population perceived a serious communist threat,” and that 78 percent of respondents believed “there may be communists or communist supporters within the various groups seeking justice at present.” Of this data, Morell and Chai-anan observe, “The leftist literature that appeared after October 1973 and the actions of the leftist movement during 1973–1975 had much to do with the emergence of such attitudes on the part of the Bangkok middle class.” (Morell and Chai-anan, 172.)

standing against all of the Communists in Asia. The only assurance of help came from Malaysia and Singapore, who understood that if Thailand lost the fight, the whole peninsula would fall to the communists. Thailand’s situation had suddenly become critical.”<sup>22</sup>

Attacks on the Thai left began in mid-1975. Newspapers and leaflets denounced student activists and leftist politicians as communists who wanted to destroy the nation. Large patriotic organizations were brought into the fight. The Village Scouts Movement, founded in 1971 by the paramilitary Border Patrol Police (BPP) as a village auxiliary, was now turned against the urban threat.<sup>e</sup>

New groups were created, the most significant of which was the Red Gaurs<sup>f</sup>, formed by CSOC-successor, ISOC—“a vigilante movement composed of vocational school students.”<sup>23</sup> Senior military and government officials supported Nawaphon,<sup>g</sup> which in 1975 claimed a million members.

Forty-five political parties competed in the January 1975 general election; Kukrit Pramoj became the prime minister of a very shaky

e. Over 2,000,000 people had attended recruitment sessions. (Baker and Pasuk, 192.)

f. Red Gaurs refers to “a very large and testy native Thai forest ox.” (Handley, 224.)

g. “Nawaphon,” meaning “New Force” or “Ninth Power,” was a propagandist campaign to rally support for the army around the symbols of nation and monarchy. (Baker and Pasuk, 192.)

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**Thousands of students were arrested on the Thammasat campus and around the city. That evening, the military took over the government and proclaimed martial law.**

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multi-party coalition.<sup>a</sup> In January 1976, a no-confidence vote brought the Kukrit government down and a new election was called for 14 April 1976.

The 1976 election campaign would go down as the most violent in Thailand's history. The Red Gaurs provoked fights at student events, grenades were thrown into crowds, political activists and campaign workers were murdered. The Socialist Party of Thailand leader was assassinated. Military-controlled newspapers and radio stations denounced any suggestion of political or social change. Even members of the Buddhist clergy joined in. A leading Buddhist monk preached that killing communists was no sin.<sup>b</sup>

The election was a victory for conservatives and moderates and, for a brief moment, it seemed that a return to political stability was possible. Then elements of the political right aligned with military factions decided to create a crisis: "Knowing it could cause an explosion in the streets, they moved to bring the former leaders Thanom and Praphat back

to Thailand."<sup>24</sup> Praphat was the first to return, but left after four days of student demonstrations. On 19 September, former PM Thanom arrived in Bangkok, was ordained as a monk, and met with the king and queen.<sup>c</sup>

His presence set off massive demonstrations. On September 25, in Nakorn Pathom city, two student activists were hanged, and on 5 October, students at Thammasat University dramatized the event by staging a mock hanging—"the makeup applied to one actor left him with a startling resemblance to the Crown Prince." This was perceived as *lèse majesté*, and radio and newspaper accounts fed the outrage felt by many ordinary Thai. That night, thousands started gathering around the university, among them large groups of Village Scouts.

Shooting started in the morning, as the mob—led by Border Patrol Police—forced its way onto campus. "Armed with M-16s, M-79 grenade launchers, carbines, and even recoilless rifles, the BPP and other armed individuals cut loose with a withering volume of fire . . . the carnage was almost unbelievable. Some students were burned alive or lynched from

nearby trees; others were simply shot at point-blank range. . . . Official government reports listed 46 dead, but other observers believed the toll was much higher."<sup>25</sup>

Thousands of students were arrested on the Thammasat campus and around the city. That evening, the military took over the government and proclaimed martial law. Students and others who survived the massacre started leaving the city, and called on the CPT for help. "During the following weeks, the CPT's urban cadre worked day and night to exfiltrate this group to the jungle."<sup>26</sup>

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***The CPT Leaps Forward***

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"This single event represented a great leap forward for the CPT, which gained over 3,000 of Thailand's brightest and best left-leaning student, teachers, labor leaders, and politicians . . . the number of armed insurgents rose to well over 10,000, sufficient to challenge the RTA as a conventional force."<sup>27</sup> The students "who did not actually join the CPT in 1976–1977 remained a latent base of new recruits once the party was ready for them."<sup>28</sup>

When those who fled Bangkok reached the jungle, "party members were carefully segregated from the united front and from those who merely fled out of fear for their lives. The Party recognized that RTG military and civilian elements had taken advantage of an opportunity to infiltrate intelligence assets into the jungle."<sup>29</sup>

There was another reason as well: among all the "unorganized progressives" were the seeds of a national

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a. Kukrit, the great-grandson of King Rama II, was the founder of the newspaper *Siam Rat*, and a number of political parties. He was also a novelist and supporter of traditional Thai arts, and acted with Marlon Brando in the 1963 film, *The Ugly American*.

b. "It is the duty of all Thai. . . . It is just like when we kill a fish to make curry to place in the alms bowl for a monk. There is certainly demerit in killing the fish, but when we place it in the alms bowl of a monk, we gain much greater merit." (Morell and Chai-anan, 237.)

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c. "It is easy to understand how the king, in 1975 and 1976, could have become increasingly convinced that the political conflict in the system of open politics was threatening the very foundation of the monarchy. The palace began to see student, labor, and farmer leaders as communist agitators, or at least as deeply influenced by such elements. Frightened people began for the first time to consider the demise of the Chakri dynasty as a distinct possibility." (Morell and Chai-anan, 271.)

united front, a goal which had eluded the CPT's organizational efforts in the past.<sup>a</sup> And now the CPT also had the means it had previously lacked that would make a united front possible—the VOPT clandestine radio would be the link between the remote party leadership and the united front organizations.

### *Seeking a Way to Defeat the Insurgency*

Everything seemed to be going well for the party. The unexpected intake of new members represented great potential for expansion. The end of war in Vietnam and neighboring Laos assured safe areas for the Thai Peoples Liberation Army and an almost unlimited supply of weapons and ammunition, as well as training and other support. The stage seemed set for growing CPT success. But some observers started to see internal contradictions. A senior Thai intelligence officer recalled, "By 1978, the CPT could not absorb all the arms and ammunition it was receiving from the Vietnamese and Lao. In addition, the CPT's record of success was dismal—and prospects for the future were not good. The Vietnamese faction in the party was growing, and the influx of students—which was welcomed initially—did not revitalize the CPT, but was creating new rifts in it."<sup>30</sup>

a. "Although the party did set up two front organizations in the mid-1960s, these organizations remained relatively inactive. Their membership remained small, at least partly because of the lack of contacts between front leaders and their potential supporters." (Morell and Chai-anan, 296.)

### ***Thai military and civilian elements concerned with the insurgency understood that it was a dangerous time for their country; they were trying to understand the threat and find ways to deal with it.***

Thai military and civilian elements concerned with the insurgency understood that it was a dangerous time for their country; they were trying to understand the threat and find ways to deal with it. Among those was Chavalit Yongchaiyudh, a Royal Thai Army officer who had been involved with the anti-communist wars of Indochina, and who now found himself confronted by the communist threat in his homeland.<sup>b</sup> Pervasive American influence affected the Thai military and the way it dealt with the CPT insurgency. Chawalit recounted his experiences:

*American influence was in everything I did. My first assignment after graduation from the Thai military academy was Korea, where I was first exposed to the American way. Then I went to Laos, where the RTA fought for one year—under US sponsorship. A year later, I was selected for the Queen's Cobra Regiment, the first Thai unit to go to Vietnam. We operated in Two Corps, fought side by side with the Americans. After that, I was involved with Cambodia for 10 years. In that time, everything the Thai military did was done the American way.*

*Then, suddenly, we found ourselves fighting in our own country—contending for Thailand with the CPT. Thirty-six*

b. Chavalit became Thailand's "intelligence tsar" in the early 1980s and the commander-in-chief of the RTA. He was elected prime minister in 1996.

*of Thailand's 73 provinces were under strong communist influence. I was sent to the Command and General Staff school, where I taught and wrote field manuals on the new counterinsurgency tactics we learned from the Americans. But it was evident that trying to fix the CPT problem in the American way was not working—it was making the problem worse.*

*I found the answer in Mao Tse-tung's little red book; Mao wrote, "Dictatorship will be overthrown by communism, and communism will be defeated by democracy." Thailand would have to find a democratic solution to the communist insurgency. We didn't understand then what the red book meant when it said that this kind of war must be fought in a political way. We learned that from the CPT members who defected to us."<sup>31</sup>*

Events elsewhere in the region had a profound effect on the CPT's future. In December 1978, the Vietnamese Army invaded Cambodia, unseated the regime of the communist Khmer Rouge, and settled in to occupy the country. The invasion shifted the balance of power in Southeast Asia: the Khmer Rouge was Peking's ally. In addition to the chaos it created throughout the region, Vietnam's invasion "led to a tremendous fissure within the CPT, between the factions associated with the Peking and Soviet approaches to revolution."<sup>32</sup> Other consequences of the invasion would,

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**The invasion shifted the balance of power in Southeast Asia. . . . Other consequences of the invasion would, over time, prove even more serious for the CPT.**

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over time, prove even more serious for the CPT.

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**China Changes Course**

After the Vietnamese Army replaced the Khmer Rouge regime in Phnom Penh with the People's Republic of Kampuchea, a large number of Vietnamese troops were moved up near Cambodia's border with Thailand. It looked like the Vietnamese Army was headed for Bangkok. The Vietnamese Army encamped in Cambodia became a huge problem for Thailand. The Royal Thai Army could not freely employ its units against the insurgency while the Vietnamese Army threatened its border.

Then Major General Chavalit was tasked with resolving the problem. He had been instrumental in the 1978 creation of the Thahan Phran—"hunter troops," specially trained to use guerrilla tactics against the CPT insurgents—and remained committed to using political means against the insurgency when it was possible. He explained:

*Thailand was confronted by nine Vietnamese divisions across our border with Cambodia, which affected our commitment of military force we could use against the insurgency. I went to China to talk with Deng Xiaoping. My position was that it would seem better for China to side with the majority of Thai people rather than the small number that made up the CPT. Thailand could be a good friend.*

*Deng agreed. He said that decision was already made. That was our luck: it cleared the way for the RTA to attack CPT strongholds in north Thailand. China ended its support of the CPT. It shut down the radio transmissions of the Voice of the People of Thailand [VOPT].<sup>a</sup> So what we did outside Thailand helped open the way for our attempt to defeat the CPT.<sup>b, 33</sup>*

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**The Beginning of the End**

The change in China's Southeast Asia strategy affected its support to the CPT. Shutting down the VOPT was only the first step that led to the party's unraveling. According to a senior Thai intelligence official:

*The Chinese stopped their support because the CPT had outlived its usefulness. Beijing's country-to-country relation-*

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a. The VOPT was "temporarily" closed down on 11 July 1979, but never went back on the air again.

b. The change in China's Southeast Asia strategy went beyond Thailand and the CPT. According to a senior PLAAF officer who commanded an air division during the Sino-Viet border conflict, "In order to distract the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia, China decided to escalate the level of conflict that already existed along its southern border with Vietnam. . . . Our confrontation with the Vietnamese was a major shift in Sino-Vietnamese relations. . . . [the] Chinese Army tied down 11 Vietnamese divisions along the China-Vietnam border, making it impossible for the Vietnamese to deploy any more troops to Cambodia." (Yang Guoxiang, author interview, 2011.)

*ship with Thailand grew more important than its party-to-party relationship with the CPT. When the Vietnamese army invaded Cambodia, China needed Thailand to support its Khmer Rouge ally, and then to hold back the Vietnamese.<sup>34</sup>*

Loss of the VOPT was a real disaster for the CPT. The VOPT broadcasts were not simply exhortations of ideology, but the channel through which policy and information was passed. The VOPT also helped maintain the morale of isolated insurgent units and individual CPT members. It was most important to sustaining the united front effort.

The CPT's problems were converging. Support from China had been lost, and cracks in the party's façade were starting to show: "By early 1980, the CPT was in severe disarray, a victim of the Sino-Soviet struggle, which led to conflict within the party between the dominant Chinese armed struggle line, and the Soviet-oriented Vietnamese faction. The party was torn by factionalism and confusion over competing revolutionary ideologies."<sup>35</sup> And then there were the students . . .

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**Amnesty, the Students and the Intelligence Community**

Life in the jungle was difficult for the city-bred students. The party tried to make the transition easier by putting them into CPT-controlled "liberated villages." That eased the hardships of daily life, but there was another problem:

*The students had looked up to the CPT cadre as heroes. In*

*the jungle, they were appalled to find their CPT heroes were actually coarse and uneducated. The students knew they could do a better job than the old cadre, but felt they were never given a chance.*<sup>a, 36</sup>

The Thai intelligence agencies had a good sense of the difficulties the students were encountering. To take advantage of their disillusionment, an offer of amnesty was made to the students in late 1978, and several hundred came out of the jungle. Use of amnesty as a tactic against the insurgency reflected the approach of the new RTA commander-in-chief, Gen. Prem Tinsulanonda. His aide-de-camp was Maj. Gen. Chavalit Yongchaiyudh, who had become the chief proponent of the “peace-line” approach.

The Thai intelligence community had become divided between those who supported the peace-line—which was not many—and those who supported more conventional counterinsurgency tactics. The latter looked upon peace-liners as dupes of the communists. Both Prasert Sapsunthorn and Pin Bua-on were seen as highly intelligent; it did not take much imagination to see that they could easily manipulate policemen and soldiers who had very little political experience. “Chavalit was called a communist—and there are people who call him that today.”<sup>37</sup>

Within the RTA there was never any debate whether use of politi-

a. Others note: “The students who entered the jungle chafed under CPT discipline. [Student leader] Seksan Prasertkun complained that they ‘had to fight for democracy all over again in the jungle.’” (Baker and Pasuk, 196.)

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***Life in the jungle was difficult for the city-bred students. The party tried to make the transition easier by putting them into CPT-controlled “liberated villages.”***

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cal warfare might have some value against the insurgency. Chavalit had converted a fair number of working-level military officers to his peace-line thinking, but those were not the people who made the decisions within the RTA; the generals did that, and once made, the generals did not debate their decisions.

Chavalit’s peace-line got traction only after General Prem became the prime minister. Then Chavalit was recognized as the man who would make the decisions about the insurgency. The generals did not like that, but it came down to political power: they called Chavalit a communist, but they fell in line.

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***Countering the Insurgency with Amnesty***

As the PRC turned its back on the CPT, the Thai military moved in to destroy insurgent troops and deny them safe areas. General Prem became prime minister in 1989, and events moved very quickly. He had his team in place, as a senior Thai intelligence officer noted:

*Prem had a brain trust that dealt with the insurgency. The five members were known as “The four Ps and a C.” The Four Ps were Deputy Prime Minister Prachuap Suntharongkun, National Intelligence Agency Director-General Piya Chakkaphak, National Security Council head Squadron Leader Prasong Sursiri, and Deputy Director-General of the*

*National Police, Police Lt. General Phao Sarasin. The C was Chavalit Yongchaiyudh. These five men, Prem’s Privy Council, were the real chiefs of the Thai intelligence community during Prem’s tenure.*

*When Prem was commander of the Thai Army, Chavalit functioned as his chief of staff; when Prem became Prime Minister, Chavalit became Thailand’s Intelligence Tsar. The amnesty program initiated under Prem is credited for ending the insurgency. The idea was Chavalit’s, and it was Chavalit who saw the plan carried out. Chavalit’s genius was not just seeing that the peace-line approach could be used to bring down the CPT, but in turning his ideas into Thailand’s counterinsurgency policy.*<sup>38</sup>

General Chavalit explained the implementation of the amnesty program:

*As we started having military success, it was evident that we would also have to start moving politically: military power could not be our primary focus. I drafted Prime Minister Office Order number 66/33.<sup>b</sup>*

*The emphasis in 66/33 was on freedom. The old law precluded CPT members from rejoining Thai society. Now the communists could return to society; if they came out of the jungle,*

b. The 66<sup>th</sup> order is the year 2533, or 1980.

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**At the end it went quickly. The insurgency was over; the CPT was gone.**

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*the government would help them settle back into Thai society.*

*The principle we worked under was to consider CPT members as you would a friend or family member. Those who became communists had made many sacrifices for what they believed in. Now we were asking them to come out of the jungle—and in their minds—they were possibly facing death.*

In 1980, there was a major success in the Northeast when over 1,000 insurgents surrendered. The surrender was negotiated by former CPT Politburo member and Peace Line advocate, Pin Bua-on. “This mass surrender marked the beginning of a quick end to the CPT’s armed struggle.”<sup>39</sup>

*The entire amnesty process took about two years. About 80,000 CPT and family members came in. Forty senior level cadre surrendered, about half of the CPT leadership. The remaining*

*senior cadre were ashamed to show themselves. They are still out there. We know where they are.*<sup>40</sup>

At the end it went quickly. The insurgency was over; the CPT was gone. The offer of amnesty was well-timed. The pressure on the Thai communists was immense: Chinese support was gone, and what was being offered by the Vietnamese was not acceptable to the party’s Sino-Thai leadership. The students had fled, and with them went the party’s hope of expansion. The validity of the armed struggle doctrine had been questioned and discredited in the struggle with the peace-line advocates. And all the while the Royal Thai Army was in hot pursuit and shutting down insurgent safe havens. Amnesty was a way out at the point where the CPT had run out of options.

In the end, the CPT’s ethnic composition was not a factor. Amnesty was for all, and they came out in droves; Sino-Thai and tribal people,

even the hard core—“the true believers”—and even from safe havens like Kunming in China, where life was not unpleasant. It was time to end the exile and go home. The students who had started the departing stream of party exiles fared particularly well after they came out of the jungle.

Many had broken the hearts of the traditional families they came from, but there would be no punishment. They were encouraged to take up offers to study abroad that many had received; it was thought that, “once they saw how others lived their lives in democratic countries, communism would no longer appeal.”<sup>41</sup> The idea came from Prem’s intelligence advisers, and it appears to have worked well.

A small group of men still meets secretly in Bangkok—the true believers—among them the senior cadre who refused to accept amnesty. The intelligence service informants who monitor them report that these old men still have Marxist dreams, but they do nothing that might cause concern.



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### ***Interviews***

Chawalit Yongchaiyudh, commander-in-chief of the Royal Thai Army, deputy prime minister and minister of defense, prime minister 1996–1997; considered the architect of the CPT's defeat. Author interview, February 2012.

Piya Chakkaphak, director general of the National Intelligence Agency 1980–1987. Author interview in Bangkok, February 2006 and March 2010.

Bhumarat Jongkit, director general of Thai National Intelligence Agency, 1987–2004. Author interview in Bangkok, March 2012.

CPT Politburo member. Author interview in Bangkok, March 2012.

Nantiwat Samart, former senior officer, National Intelligence Agency. Author interviews, February and March 2012.

Yang Guoxiang, senior People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) officer. Author interview in Kunming, China, 2011.

### Endnotes

1. David Chak Wing Tsui, *China and the Communist Armed Struggle in Thailand* (Sangam Books, 1995), 48.
2. *Ibid.*, 36.
3. David Morell and Chai-anan Samudavanija, *Political Conflict in Thailand: Reform, Reaction, Revolution* (Oelgeschlager, Gunn & Hain, 1981), 294.
4. Chris Baker and Pasuk Phongpaichit, *A History of Thailand* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 146.
5. Chalmers Johnson, in foreword to Daniel D. Lovelace, *China and the "People's War" in Thailand, 1964–1969*. After analyzing the status of the CPT insurgency in 1969, Lovelace on page 74 concludes, "regardless of the intensity of its commitment to the support of the Thai guerrillas at the propaganda level, Peking was never really serious about creating an insurgency strong enough or well enough led to overthrow the government of Thailand, or even to disrupt American military activities in the country."
6. Bhumarat Jongkit, former director general of Thailand's National Intelligence Agency (NIA), author interview. In March 1962, a clandestine radio station calling itself the Voice of the People of Thailand (VOPT) started broadcasting into Thailand. It was allegedly located in a liberated area of Thailand, or in communist Pathet Lao-controlled North Laos, but Thai government direction-finders placed the radio transmitter in Kunming, the capital of China's Yunnan province. For the next 17 years, the VOPT broadcast news and disseminated party doctrine, policy, and propaganda to mobilize the masses and denounce the US occupation of Thailand.
7. Tsui, *China and the Communist Armed Struggle*, 48.
8. *Ibid.*, 11–12. U-Tapao Royal Thai Navy Airfield became a forward operating base for B-52 Stratofortress bombers. Although used to drop conventional bombs on both North and South Vietnam, the B-52 had been designed to carry nuclear weapons.
9. Thomas A. Marks, *Making Revolution—The Insurgency of the Communist Party of Thailand in Structured Perspective* (White Lotus, 1994), 99.
10. Morell and Chai-anan, *Political Conflict in Thailand*, 87.
11. Piya Chakkaphak, former director general of Thailand's National Intelligence Agency, author interview, February 2006 and March 2010.
12. Glenn Ettinger, "Thailand's Defeat of Its Communist Party" *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 20, no. 4 (August 2007), 661–677.
13. Morell and Chai-anan, *Political Conflict in Thailand*, 147.
14. Paul M. Handley, *The King Never Smiles: A Biography of Thailand's Bhumibol Adulyadej* (Yale University Press, 2006), 211.
15. Baker and Pasuk, *A History of Thailand*, 187.
16. Morell and Chai-anan, *Political Conflict in Thailand*, 160.
17. Piya, author interview.
18. Ettinger, 667.
19. Morell and Chai-anan, *Political Conflict in Thailand*, 287.
20. *Ibid.*, 174.
21. Chavalit Yongchaiyudh, author interview.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Baker and Pasuk, *A History of Thailand*, 192.
24. Handley, *The King Never Smiles*, 233.
25. Morell and Chai-anan, *Political Conflict in Thailand*, 275.
26. Ettinger, 669.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Morell and Chai-anan, *Political Conflict in Thailand*, 293.
29. Ettinger, 675.
30. Bhumarat Jongkit, author interview.
31. Chavalit Yongchaiyudh, author interview.
32. Morell and Chai-anan, *Political Conflict in Thailand*, 304.
33. Chavalit Yongchaiyudh, author interview.
34. Bhumarat Jongkit, author interview.
35. Morell and Chai-anan, *Political Conflict in Thailand*, 305.
36. Bhumarat Jongkit, author interview.
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Ibid.*
39. Ettinger, 670.
40. Chavalit Yongchaiyudh, author interview.
41. Piya, author interview.





***Playing To The Edge: American Intelligence In The Age Of Terror***

Michael V. Hayden (New York: Penguin Press, 2016) 448 pp., index.

***Reviewed by Hayden Peake***

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Twenty-one directors have headed the CIA in the 69 years since it was created in 1947. Three were admirals, two were Army generals, and 15 were civilians. Only one was an Air Force general and he had the added distinction of having served as director of the National Security Agency (DIRNSA), the only person to have held both positions. Now, retired four-star Air Force general Michael Vincent Hayden, like seven of his CIA predecessors, has written a memoir “to show the American people what their intelligence services actually do on their behalf.” (xi)

While Hayden’s decade of service in Washington—1999–2009—is the central focus of *Playing to the Edge*, the narrative weaves in his life story. After growing up in Pittsburgh—a dedicated Steelers fan—he attended nearby Duquesne University (earning both his undergraduate and graduate degrees in history), where he joined Air Force ROTC. Graduation found him with a five-year military obligation and a new wife, Jeanine, a classmate. Called to active duty as an intelligence officer in 1969, the family—including baby Margaret and son Michael, on the way—left Pittsburgh and found a new home in the Air Force.

After service as an imagery analyst at Strategic Air Command headquarters, there were intelligence assignments in Guam, Korea, Bulgaria (as air attaché), Germany, the Pentagon, and the National Security Council. By 1996, now a brigadier general, Hayden became commander of the Air Intelligence Agency in Texas. His next (and rare non-intelligence) tour was as deputy chief of staff, US Forces in Seoul (1997–99). It was while there that he was nominated—sort of—to be director of NSA. As Hayden tells the story, the Air Force chief of staff told him, “You’re not going to get it [but you will] be well positioned when the director of DIA position comes open next summer. That’s the one we’re really shooting for.” (8) His only interview for the position was with DCI George Tenet. Hayden was sworn in as director late in

March 1999. He adds wryly, “Stuff like that happens in Washington.” (9)

Hayden arrived at NSA at a time when “only about ten years of global technological advance separated the agency from operational deafness.” (12) Two incidents quickly drove this point home. The first was when the entire NSA computer system crashed and the agency went dark—completely down—for several days. The second was when he learned that he couldn’t “send an e-mail to everybody.” (12) Change was clearly necessary and Hayden established the TRAILBLAZER program that, with the help of industry, would provide an agency-wide upgrade of computers, software, and personnel to improve operational capability. At the same time, he had to deal with Congress—the source of needed funds and public trust—and their concerns about legality, in addition to privacy groups worried about “government spying on America’s private communications.” (18) Foreign anxieties were also a factor, mainly over the so-called “Echelon” program that some thought, wrongly, involved US economic espionage on European allies.

If these issues were not enough to fill his plate, Hayden encountered what he calls “guerrilla warfare” from some professionals with vested interests in the “Thin Thread” program, which was designed “to collect and sort metadata and then to point analysts to the rich veins of SIGINT ore within the mountain of information.” (21) When tested, it didn’t work well, but its adherents didn’t give up. Hayden summarizes the legal, operational, and ethical arguments they maintained, with sharp discontent, even after 9/11. The result was an outbreak of whistleblower revelations that eventually involved the Snowden disclosures, and public exposés to foreign governments. It took years to resolve the legal issues; the costly operational losses are still being felt.

From an overall point of view, the problem that Hayden was attempting to confront was the steadily growing volume of data NSA was collecting daily; 9/11

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only increased the daily take and multiplied the associated hardware challenges. He reviews how NSA worked with its Five Eyes allies and new South Asian partners to cope with the data while tracking indications of further attacks. Simultaneously, Hayden and George Tenet were called before Congress to explain why 9/11 had not been foreseen by the intelligence agencies. The session did not go well as they explained the mistakes, the financial cutbacks, and the legal constraints that had limited collection prior to the attack. Topics discussed in the closed hearings were promptly leaked to the press, a persistent problem noted in other situations throughout the book. Moreover, the committee members didn't seem to understand "how SIGINT works," concluded Hayden—and from then on he worked to eliminate that circumstance, with mixed results. (45)

Then came the orders to prepare for the Iraq war, "for better or for worse." (48) This, he explains, led to personnel conflicts with the mission and complications when the resulting intelligence analysis did not meet policymaker expectations. After Hayden became director of CIA he reviewed the entire effort for his successor, Leon Panetta, telling him that contrary to "the urban legend that we were pressured by the White House . . . to write a case for war," that didn't happen. "We just got it wrong," he writes, when it came to weapons of mass destruction. (50)

Throughout the post-9/11 period, NSA worked to increase collection capability and fill gaps in coverage under a very close-hold, classified program called STELLARWIND. When up and running, Hayden writes, "We had the theoretical capability to access a significant percentage of the calls entering or leaving the United States." (73) Hayden explains at some length how the program worked, the legal issues resolved by the White House (collection without warrants), and the benefits it produced. Emphasizing that "no one expected STELLARWIND to stay secret forever", (76) Hayden took pains to brief the congressional intelligence committees, the Justice Department, and other Intelligence Community elements. Still, when it did become public through a leak to the *New York Times*, the resulting furor created by Congress and the press was substantial and even hypocritical. Hayden lays out the details.

Two other secret operations—PRISM and 215—the metadata program that replaced "Thin Thread"—came to light after Hayden had left government when Edward

Snowden leaked their details. "PRISM was focused on foreigners; 215 was all about Americans . . . a repository of American calls—not content." (406) Hayden reviews the often acrimonious outpouring of misguided public reporting that resulted, while assessing the damage—political and operational—their exposure caused, and the corrective actions taken at various levels of government.

In July 2004, toward the end of Hayden's nearly six-year NSA tour, the 9/11 Commission published the findings of its congressionally-mandated investigation. Among other recommendations, it accommodated Congress's desire for visible change with a major restructuring plan. In his chapter on the fallout from the Commission's work, delicately titled "Is This Really Necessary?", Hayden calmly notes that "there were few in the Intelligence Community at the time who thought that restructuring was a good idea. I certainly did not." (154) On the related topic of the DNI powers, Hayden and his NGA director colleague, James Clapper, "warned the House Intelligence Committee . . . that a feckless DNI would actually make things worse." (158) Then-defense secretary Rumsfeld got involved. Seeing a threat to the intelligence agencies under his command in the original version, he succeeded in negotiating modifications to the proposed act that in the end created the feckless, or at least less threatening, office of the DNI. It was promptly passed by Congress in the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention act of 2004. (154) Hayden assumed a role in its creation when he was appointed the first principal deputy to the DNI (PDDNI) in April 2005. Early on in the assignment, in a display of initiative, Hayden had his staff draft a document stating that "the CIA station chiefs around the world would function as the DNI's personal representative to the local intelligence service." (170) Under the new organization, he reasoned, what objections could there be to such a sensible proposal? There were few from the CIA and most of the Intelligence Community agencies. NSA and NGA were exceptions. They wanted their officers to be eligible to fill the posts. The issue was put on hold, only to be resurrected under a subsequent DNI. This time, thanks to CIA director Panetta, the CIA was formally recognized as the DNI representative and the DNI was replaced. (174)

In May 2006, circumstances at the CIA were in something of a turmoil and the DNI recommended that Hayden succeed Porter Goss as D/CIA. Hayden's first reaction was to "order" his two very accomplished personal assis-

tants, Mary Jane Scheidt and Mary Elfmann, to “find Steve Kappes.” (180) A respected and experienced clandestine service officer who had resigned under Goss, Kappes was found in London. He agreed to return as Hayden’s deputy. Bringing him on board was insurance that Hayden’s appointment would not be “seen as a hostile takeover by the DNI.” (181) The confirmation process was ultimately successful, with only Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, and a few other Democrats casting a “no” vote. (185)

On arrival, Hayden found that “powerful people were accusing the CIA of felonies” (179) and other wrongdoings, none of his making, that would dominate his three year tenure—and beyond—and which he treats in detail. These included the now-familiar topics of secret prisons, enhanced interrogation practices, the destruction of interrogation tapes, and “targeted killings.” (333) On the administrative side, a number of quandaries demanded attention. They included plans to release the Justice Department memos “that laid out in detail the techniques that had been authorized for CIA’s interrogation of high value terrorists,” (378) frequent contentious exchanges with congressional committees, (225, 401) and the SSCI report on “detention and interrogation of terrorists” (398) that eventually surfaced publicly after Hayden had retired and on which he offers incisive views.

There are separate chapters on the bombing of the nuclear reactor in Syria in September 2007, and the Iranian nuclear program. As to the former, Hayden writes, “We had shared a decade worth of sporadic evidence of North Korean-Syrian nuclear cooperation with our liaison partner.” (255) While the United States considered various options to deal with the threat, the liaison partner acted unilaterally and destroyed the facility and Hayden describes that reaction. With regard to Iran, Hayden says it was the second most discussed topic of his tenure. His review of the Iranian nuclear agreement concludes that while claims of “the most intrusive inspection regime in history [is] probably a bit of hyperbole, [it] may indeed be a tough regime for Iran’s known facilities.” (308) He adds that, while the Bush was unlikely to have “bought

this deal . . . it wasn’t like we had created a lot of better choices, either.” (309)

Several reviews of *Playing to the Edge* took Hayden to task for these operations and those he had conducted at NSA. One wrote gratuitously that the book “is also badly written” while noting that his frequent references to his favorite NFL team, the Pittsburgh Steelers, made his style “jock-bureaucratic,”<sup>a</sup> comments that say more about the writer than the general. One reason for the antagonism is Hayden’s repeated assertion that “the information that we got from [KSM] and others was incredibly valuable.” (189, 224) Another important reason was Hayden’s persistent but unsuccessful opposition to the *New York Times*’s publication of NSA’s STELLARWIND story that no journalist could support.<sup>b</sup>

The title *Playing to the Edge* was contributed by Hayden’s wife Jeanine, because it characterized his approach to challenging decisions as he traded risk with mission accomplishment in unprecedented times. And although the narrative is generally chronological, he manages to include his views on the staff and things like family day at CIA, “when families descend on headquarters” (272) to see where their parent(s) work. He also comments on contacts with his support elements—general counsel, public affairs, CIA’s Publication Review Board—and various functional centers, as for example counterintelligence and counterterrorism—at both NSA and CIA.

*Playing to the Edge* is a very readable, candid, important assessment of Hayden’s intelligence career that gives a unique view of intelligence in action at the highest levels of our government. When added to the contributions of his predecessors, the result is an irreplaceable portrait of the Intelligence Community in action.

a. George Packer, “Can You Keep A Secret?”, *The New Yorker*, 12 March 2016.

b. See for example, Mark Bowden, “‘Playing To The Edge,’ Michael V. Hayden, Bush-Era Spymaster, Defends His Record,” Books of the *Times*, *New York Times*, 23 February 2016.





***Destiny and Power: The American Odyssey of George Herbert Walker Bush***

Jon Meacham (Random House, 2015), 864 pp., notes, bibliography, photos, index.

**Reviewed by Thomas Coffey**

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The category into which Jon Meacham's book about George H. W. Bush fits is debatable: the author says the book is neither a full life-and-times account nor a history of the Bush family, but rather a "biographical portrait" of the 41<sup>st</sup> president. This portrait's heavy reliance on diary entries and oral history, though, give it the feel of a memoir or a co-written autobiography, despite Meacham's stating the former president had no editorial authority over the book's content. The methodology behind *Destiny and Power* makes for a flawed, if well written and somewhat interesting, account of an underrated and historically important public servant.

*Destiny and Power* comes on the heels of the publication of *The Strategist*, the biography of Bush's former national security advisor and close friend, Brent Scowcroft, and the books adopt similar approaches.<sup>a</sup> The author of *The Strategist* relied heavily on interviews with Scowcroft and the same holds for *Destiny and Power*, but Meacham adds Bush's diary entries dictated during his time as vice president under Ronald Reagan and then as president, from 1989 to 1993. As it happens, the diary recordings and interview comments are pretty bland; they are not tutorials in manipulation as are the transcripts of LBJ's conversations with domestic politicians and foreign leaders. Nor are the diary entries jaw-dropping in their mean-spiritedness and conniving, as are Nixon's White House transcripts.

The diary entrees are, instead, what you'd expect from someone who is pragmatic in his policy preferences and gracious towards others. Many of them appear aimed mostly at bucking himself up during difficult times. For instance, right before the ground war in Kuwait in February 1991, Bush dictated, "We can't stop now, we can't look back now, we can't pause now, we can't cease fire now. We can't fail in our mission." (461) After conceding the 1992 election to Bill Clinton, Bush noted, "I ache

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a. The author reviewed *The Strategist* in the September 2015 issue of *Studies in Intelligence* (Vol 59, no. 3: 67–69).

and must now think: how do you keep your chin up, keep your head up through the couple of difficult days ahead?" (xv) However, Bush's recordings do contain some revelations, most of them dealing with the 1991 Gulf War:

- Bush was very concerned that Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan preferred to reach an accommodation with Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. "There was a historical Arab propensity to try to work out deals . . . I had to wonder if, under pressure, they might be inclined to strike some kind of behind-the-scenes arrangement with Saddam." (427)
- Bush found British prime minister Thatcher tiresome: "She talks all the time in a conversation. It is a one-way street." (371) German Chancellor Helmut Kohl referred to Thatcher as "that woman."
- Concerned about the potential for Saddam Hussein to take US hostages during the troop buildup in Saudi Arabia, Bush was "determined that I could not be Jimmy Carter—an impotent, flicking US impotence in the eyes of the world." (438)
- Having failed to force Saddam to attend the signing ceremony that ended the Gulf War, Bush regretted never having a "Battleship Missouri" surrender, to make it akin to WW II, to separate it from Korea and Vietnam." (467)
- The dictations show a resentful side. When the ground war was shown to be going extremely well, Bush savored the moment. "It's going to be quicker than anyone ever thought. All the talking heads and all the worst case, and all the Congress and their pusillanimous views, look now to be wrong." (464)

The last quote highlights one of the traps of these books. Much as the incessant reliance on the after-the-fact, assured comments of Scowcroft give *The Strategist* a smugness of tone, the relentless quoting from the diaries makes Bush appear at times as grumpy, embattled,

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and prone to sulking. It wasn't all "chin up" after losing the election in 1992. Bush, after noting the praise from foreign officials, dictated "Domestically, it's the same: you don't stand for anything, squandered your popularity, don't care about people, haven't done anything, and on and on it goes—and brutal in its intensity." Regarding the end of the Soviet empire and the departure of its famous infantry brigade from Cuba, Bush says, "What changes in the world, and yet who gives a damn?" (513) Indeed, his last diary entry as president was a rhetorical, "Who gives a damn now?" (535) Of course, diaries by their nature allow the diarist to vent, complain, and let off some steam. But it is their actions and publicly-spoken words that should define public figures; by relying so heavily on dictations, Meacham paints—no doubt unintentionally—a somewhat negative and misleading portrait of Bush.

Like *The Strategist*, the author of *Destiny and Power* comes across as a huge fan of its subject, which hurts the writing. Meacham pours it on a bit thick, describing Bush's appointment as CIA director in late 1975 (a political dead end for him) as reflecting his "duty to country, understood as compliance with the wishes of the President, was to trump the dreams of the individual." (194) Some of it is trite: "The political lesson of Bush's formative first years in public office was that the President of the United States—in this case Johnson—was neither wholly right or wholly wrong." (133) Or, "Bush sensed that transitions in public life would be made easier by courting those with whom you were to work and saying thanks to those with whom you had worked." (154) At points Meacham just can't hold back the praise: "George H. W. Bush was a uniquely good man in a political universe where good men were hard to come by." (596) And sometimes the reader is asked to swallow things whole: a case in point concerns the president's response to the Chinese regime's violent crackdown in June 1989 on demonstrators in Tiananmen Square. He chose essentially to overlook it, which undoubtedly made good geo-strategic sense; however, the author buys into the false administration narrative, quoting—approvingly—a draft press release that notes, "The encouragement of peaceful progress toward democracy and the assertion of American values would guide this administration in a remarkable period of change." (375) This of course must have come as news to the Chinese protesters.

The book, at nearly 900 pages, is twice as long as required, in part because Meacham has a habit of tying

up every new revelation with a bow of his own or introducing new sections with dedication-like statements. "Bush came to the Presidency a decent and caring man whose experience in life had taught him there were few simple problems and even fewer perfect answers." (355) Or truisms: "His presidency was shaped by all that he had met and all that he had done." (355) His windups and follow-throughs are too long, sometimes gratuitous, and it is often hard to tell where Bush's voice ends and Meacham's begins.

One final similarity with *The Strategist* is that both books traffic in the same criticisms of Bush 43's administration. The targets are predictably Defense Secretary Rumsfeld and Vice President Cheney. "Rumsfeld was an arrogant fellow and self-assured, swagger." (585) As for Cheney, the elder Bush attributed his "iron ass" reaction to the 9/11 attacks possibly to his wife, Lynne, who is "a lot of the eminence grise here—iron ass, tough as nails, driving." (589) Meacham, oddly coming across as a go-between, presented Bush's comments to Cheney, who gave the standard response to the standard criticism of his changing into more of a hard liner: essentially that times had changed since the first Bush administration—where he served as defense secretary—and the world became more dangerous. The father-son link between the two administrations and their different styles provides a much stronger rationale for inclusion in this book, but there is something pointless about the chapter. It does not add to our understanding of Bush the man or of his son's administration.

The chapter that should improve our understanding of George H. W. Bush, but does so only marginally, is the one on his time as the director of Central Intelligence. He did not want the job and there was some suspicion Ford's then-chief of staff, Donald Rumsfeld, had pressed to have Bush appointed DCI to remove a potential rival from the Republican national ticket in 1976. The Senate, wanting to prevent any politicization of the directorship, refused to confirm Bush as DCI without White House assurance that Bush would not run for vice president in 1976. Meacham suggests, quoting then-deputy chief of staff Cheney, that Bush actually got the job as a sop to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who much preferred Bush to the frontrunner for the job, Eliot Richardson, a former attorney general. And, as a former member of the House of Representatives, Bush was seen as a good fit to work with Congress.

Overcoming his initial doubts, Bush was soon in his element as DCI—this, despite being refused Cabinet rank as director—a decision Bush himself later condoned by denying the same rank to his DCI when he became president. Meacham quotes former first lady Barbara Bush who noted, “I must confess that he adores the work . . . he has never enjoyed a job more.” (198) One of Bush’s sons told this reviewer a few years ago that being CIA director was his father’s favorite job. Not that it was smooth sledding: Bush worked at mending the CIA’s relations with Congress in the wake of the contentious Church and Pike Committee hearings into Intelligence Community abuses. His amiability improved esprit de corps and put a more benign face on the Central Intelligence Agency. He was no pushover, however. According to former CIA officer Douglas Garthoff, Bush replaced 12 of the top 16 CIA officers; he also dealt with intense criticism from conservatives in the Republican Party that the CIA was downplaying Soviet intentions and capabilities by inviting some of them, dubbed Team B, to look at the classified information and come to their own conclusions. What Bush viewed as a case of competitive analysis, others

saw as politicization. Meacham, ever on the lookout for a positive take, quotes, in a footnote, from a previous biography of Bush: “Among CIA professionals, Bush earned high praise for his handling of the Team B matter. By letting outsiders in, he had reduced pressures that might have forced a greater politicization of intelligence estimates.” This is about as far as it goes in learning about this potentially revealing time, for Bush did not make diary dictations—perhaps for security reasons—and gave little insight into his thinking as director in the course of the author’s interviews with him.

Bush did want to stay on and serve under Carter, Meacham tells us, but the president-elect thought the current director was “too wedded to existing structure to be an agent of change,” a reference to the massive staff cuts soon to be undertaken by Stansfield Turner. Besides, Carter later joked, staying on as DCI would likely have prevented Bush from becoming president since a Republican who served under Carter would have been an unlikely candidate for the national ticket in 1980. The CIA’s loss was the country’s gain.







## Intelligence in Public Media

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### ***The President's Book of Secrets: The Untold Story of Intelligence Briefings to America's Presidents from Kennedy to Obama***

David Priess (Public Affairs, 2016) 386 pps., notes, index.

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

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In a few months a new US president will begin to chart a course through a complex set of national security issues. In short order the new administration will put in place a process to absorb intelligence analysis as it formulates a strategy to contend with terrorist threats, turmoil in the Middle East, international economic problems, security tensions in East Asia and Europe, and myriad other problems. Simultaneously, the Intelligence Community (IC) will need to learn swiftly how best to serve the new administration.

The imperatives of the administration and the IC will meet in the first intelligence briefings the president-elect receives, together with the start of *President's Daily Brief* (PDBs) deliveries. The routine and substantive exchanges they establish at the outset will evolve, but a significant portion will revolve around the PDB, the daily digest of analysis CIA started in 1961 to serve President Kennedy's needs. The current proximity to a new relationship makes David Priess's book, *The President's Book of Secrets: The Untold Story of Intelligence Briefings to America's Presidents from Kennedy to Obama* an exceptionally timely read.

*Book of Secrets* eschews the flashy operational side of intelligence in favor of examining the cheerless side of intelligence—analysis. It recounts past administrations' practices surrounding the PDB, senior officials' views on its value, and various efforts to shape its form and content. Beyond the timeliness of the work, Priess's historical review reveals rich details about the PDB's evolution that will resonate with those who work in intelligence and national security and appeal to those interested in an insider's view of a particular slice of the US intelligence system.

Those looking for something about how policymakers view intelligence will also find it of value; however, those interested in intelligence successes and failures, operations, or new political gossip, will be dissatisfied with this largely uncritical look at how intelligence analysis is delivered to the president and his top advisors.

Priess brings genuine expertise to *Book of Secrets*. Although this is his first book, he brings personal experience in writing, briefing, and editing PDBs and, like many in his generation of intelligence professionals, he has worked and managed analysis on Middle Eastern states and counterterrorism issues and knows well the pressures of providing analysis for policymakers. Priess carries forward the scholarly work about US presidents and intelligence.<sup>a</sup> His book is particularly strong in looking at PDB practices from President Carter forward because it draws on inputs from all living former presidents and interviews with some 100 former senior US policymakers and many former intelligence officers.

*Book of Secrets* expands on work about how the CIA has handled presidential transitions and suggests that one of the first crucial questions the new president will need to answer is how many in the administration will be regular PDB readers.<sup>b</sup> President Carter restricted readership to himself, National Security Advisor (NSA) Brzezinski, Vice President Mondale, Secretary of State Vance, and Secretary of Defense Brown because he thought President Ford had allowed too many people to read the book and, as a result, the best intelligence was not being included. (112–13) President Reagan and the first President Bush kept a similarly small group of readers. In stark contrast, President Clinton allowed access to some 24 individuals (211), and the second President Bush pared recipients back to just six, though the events of 9/11 prompted him to expand the circle to 20. (231, 249) Under President Obama, readership has edged up to at least 30. (282)

Membership in the PDB circle is important. It allows participation in an exclusive dialogue on national security issues that centers on the book's contents, developing what the business community would call a distinct "con-

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a. Christopher Andrews, *For the President's Eyes Only: Secret Intelligence and the American Presidency from Washington to Bush* (Harper Collins, 1995).

b. John L. Helgeson, *Getting to Know the President: Intelligence Briefings of Presidential Candidates, 1952–2004* (Center for the Study of Intelligence, 2001).

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

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sumer identity.”<sup>a</sup> Presidents set the broad themes in the *PDB* by virtue of their foreign policy agendas and the security threats they face. Direct *PDB* recipients learn they can drive the security discussion by tasking topic-specific analysis for the *PDB*, which they can then use to engage the president. *Book of Secrets* shows how both NSA Scowcroft under the first President Bush and Defense Secretary Rumsfeld under the second President Bush used their tasking authority to great effect to get things before the president and other National Security Council principals. (243) Albeit, as Priess finds, this carries the risk of presidential ire if it becomes too obvious or cuts against the president’s agenda, as it did in Scowcroft’s case. (170) Priess’s research shows that some presidents have learned to use the *PDB* as more than fuel for a dialogue but as a policy tool. President George W. Bush used the *PDB* to work more closely with his ambassadors and build rapport with foreign leaders, such as Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi and Russian President Putin, by letting them have a peek. (260–61)

*Book of Secrets* makes plain that intelligence officers most prefer to brief presidents directly, as they did under both Bush administrations. Such briefings offer the best the opportunities to gain direct feedback on how best to aid the president. More than likely, however, they will brief the president’s NSA or chief of staff as they did under Presidents Nixon, Carter, Reagan, Clinton, and Obama.

Priess’s narrative highlights intelligence officials’ struggles with the fact that some presidents simply prefer to read than to be briefed on intelligence. As early as the Johnson administration, intelligence officials have gauged a president’s willingness to accept in-person briefs as an indicator of how engaged the president is on intelligence analysis. (43) Former DCIA Tenet, however, believes that too much has been made of in-person briefs (214) and *Book of Secrets* suggests that in-person briefs are not a good measure of the president’s attention to intelligence analysis. Several presidents have left notes in the margins of their books demonstrating strong interest in the analysis they receive and serving as feedback, though imperfectly. For example, it took time for intelligence officers during the Carter administration to figure out that the president’s use of a question mark in the margins did not mean he wanted an immediate answer so much as indicated he was musing about a particular point. (120)

In-person briefs to other *PDB* recipients, such as to the vice president, the NSA, secretaries of defense and state, and others, allow intelligence officials insight into the needs of other top national security consumers. This personal service, a practice started under the Reagan administration following a directive by then-Vice President Bush (137) feeds the *PDB* intelligence consumer identity and is a key node in the administration-Intelligence Community relationship. Vice Presidents Gore and Cheney used these briefings to request additional intelligence support, to follow up on issues of interest, or to clarify points about specific *PDB* items—all of which further enabled them to drive national security policymaking and offer intelligence analysts the opportunity to inform policy.

*Book of Secrets* reveals that intelligence officials have introduced other analytic products to accompany the *PDB* and meet the president’s needs. The *Economic Intelligence Brief* was created for President Obama a month after he took office because of his focus on economic issues and because, as then-CIA Director Panetta explains, “we have to know whether or not the economic impacts in China or Russia or any place else” are affecting US interests. (277) CIA similarly responded to President Clinton’s request that CIA include more economic and environmental topics in the *PDB* because he “became convinced early on that economics was going to be increasingly tied to security.” (192) Under the second President Bush, a terrorism threat matrix was developed after the 9/11 attacks, though it has been much criticized as including too much useless information.

The variety of actors seeking to shape the analysis in the *PDB* is amazing, though perhaps expected. *Book of Secrets* suggests a president’s desires for strategic or tactical analysis shifts during his administration and there is ebb and flow in the *PDB*’s quality, between simply distilling vast volumes of information and going beyond a “secret” news summary. Vice presidents, NSAs, and chiefs of staffs have all have played roles in pushing for style and composition changes. Priess’s research, however, also unearths that one of the most important changes coming from the consumer side traces back to Vice President Mondale’s NSA, Denis Clift, who worked with the CIA to include opportunity analysis and analyses of the domestic challenges foreign leaders meeting the president faced at home. (126–27)

On the intelligence production side, the roles of senior IC officials in the *PDB* has fluctuated tremendously. *Book of Secrets* retells how DCI Colby acted to get the *PDB* flowing to the vice president regularly (86) and

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a. Guy Champniss, Hugh N. Wilson, and Emma K. Macdonald, “Why Your Customers’ Social Identities Matter,” *Harvard Business Review*, 93, no. 1–2 (2015): 88–96.

portrays DCIs Turner and Goss as very hands-on. Goss complained he had to spend a startling five hours a day working on the *PDB*, because he was disappointed by it and saw it as a means to rebuild the Intelligence Community after 9/11 and the Iraq WMD failure. (262) As DCI, Gates was considered to be less involved than he was as DDI, when he ordered analytical units to distinguish between analysis and intelligence reporting in their writing and to become more explicit in describing the bases of their analysis. (145) DCI Deutch, however, saw the book as largely irrelevant to his position. (213) CIA Deputy Director Kerr sought to create a “Red Book” to complement the *PDB*. The Red Book was designed to examine how the US looked from a foreign perspective, but Kerr was unable to gain traction for it. (180) CIA *PDB* briefers have also inserted themselves into the *PDB* review process, at times rewriting pieces based on what they believe the president needed to know. (167)

Organizationally, the DI revised the *PDB* decisionmaking process during the Clinton administration. For the first time, it began engaging the heads of all analytic offices in daily meetings to plan the next day's *PDB*. It also established the practice of analysts writing current intelligence in the *PDB* format—with the president in mind as the prime consumer—rather than, as had been the practice, of writing current intelligence for a broader, cabinet and subcabinet, readership. In addition, feedback to analysts was improved. (207–8) Much of what Priess brings forth in this part of his narrative echoes other work highlighting the influence analytic managers have on analysis.<sup>a</sup> He observes, however, that too much concentration on the *PDB* brings diminishing returns and that successive layers of review only marginally improve the work. (285)

Priess reviews the importance of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 on the

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a. See John A. Gentry, “Managers of Analysts: The Other Half of Intelligence Analysis,” *Intelligence and National Security* 31, no. 2 (2016): 154–177.

management of the *PDB* and suggests it has had little effect thus far. The legislation placed responsibility for the *PDB* in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) and opened the book to contributions from the broader IC. In practice, however, the CIA has continued to manage day-to-day operations of the book and provide the lion's share of the content. (268) Although the first DNI, Negroponte, made few if any changes, subsequent DNIs have begun to make their influence felt. For example, DNI Blair under the Obama administration was “determined to take the *PDB* from its tactical detail to a more strategic level” (276) because he believed that was where the president needed to be, despite having no guidance from the president. Interestingly, Blair also favored holding some articles and to give a “heads up” (277) to policymakers who had to act on them.

*Book of Secrets* lingers over the events of 9/11 and the efforts of the 9/11 and WMD commissions to gain access to the *PDB*. Priess adds a few new details from interviews about these issues but they add little to what is already known publicly. As a consequence, he misses the opportunity to inform us how the *PDB* served the second Bush administration as it grappled with deepening crises in Afghanistan and Iraq or other key issues. Several chapters in *Book of Secrets* make references to the national security issues administrations faced and as such, the absence of some mention of these issues from Bush's second term is glaring. Nonetheless, Priess does make a solid point that future investigations about intelligence will probably have an easier time getting access to the *PDB*.

*Book of Secrets* makes for a good, primary resource for further analysis and those involved in the upcoming presidential transition would be wise to read it. Priess does not provide any lessons learned, but the voices and views of the people who have been involved with the *PDB* over the past several years give us a deeper sense of the complex and sometimes strained policymaker-Intelligence Community relationship and what we can expect as the relationship continues to evolve.





## Intelligence in Public Media

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**“Kitachosen Kikan” o soshiseyo: Nihon ni sennyushita Kankoku Himitsu Kosakutai** [Stop the “Return to North Korea”: The ROK Covert Operative Teams that Infiltrated Japan]

Shirouchi Yasunobu (Shinchosha, 2013), 253 pp., map, photographs

**Reviewed by Stephen C. Mercado**

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Washington for decades has grappled with successive Korean regimes developing nuclear weapons in secret, carrying out abductions and other covert operations overseas, and torturing political opponents at home. As Donald Gregg, former US ambassador to the Republic of Korea (ROK), recalled in an interview published earlier this year in a major Japanese newspaper, Seoul in the 1970s was the Korean locus of such activities.<sup>a</sup> Journalist Shirouchi Yasunobu<sup>b</sup> of the Japanese daily *Tokyo Shimbun*<sup>c</sup> has written an intelligence history that reminds readers that Seoul has for decades conducted covert operations abroad. Shirouchi by now is an expert on Korean issues. Intrigued by Korea since learning as a child that his mother had been a Japanese repatriate following Japan’s loss of the colony in the Second World War,<sup>d</sup> Shirouchi has made the peninsula a focus of his writing. Between 1993 and 2011, he covered Korean events from Seoul as foreign correspondent, then bureau chief.

Shirouchi wrote several books related to Korean intelligence topics before the one under review here. For his first, *Shirumido* [*Silmido*] (Takarajimasha, 2004), he

interviewed former officers and soldiers involved in an aborted ROK project to assassinate Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) leader Kim Il-song.<sup>e</sup> Shirouchi next wrote *Fanso to yobareta otoko* [*A Man Called “Mad Bull”*] (Shinchosha, 2009), a biography of the Tokyo gangster Machii Hisayuki, an ethnic Korean also known as Chong Kon-yong, who worked with the KCIA as a fixer between the ROK and Japan.<sup>f</sup> Shirouchi also wrote *Showa nijugonen: Saigo no senshisha* [*1950: The Last KIA*] (Shogakukan, 2013), his story of a Japanese minesweeper’s crewman killed in a mine explosion off Wonsan in an operation conducted in secret with the US Navy.

The book reviewed here is the story of a failed covert ROK operation in Japan that President Yi Sung-man in Seoul had ordered to disrupt the “repatriation” arranged in 1959 by Tokyo and Pyongyang of tens of thousands of Korean residents from Japan to the DPRK.<sup>g</sup> While on his third Seoul assignment, Shirouchi tracked down and interviewed surviving veterans of the operation.<sup>h</sup> He also extracted information from Korean as well as Japanese written sources and translated from ROK materials the excerpts appearing in this book.

In June 1950, the Korean People’s Army of the DPRK had struck south in a bid to reunify the nation divided in

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a. “Intabyu-: Kitachosen no mokugekisha toshite” [Interview: North Korea Witness], *Asahi Shimbun*, 13 February 2016 (Edition 13), 15. Donald Gregg interview with Japanese correspondent Sakajiri Nobuyoshi. Time and place of interview not given.

b. Japanese and Korean names appear in this review in the conventional order, with the family name preceding the given one. Apart from “Seoul,” Korean names are transliterated in the standard McCune-Reischauer system, minus the diacritic marks.

c. The Tokyo newspaper of the Chunichi Shimbun Company, which hired Shirouchi in 1987 following his graduation from Waseda University.

d. Shirouchi, with fellow journalist Fujikawa Hiroki, contrasted in their book, *Chosen hanto de mukaeta haisen* [*On the Korean Peninsula when Japan Lost the War*] (Otsuki Shoten, 2015), the good fortune of Japanese—including the family of Shirouchi’s mother—who evacuated in orderly fashion the US occupation zone below the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel with the harrowing and in many cases fatal journey south through the peninsula of several hundred thousand Japanese fleeing Soviet-occupied Manchuria and northern Korea.

e. The operation is known to movie fans via the 2003 hit film *Silmido*, ROK director Kang U-sok’s sensational version of the story.

f. The American writer Robert Whiting included Machii in a story of postwar Japan, *Tokyo Underworld: The Fast Times and Hard Life of an American Gangster in Japan* (Pantheon, 1999).

g. The author explains that Pyongyang and Tokyo termed the project as “repatriation” or “return,” while Seoul denounced it as sending Koreans to territory under communist control. The author also notes that nearly all the Koreans who went to the DPRK hailed from the southern part of the peninsula that later became the ROK or, if born in Japan, had their roots in the south.

h. Shirouchi also tapped his bureau’s resources, including a Korean staffer who sent additional information after Shirouchi’s return to Tokyo.

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1945 by Washington and Moscow into respective zones of occupation after Imperial Japan's surrender in the Second World War. The armistice in 1953 ended the overt military battles, but the war continued in the shadows. The movement begun in December 1959 of thousands of ethnic Koreans from Japan to the north outraged President Yi, who was furious that Tokyo was in effect aiding the enemy by sending over Koreans who would contribute to the DPRK's postwar recovery and hand Pyongyang a propaganda victory in their unsettled war.<sup>a</sup>

President Yi turned to the Home Affairs Ministry, whose police Shirouchi terms the "advance guard" of the regime's "politics of terror."<sup>b</sup> The scheme the ministry cooked up combined multiple covert activities. ROK agents were to be infiltrated into Japan, where they were to gather intelligence, blow up "repatriation" facilities, and abduct leaders of the pro-Pyongyang General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (known in Japan as the *Chosen Soren*). Agents were also to attempt to sway Koreans in Japan against going to the DPRK.

Ministry officers recruited several dozen men for the operation, drawing from two pools. One comprised men who had sat for a national police exam. Test-takers who received from visiting police officers a terse summons to go to an inn in Seoul for further instructions went hoping that they had passed. Once at the inn, intelligence officers coerced them into joining the operation. Obeying such orders was the prudent course in those days. The ministry also recruited from among several hundred Korean residents of Japan who had volunteered in the recent war to fight on Seoul's side, but who had not been permitted to return home to Japan after the armistice. Along with coercion, the recruiters dangled incentives. They promised to assign the men to the regular police after the operation (such stable, relatively good employment was much prized in the poverty-stricken ROK). The recruiters also assured them that

they would care for their families during the operation and, in the event of accident, afterwards.

Sixty-five recruits—24 test-takers and 41 former residents of Japan—from September 1959 underwent several weeks of training north of Seoul at a camp in Pukhansan. Their instructors taught them intelligence gathering, demolition, and abduction. The recruits also received training in Japanese culture and language, listening to radio broadcasts in Japanese and reading Japanese magazines.<sup>c</sup>

The men sailed in December with foreboding, leaving on various dates and from various sites. One veteran told the author how, seeing a trainer weeping at the dock, he feared that they were on a one-way mission. Indeed, the operation soon proved fatal for a dozen men on board one ship that sank en route in a storm. The operatives on another ship, spotted by the Japanese and kept under watch after reaching the port of Kobe, soon returned in failure to the port of Masan.

Those who infiltrated Japan endured months of inaction or engaged in ineffectual acts while awaiting funds and instructions. One man recalled an order to put a flower in his suit and hold a cigarette in his right hand to meet a contact outside Kawasaki city hall. He did so repeatedly; no one ever approached him. Almost immediately out of money, the operatives sought out family and friends for shelter and work. One man turned in Tokyo to an uncle, an important official in the *Chosen Soren*, who found him a job in a trading company that did business with the DPRK. Another went directly to the ROK mission in Tokyo<sup>d</sup> to request funds. An official turned him away but suggesting that he see the pro-Seoul Korean Residents Union in Japan (known as *Mindan*), which gave him a small handout.

Operational security was absent. Their superiors had instructed the men to disperse to their old home towns and blend into the background to await orders, without apparently providing them cover stories. One operative took eight members of his group to his old haunts in Osaka and there sought the help of a fellow Korean veteran of the Korean War, telling him cryptically that he had returned for "national work." The nine operatives then

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a. The DPRK circa 1960 had a more developed economy than its rival. Pyongyang's propaganda also compared favorably with Japanese media reporting on the troubled Yi regime, convincing many Koreans in Japan that their future lay in the DPRK.

b. Shirouchi points to military and police executions of an estimated 200,000 civilians at the onset of the Korean War as characteristic of the Yi regime. Successive ROK governments kept silent on the killings for half a century, until the Truth and Reconciliation Commission from 2005 began bringing to light many of the darkest episodes in the history that began with Korea's 1910 incorporation into the Japanese Empire and ended with the 1993 election of the ROK's first democratic government.

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c. The training was a refresher course. Even operatives born and raised in Korea would have received a Japanese education until August 1945.

d. Seoul and Tokyo only opened embassies following the tortuous establishment of diplomatic relations in 1965.

stayed together at the home of their compatriot for several weeks.

But even the greatest discretion on their part would have done little to undo the damage from at least one previous operation. The detection of other plotting earlier in the year, involving a thwarted plan to dynamite “repatriation” facilities, alerted the Japanese authorities. On 5 December, the Japanese press reported a warning of the National Police Agency concerning a ROK “special operations unit” in Japan with the intent to stop the “repatriation.”

While the operatives were in Japan, the ROK government failed to beat down growing political unrest. President Yi left the country days following the explosion of popular anger after police shot dead nearly 200 demonstrators and wounded thousands more on 19 April 1960. Maj. Gen. Pak Chong-hui the next year ended a brief democratic interlude with a military coup d'état.

Seoul disavowed two dozen operatives arrested in a surprise raid in Shimonoseki on the night of 3 May 1960. Neither the democratic government in power at the time of their arrest nor the military junta that followed showed immediate interest in their fate. The 24 operatives left Japan only in 1961. Grim officials of the Home Affairs Ministry met them at Pusan on their return, had them write out reports, handed them money for fare home, and told them to await further contact.

Only those few operatives who returned before President Yi lost power received their promised policeman's position. For the others, the Pak regime disavowed the Yi Interior Ministry's promised compensation and threatened those who insisted the government honor its commitment. The widows of the drowned operatives did not receive promised survivor benefits or even official word of what had happened. One operative's son recalled with bitterness in an interview with the author how his father ended his days in poverty as a farmer.

As to the DPRK “repatriation” effort, from the time the first “repatriation” ship sailed from Niigata to Wonsan in December 1959 to the program's ending in 1984, some 90,000 resident Koreans, many born and raised in Japan, along with a number of Japanese spouses, would leave Japan for the Korean “fatherland.”

Shirouchi has written with a sense of indignation the story of a failed operation from the perspective of those who suffered by their participation in it. The resulting book is a moving human drama. As is the rule in intelligence history, the details revealed whet our appetites for more. What records lie unexamined in archives—open or closed—in Seoul, Tokyo, or elsewhere? What do those who refused the writer's interview requests know? How accurate and complete is the testimony that survivors and relatives gave? Limitations of the genre aside, the author has written an intelligence history that sheds light on a dark area of relations between Seoul and Tokyo.







## *Intelligence in Public Media*

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### ***Avenue of Spies: A True Story of Terror, Espionage, and One American Family's Heroic Resistance in Nazi-Occupied Paris***

Alex Kershaw (Crown Publishers, 2015), 228 pp., notes, bibliography, index, map, and photos.

#### ***Reviewed by David Foy***

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The sudden military collapse of France and the ensuing German occupation of Paris in 1940 came as a shock to most Frenchmen but also to American Hospital of Paris surgeon Sumner Jackson, his wife Toquette, and their young teenage son Phillip—known to all as “Pete”—whose idyllic prewar life in a tony section of the capital would come to an abrupt end. Alex Kershaw’s latest book discusses, in brief fashion, the family’s tenuous relationship with French authorities—Vichy and Free French alike—post-spring 1940 and with the German occupiers, both the polished officers of the Wehrmacht and the sadistic spycatchers and security officers of the Gestapo and the Schutzstaffeln (SS).

Initially tolerated by German and Vichy authorities alike, the Jackson family’s presence at No. 11 Avenue Foch drew increasing attention once the United States was at war with Germany in December 1941, particularly since their immediate neighbors soon included the local Gestapo offices, intent upon identifying and interrogating suspected Resistance members. Nazi suspicions of the family’s activities grew in the face of rumors—accurate, as it turned out—that Sumner was using the hospital as a temporary shelter for downed Allied fliers, who mysteriously showed up in allied capitals several weeks later with the correct paperwork. He hid a B-17 tail gunner in his home for a time and his house became a “drop box” for intelligence-related photos and documents, notably including information on the V-1 rocket “buzz bomb.” However, it was the accommodation work that Toquette began doing for various Resistance networks in France—work which fascinated the young Phillip—beginning in the summer of 1943 that ultimately brought the Gestapo to their door. Toquette served as the touchstone for the Goelette Resistance network and the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) agent network known as Prosper, among other groups. Kershaw uses such instances to highlight a larger lesson within the book—namely, the angst of professional duty versus personal responsibility.

Sumner’s “private war” against the Nazi occupiers ultimately led to his arrest on 24 September 1942 and his internment at a camp for American captives approximately 50 miles northeast of Paris. However, throughout his ordeal, his personal acquaintance with various powerful French officials would save him from longer and more savage incarceration. In this case, it was his relationship with 70-year-old General Adelbert de Chambrun, governor-general of the hospital and a World War I hero (and a regrettable supporter of collaborator Marshal Philippe Pétain) that prompted Sumner’s release within a few weeks.

But the reprieve proved only temporary and by the time Paris was liberated on 25 August 1944—first by the French, shortly thereafter by the Americans—Sumner and Phillip were in the Neuengamme labor camp, 10 miles southeast of Hamburg, Germany. Ironically, that same day, US Secretary of State Cordell Hull sent Swiss authorities a telegram asking about the status of the Jackson family. At Neuengamme, Sumner worked in the camp hospital but lost a finger to infection, ending his career as a surgeon, but also went to great lengths to protect his son, finding a replacement for him on a post-bombing work detail that proved fatal for most assigned. As World War II ended, Nazi officials frantically moved prisoners out of the hands of the advancing allied armies. Sumner and Phillip, both French speakers, were offered the opportunity to join a French-speaking group headed for Sweden; however, they elected to stay with Sumner’s patients instead and found themselves on a train to Lubeck and ultimately on a ship, a fateful decision.

Kershaw focuses more, however, on the brutally shocking treatment of Toquette at the hands of the Nazis, from imprisonment in Romainville, France, to the intimately-described details of the horrors of Ravensbruck extermination camp, to a ship bound for Sweden, with the assistance of the International Red Cross. Of the 550 women deported from France with her on 15 August 1944, Toquette was one of only 17 survivors, and she barely alive.

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A particular bonus for intelligence officers who read Kershaw's book is the mention of several Office of Strategic Services (OSS) members who were acquaintances of and often worked with Sumner, men such as Donald Coster, mentioned prominently in former Foreign Service Officer and journalist Hal Vaughn's book, *FDR's Twelve Apostles*, operating in pre-Operation TORCH Morocco, and Max Shoop, both of whose exploits deserve wider attention as part of CIA's "pre-history."

Kershaw, a bestselling author, has written eight previous books, most concerning little-known individuals and dramatic incidents during World War II. Overall, *Avenue of Spies* is an engaging read, with helpful maps and photos, and short chapters that invite even the busiest of readers. He is particularly skilled at describing the various French, German, and American personalities in the book and the depth of animosity between the professionals of the German Army and the thugs of the Gestapo and the SS.

Despite Kershaw's obvious talents and popularity, however, readers will find aspects of the book to critique—for example, he often takes what is by definition a dramatic and heart-wrenching tale and seeks to embellish

it further through hyperbole. Thus, the sentence that described newly-occupied Paris as a city which "lay hushed in a darkness it had never known" (28) makes one wonder what words those who witnessed the revolutions of 1830 and 1848 and the wars of 1871 and 1914 might have used. His assertion that in 1942, the United States had "no formal foreign intelligence service" prompts thoughts of a history of the US Coordinator of Information (COI) and OSS. A similar declaration that the Final Solution was "the greatest crime in human history" is trite and certainly disputable in light of the millions who died at the hands of Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot, and others.

While *Avenue of Spies* is the most recent book to describe the Jacksons's life in Paris under Nazi occupation, it is not the only one—in 2004, Hal Vaughn's first book, *Doctor to the Resistance: The Heroic True Story of an American Surgeon and His Family in Occupied Paris*, also focused on the Jacksons. One reviewer assessed Vaughn's book as "a good book; not outstanding but comprehensive with some unique insights." In that sense, Kershaw's is also a good, but not great, book, one that makes an engaging and emotional read and, despite flaws, adds to the oeuvre on the strength of the human spirit in crisis.



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

Benjamin F. Jones (Oxford University Press, 2016), 384 pp., notes, index.

***Reviewed by David A. Foy***

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As General Dwight Eisenhower, commander of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), contemplated Operation OVERLORD, he realized his need to effectively utilize an additional ally—the French Resistance, writ large, including General Charles de Gaulle's French Forces of the Interior (FFI). *Eisenhower's Guerrillas* is the story of how he sought to do that, although the author explains that the purpose of his volume is to better acquaint readers with the complexity of the war, to describe diplomacy's impact on the individual soldier, and to stress how much leadership matters.

True to its title, the book—whose author is a college faculty member and administrator—focuses on the confusing multiplicity of French Resistance groups and on their inconsistent relationship with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS)-subordinated Jedburghs, the three-man, multinational teams comprised of an American or British officer/leader, a French officer, and a radioman (British, French, or American) and Britain's Special Operations Executive (SOE). As Jones explains, the Jedburgh teams were tasked with arming, equipping, and training local Resistance groups in guerrilla warfare. Making its first conceptual appearance in March/April 1943, the Jedburghs would play a role of somewhat hard-to-determine significance through September 1944.

While the concept seemed simple enough in theory, its actual operation proved more problematic, due to differing goals of the French Resistance on the one hand and the British and American military and political authorities on the other. The British and Americans viewed the retaking of France as a military goal, while the French viewed the campaign as primarily a political contest, with no postwar occupation of the nation by either Britain or the United States. In this sense, Jones claims that his book is the first to view the actions of the Jedburgh teams in light of the politics of French liberation.

After a discussion of the origins of the Jedburgh construct, the author notes that in the then-embryonic US doctrine on guerrilla warfare, American authorities

expected the Jedburgh teams to replace the SOE and OSS agents who were rolled up, tortured, or killed. Meanwhile, in light of the French surrender, partial German occupation, and the creation of the Vichy regime, the exiled De Gaulle proclaimed sovereign authority over France. Although the November 1942 Operation TORCH landings proved a surprise, De Gaulle realized that the Resistance would have to cooperate with the Allies when the long-awaited cross-Channel invasion occurred; this realization also meant that his FFI members, in exile in London, would have to work with the interior groups. To that end, the National Resistance Council was created in May 1943, a body pledged to support De Gaulle. A sizable fly-in-the-ointment, however, was that neither Roosevelt nor Churchill liked or trusted the insufferable Gallic champion, a strained relationship that would continue and bedevil the cooperation Eisenhower needed to plan and conduct effective guerrilla operations.

Meanwhile, the United States prepared to jump in—literally—to participate in the Jedburgh mission, seeking to recruit men who could operate behind enemy lines, speak French, parachute, and operate independently. In December 1943, COSSAC (Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander) published a "Basic Directive" on the Jedburgh teams—the teams were to act as a "focus for local resistance," to train Resistance members, and to ensure that their operations were aligned with OVERLORD missions. Additionally, they had the delicate but important task of representing Eisenhower to the Resistance, being careful to exert "leadership" only when absolutely necessary.

In early March 1944, SHAEF ordered that 70 Jedburgh teams be trained and ready for D-Day. Eisenhower directed the Resistance to focus on rail and road targets and the blocking of any German columns moving north after the initial landings. For OPSEC reasons, however, he chose to share only the month of the planned cross-Channel invasion with French military leader General Pierre Koenig, who plays a key role in this account. Not only did Koenig outrank the heads of SOE and OSS, he was on 23 June

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proclaimed by Eisenhower as the equivalent of any other subordinate officer in his command. Otherwise, the kick-off of OVERLORD remained a secret to the French until the late evening of 4 June, when the BBC transmitted 185 action messages to the Resistance.

From 5 June—the date the first Jedburgh unit, Team Hugh, dropped into France—Eisenhower's orders to the Resistance were, first, to focus on the bridgehead area and to be ready for expanded operations in Brittany; second, to strike against the French rail system bringing German reinforcements to the front; and third, to neutralize the communications system to further thwart and delay the German response. Yet, as the author points out, thanks to the arrest and interrogation of numerous Resistance members, German officials had a very good idea of what the Resistance targets and missions were, although Jones hastens to add that knowing the allied goals and being able to thwart them were two different things. But German forces clearly had their moments—such as the brutal retaliation 10 June 1944 against the village of Oradour-sur-Glane, in which they killed all the men of the village, barricaded all the women and children in the church, and set it ablaze, killing 642 French civilians in a four-hour period. As the author writes, “The untrained and uncontrolled Maquis were already [a few days after D-Day] drawing too much of the wrong kind of attention with their passionate desire to kill Germans.” (178–179)

The rest of Jones's account stresses the frustrations and flexibilities of the Jedburgh teams in the movement toward Germany as they dealt with the factors that frequently limited their effectiveness—the vagaries of European weather, which often prevented parachute drops of arms and supplies; the consistent underestimating by US authorities of the numbers of Maquis who would rise up; unreliable communications; and, increasingly, the inability of the Allies to generate sufficient air sorties to place trained teams into the theater at all. This latter problem meant lengthy delays at the primary British training facility, Milton Hall, and led to much grouching. In the words of a disgruntled Jedburgh team member who had been Eisenhower's driver in North Africa, “there were a lot of angry guys at Milton Hall.” (256)

In summing up the accomplishments of the 93 Jedburgh teams and the Resistance, Jones notes that Eisenhower deserves credit for the cooperative and effective way he worked with Koenig. However, he posits that the

success of the FFI in the wake of Operation DRAGOON (the August 1944 invasion of southern France) had more to do with German actions than those of the Resistance, as the Germans were able to form a solid defensive line and save many of their troops from annihilation. On the other hand, some operations went well, especially in Brittany, where aerial resupply was easier and Wehrmacht units were weaker and more dispersed. In the final analysis, Jones concludes that “when the Jedburghs succeeded, they did so because the Resistance and De Gaulle's provisional government put in place the element necessary for success—national political will. General Eisenhower then placed that national political will, in the form of General Koenig and the Free French, within his coalition.” (285)

The author deserves credit for writing a fact-packed narrative, replete with detailed information about the Jedburgh teams and their Resistance colleagues, and his viewing the history of the Resistance movement through the lens of French political developments is certainly novel. His dedication in the frontispiece to the 17 Jedburghs who were killed-in-action is fitting, and he exhibits an impressive knowledge of the German military chain-of-command. The book has a useful and extensive glossary, good maps and index, a solid bibliography demonstrating the use of a wide variety of primary and secondary sources, and a small but suitable selection of photographs. The two appendices—one listing French Resistance leaders, the other the Jedburgh team members—are a nice touch.

Detracting from the volume's attributes are an embarrassing number of typographical errors—more than expected in a modern, professional publication. For example, readers learn about the US Marines as “the force the United States sent to in to Haiti” (42) and, just a few pages later is a reference to the space-less phrase “theyturnedtoAdolfHitler'sNationalsozialistischeDeutscheArbeiterpartei.” (54) Finally, speaking of the John F. Kennedy-sponsored insurgency against North Vietnam, the reader's attention is disrupted by the phrase, “Kennedy believed the CIA did not have the resources to do pursue this . . .” (283). Such unfortunate sloppiness is as unwelcome as it is unexpected.

*Eisenhower's Guerrillas* is one of three recent books on the French Resistance—in November 2015, Robert Gildea's *Fighters in the Shadows: A New History of the French Resistance* appeared (but has only one reference to “Jedburgh missions” in the index) and as this review

is being written, the English translation (*The French Resistance*) of Olivier Wieviorka's 2013 volume, originally in French, is due (but which, despite its billing as a "comprehensive history of the French Resistance," has no references to the Jedburghs and few even to Eisenhower).

Thus, Jones's book fills a void, expanding our knowledge of and appreciation for the complexity and political significance of the Resistance movement overall and for the limited but unique accomplishments of the Jedburgh teams in particular.





## ***Intelligence in Public Media***

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### ***Bridge of Spies***

Directed by Steven Spielberg, screenplay by Matt Charman, Ethan Coen, and Joel Coen, 2015, 141 min.

### ***Reviewed by James Burrige and John Kavanagh***

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In *Bridge of Spies*, Steven Spielberg and the screenwriters have brought us a stylish and suspenseful film, the merits of which have been recognized by an Oscar nomination for best picture and for three other categories. One might further praise the film for sustaining suspense about outcomes already known, but in this case the events were so long ago (1958–1962) that few viewers probably did know, walking into the theater, the story they were about to hear.

The film shows us how a KGB sleeper agent in New York City and a CIA U-2 pilot ended up being swapped for each other in February 1962 on a bridge between East and West Berlin. The film begins with the arrest of the Soviet, KGB Colonel Rudolf Abel. The depictions here of operational activities are both generically truthful and detailed; particularly noteworthy is Abel's tradecraft while under FBI surveillance. The stunningly filmed sequence showing his movement through Grand Central Station at rush hour illustrates the challenges of surveillance team management and maintaining line of sight contact with a target.

James Donovan, an insurance litigation specialist and partner in a prominent Manhattan law firm, is asked by the New York Bar Association to defend Abel, and he reluctantly accedes. Interestingly, the selection of Donovan—as opposed to an experienced criminal lawyer—is never explained, either in the film or in his memoir.

At this point—August 1957—the film introduces Francis Gary Powers as an applicant for the CIA U-2 program. Once Powers is introduced, the film toggles back and forth between Powers and Abel. In the face of social and professional hostility, Donovan mounts a vigorous defense of Abel, mostly on procedural grounds. Abel is convicted and sentenced to 30 years, but Donovan appeals all the way to the Supreme Court, which narrowly affirms the conviction by a 5-4 vote in March 1960.

Powers was shot down on 1 May 1960, convicted of espionage, and sentenced to 10 years on 20 August 1960. In the next scene, Donovan is discussing a possible swap with DCI Allen Dulles, prompted by a letter Donovan received suggesting Soviet interest in such a transaction. Dulles asks Donovan to go to East Berlin as a private citizen and negotiate the trade. The negotiations are complicated by conflicting East German and Soviet equities and the status of an American graduate student held by the East Germans on espionage charges, but in the end all three are released.

In this brief telling, the film is a straightforward Cold War spy story, lacking the moral ambiguity or political implications so prevalent in the modern spy genre. But there is symmetry in the portrayals of Powers and Abel: they are both essentially pawns who did what their governments asked and ended up in prison. Abel, played by Mark Rylance, is a charming and courtly Old World gentleman—by far the most sympathetic character in the film. He is completely apolitical, and there is no subtext to describe the Stalinist regime he served for more than 30 years before his conviction. (Rylance won the 2016 Academy Award for best supporting actor for his portrayal of Abel.) Powers is also a sympathetic character, although he comes across as somewhat whiny.

Powers was convicted in a three day show trial. The film also portrays Abel's legal proceedings as a show trial, presided over by a biased judge. In a completely improper pretrial conversation, he urges Donovan to simply go through the motions and get it over with: "C'mon, counselor, let's not play games on this." This scene is completely fabricated. Another fabrication involves the judge, Homer Byers, who is portrayed in the film as completely biased against Abel, interested only in going through the motions to secure a guilty verdict and death sentence, whereas Donovan's memoir provides the opposite assessment of Byers as "highly regarded as an independent

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thinker.”<sup>a</sup> It is unfortunate that Spielberg used the judge’s true name, effectively slandering the man without cause.

Both men are also scorned by their own governments after their release. Abel tells Donovan just before the swap that if the Soviets simply shove him into the car without embracing him, it will be a signal that he will be punished. He is not embraced. Powers is snubbed by the senior CIA officer present and by unidentified US military officers on the plane from Berlin to Frankfurt. There is no basis in fact for either of these scenes.

The film also greatly exaggerates the hostility towards Donovan and his role as Abel’s attorney. The screenwriters included a drive-by shooting of Donovan’s home that nearly kills one of his children. They also depict Donovan’s senior partner as urging him to forgo an appeal: “The man is a spy. The verdict is correct, and there is no reason to appeal it.”

When Donovan persists, the partner punishes him by taking him off an important case. None of this happened—not the shooting, not the shouting crowds outside the courthouse, and not the retaliation by his firm. In fact, the firm supported Donovan through the Supreme Court appeal.

The film’s portrayal of Donovan as a lone wolf in Germany is also patently false. Donovan received considerable support from CIA Berlin chief of base. At one point Donovan met with State Department Deputy Chief of Mission E. Allan Lightner and Special Presidential Representative Lucius Clay.

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a. James B. Donovan, *Strangers on a Bridge* (Scribner, 1964; reissued August 2015), 25-26.

So we have here two superpowers that put their pawns in play, let them rot in prison, and leave it to a heroic private citizen to bring them home. Both states have corrupt judiciaries as well. And, for good measure, neither the general public nor the legal profession in the United States understands or supports the Constitutional right to counsel and a fair trial. We have definitely crossed into the land of moral equivalency. We have arrived in the territory of le Carré, in which Smiley asks Karla in *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, “Don’t you think it’s time to recognize there is as little worth on your side as there is on mine?”<sup>b</sup> One cannot make a credible case that a director so scrupulous about historical accuracy in his earlier films (*Saving Private Ryan*, *Flags of Our Fathers*, and *Lincoln*) would rewrite history to this extent simply for dramatic effect.

The question of whether such misrepresentations matter is too complicated to address here, but we commend to the reader John McLaughlin’s compelling argument in *Studies* that public perceptions about intelligence do matter.<sup>c</sup> For the opposite view, see *New York Times* film critic A.O. Scott’s view that only “certified intellectuals” are dumb enough not to understand that every movie (excluding documentaries) is a work of fiction.<sup>d</sup>

The reviewers would like to thank Richard Willing and David Robarge for their assistance.

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b. John le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* (Knopf, 1974), 204.

c. John McLaughlin, “Introduction,” *Studies in Intelligence* Vol. 53, no. 2 (Summer Supplement 2009—Intelligence in Contemporary Media: Views of Intelligence Officers), 3.

d. *New York Times*, 8 January 2016, C14.



## ***Intelligence in Public Media***

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### ***Sicario***

Directed by Denis Villeneuve, screenplay by Taylor Sheridan, 2015, 121 min.

***Reviewed by James Burrige and John Kavanagh***

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CIA has always been an easy target for filmmakers looking to exploit themes of corruption and conspiracy in high places. In the happy ending films, the mid-level hero or heroine, serving as a stand-in for the audience, exposes the conspiracy and saves the Republic. In the alternative ending, the truth bearer is silenced, bureaucratically or lethally. Examples include *Three Days of the Condor*, in which analysts at a predecessor to the Open Source Center stumble upon a CIA plot to control the oil market and are all murdered for their diligence (1975). In *Clear and Present Danger* (1994), it's DDI Jack Ryan exposing a DO plan to form an alliance with a Columbian drug cartel. In the Bourne series (now up to four films), Jason Bourne is after the rogue CIA senior officers who made him a killing machine and now want him dead. In *JFK* (1991), it's Jim Garrison, ultimately defeated and discredited in his quest to expose CIA's involvement in the assassination and coverup. In *The Good Shepherd* (2006), there are too many conspiracies to count.

In reviewing these films—indeed, in deciding whether or not to review them—it's important to distinguish between the purely fictional and the advocacy vehicles such as *JFK* and *The Good Shepherd*. *Sicario* (“hitman” in Spanish) is in the former group; it does not claim to be “inspired by real events” and there is therefore no need to compare the filmmaker's vision with reality, or seek hidden agendas in the changes. It is a “CIA is evil” conspiracy story, without moral ambiguity or nuance. Beautifully filmed and well acted, it is simply there to experience. We review it here as a completely fictional story about CIA that readers may be interested in; put aside your righteous indignation and sit back and enjoy the review.

Emily Blunt plays Kate Macer, an idealist and by-the-book FBI agent who's invited to work with a mysterious counternarcotics task force composed of US Marshals, DEA officers, and Delta Force soldiers. It is led by Matt Graver, played by Josh Brolin; Kate later learns that he is a CIA Special Activities Division officer. Graver's partner

is an enigmatic man named Alejandro Gillick, played by Benicio del Toro. The first mission is to extract a Mexican cartel bigwig from Juárez. On their way out, the convoy gets stuck in the cross-border backup and a firefight ensues with carloads of cartel gunman determined to retrieve the prisoner. All the gunmen are killed, and when Kate expresses concern about the media coverage of a shootout at the border, Matt assures her that there will be no media coverage. Matt and Alejandro waterboard the prisoner and learn the location of the cartel leader in Mexico.

The strategy is to disrupt the cartel's money-laundering operations to the point where Manual Diaz, the cartel's senior representative in the United States, is forced to travel to Mexico to meet the cartel boss, Fausto Alarcón. Kate wants to arrest everyone in the money-laundering chain, but her FBI seniors counsel her that a long-term counter-cartel strategy has been dictated by “senior elected officials” and that prosecuting small or even medium sized fish isn't part of the plan.

The next operation is to create a diversion at a smuggler's tunnel in order for Alejandro to enter Mexico and go after the cartel leader, following Diaz to Alarcón's house. Matt explains to Kate that she was asked to join the task force only because CIA cannot operate in the United States unless “assisting” another federal agency; her role is simply to provide legal cover. This is a bizarre take on Executive Order 12333, but plot holes are numerous here. Do you really need to stage a firefight as a diversion to get Alejandro into Mexico? And since the waterboarding of the prisoner produced Alarcón's location, why did Gillick need to follow Diaz to the house?

At the tunnel Kate tries to arrest Alejandro, but he shoots her in her body armor and escapes. Matt explains that the overall US counternarcotics strategy is to restore the dominance of the Medellín cartel. Given American demand for narcotics, the drug business is going to con-

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tinue, and putting it all under a single cartel will end the collateral death and violence on both sides of the border. We learn that Alejandro's wife and daughter were killed on Alarcón's orders. Alejandro kills Alarcón and his wife and children, but it is not clear whether this is a matter of personal revenge or part of the Medellín strategy.

The ending is a stretch, even for a conspiracy story. Alejandro threatens to kill Kate if she doesn't sign a paper

acknowledging that all the actions of the task force were legal and proper, and she signs. She has an opportunity to kill Alejandro, but passes. She is emotionally shattered, and it is unlikely we will see her character in the sequel, which will focus on the Alejandro character. The film has been nominated for Oscars for cinematography and sound editing.



## **Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf**

*Compiled and reviewed by Hayden Peake*

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### **CURRENT TOPICS**

***100 Deadly Skills: The SEAL Operative's Guide to Eluding Pursuers, Evading Capture and Surviving Any Dangerous Situation***, by Clint Emerson

### **GENERAL**

***The Central Intelligence Agency: An Encyclopedia of Covert Ops, Intelligence Gathering, and Spies***, edited by Jan Goldman

***The Gatekeepers: Inside Israel's Internal Security Agency***, by Dror Moreh

***Understanding the Department of Homeland Security***, by Don Philpott

***Why Spy?: The Art of Intelligence***, by Brian Stewart & Samantha Newbery

### **HISTORICAL**

***Agent Fifi and the Wartime Honeytrap Spies***, by Bernard O'Connor

***Church of Spies: The Pope's Secret War Against Hitler***, by Mark Riebling

***Codebreakers: The Secret Intelligence Unit that Changed the Course of the First World War***, by James Wyllie and Michael McKinley

***Donovan's Devils: OSS Commandos Behind Enemy Lines—Europe, World War II***, by Albert Lulushi

***F. B. Eyes: How J. Edgar Hoover's Ghostreaders Framed African American Literature***, by William J. Maxwell

***Haig's Intelligence: GHQ and the German Army, 1916–1918***, by Jim Beach

***JFK's Forgotten Crisis: Tibet, the CIA, and the Sino-Indian War***, by Bruce Riedel

***The Man with the Golden Typewriter: Ian Fleming's James Bond Letters***, edited by Fergus Fleming

***Patriotic Betrayal: The Inside Story of the CIA's Secret Campaign to Enroll American Students in the Crusade Against Communism***, by Karen M. Paget

***The Pentagon's Brain: An Uncensored History of DARPA, America's Top Secret Military Research Agency***, by Annie Jacobsen

***Rendezvous at the Russian Tea Rooms***, by Paul Willetts

***Special Branch—A History: 1883–2006***, by Ray Wilson and Ian Adams

### **MEMOIR**

***Out of the Shadows: The Life of a CSE Canadian Intelligence Officer***, by Ron Lawruk



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## CURRENT TOPICS

***100 Deadly Skills: The SEAL Operative's Guide to Eluding Pursuers, Evading Capture and Surviving Any Dangerous Situation***, by Clint Emerson (pseudonym) (Touchstone, 2015) 258, bibliography, illustrations, index.

During his 20-year Navy career, author Clint Emerson participated in special operations around the world while assigned to the National Security Agency, Seal Team 3, and Seal Team 6. Known as Violent Nomads, he and his colleagues were skilled in surviving dangerous situations. After his retirement he realized that while much of his training would not be of use again, there were some techniques that applied to today's risk-filled society. *100 Deadly Skills* is intended to make these techniques explicit for those whose day-to-day work exposes them to uncommon hazards, or perhaps for authors of spy thrillers.

The first thing to understand when considering this book is that, despite the title, not all the "skills" discussed are deadly, unless of course there is something

about how to "construct a rectal concealment" device, or "leaving zero digital trace behind," that is not obvious. And for ease of understanding, illustrations accompany each skill while the details of use are explained in the narrative, usually limited to just a page.

On the other hand, there are entries that deal with expedient means of self-defense, making and handling weapons, shooting from a vehicle, and making an improvised Taser. Less violent topics include surveillance techniques, tracking devices, making an improvised infrared light, lock-picking, anonymous e-mail, hasty disguises, defensive driving, and construction of a safe room.

*100 Deadly Skills* is a handy source of tools and techniques for those with occupations just outside the norm.

## GENERAL

***The Central Intelligence Agency: An Encyclopedia of Covert Ops, Intelligence Gathering, and Spies***, edited by Jan Goldman (ABC-CLIO, 2016) 911, in two volumes, photos, bibliography, index.

Volume One of this encyclopedia contains 216 entries about the CIA, with supporting evidence in the form of 98 primary sources reproduced in Volume Two. The purpose of the volumes is to "state objectively and with clarity the history of the CIA," (xiii) based on "the use original or primary sources." (xix) Does it meet these self-imposed conditions?

Unfortunately, the answer is yes and no. It does indeed have entries about various CIA collection (which it calls "gathering") activities written by an assortment of academics and scholars. And each entry provides suggestions for further reading; some make reference to documents reproduced in Volume Two. But there is some ambiguity about the book's overall purpose. For example, the Preface states that the encyclopedia "is not just a history of the CIA." (xiii) This is followed a few pages later with the comment that the work "is not about the history of the CIA but

instead is an encyclopedia of entries and documents on covert operations and spies." (xix) No clarification is offered.

The entries themselves are of mixed quality. Sourcing is a problem on two counts. First, references to primary source documents at the end of an entry—and not all entries have them—are often not relevant to the entry topic. For example, the entry for Anatoliy Golitsyn lists three documents in Volume Two, but they have nothing to do with the case. (162) Likewise, the entry for Kim Philby refers to document #66; but it discusses greater openness at CIA. (294)

A second, more serious aspect of the entries is their accuracy. While most are presented as factual, too many have errors due to poor fact-checking. For example, KGB defector Yuri Nosenko is referred to as a "double agent" instead of a suspected provocation. Moreover, the claim that he "spied for the CIA in Moscow" is inaccurate, ac-

ording to the sources cited in the entry. And the Philby entry is inaccurate in many small details: Golitsyn didn't provide proof of Philby's espionage; he was not rehired as a member of SIS after his initial resignation; his wife died in London, not Beirut; and he received the Order of the Red Banner in 1965, not the Order of Lenin. (293) On the topic of CIA and the Cold War, the author writes that "Truman appointed legendary OSS spymaster William 'Wild Bill' Donovan as the first CIA director"—perhaps the greatest blooper of intelligence history. (76) A quick look at the CIA web page (search for directors) tells a different story. And Congress "was not vague in defining CIA's mission"—it didn't define it at all (though it did approve the mission proposed in the National Security Act of 1947). A final area worth close attention is the terminology employed; it is often inaccurate. For example, the defini-

tion of double agents is wrong; the commentary provided applies to recruited agents and genuine double agents. And the statement that a "digital espionage division" was created in March 2015, is incorrect; though a Directorate of Digital Innovation was created at that time. (xxxix)

The number of important topics overlooked altogether is surprising. For example, there is no entry for agency organization and no mention of analysis. Moreover, the coverage after 9/11 is spotty; the bibliography is weak and not up to date; and the main source for the Nosenko case is not included.

In sum, while there is a great deal of information about the CIA in the encyclopedia, it should be used with caution. Fact check any entry of interest. Caveat lector.

*The Gatekeepers: Inside Israel's Internal Security Agency*, by Dror Moreh (Skyhorse Publishing, 2015) 419, index.

The Israeli internal security service Shin Bet—also known as Shabak—was established in 1949. Since then its primary focus has been the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that, in retrospect, "doomed [Israel] to live by the sword for the foreseeable future." (xi) Seeking to learn how and why this was so, author and documentary filmmaker Dror Moreh decided to tape interviews with the then-current Shin Bet director and his five predecessors. The result was the Academy Award-nominated documentary film, *Gatekeepers*. The book version presents the original interviews with unique insights and additional material about each of the directors. Since all six served together at various times in their careers, Moreh includes as part of the narrative their comments when their paths crossed on cases.

Some of the directors express surprising views. For example, Avraham Shalom (1980–1986), commenting on the idea of an Arab state said, "The Arabs didn't come up with the idea; it was us" (13)—and he suggests the idea contributed to the creation of Hamas. Other directors mention the moral and practical conflicts associated with interrogation to prevent suicide attacks. Director Carmi Gillon (1994–1996) discusses a practical example of the ticking bomb dilemma. (147) He also comments

on the reasoning associated with "shaking"—their euphemism for enhanced interrogation. Most directors mentioned "very intense discussions" (339) concerning assassination operations like the one that preceded the assassination of a Hamas bombmaker with an exploding cell phone. (183) Several stressed that it was important to have empathy for and understanding of the enemy. (239)

Each director comments on the political circumstances accounting for his selection, his length of service, and his eventual resignation. Not all were fond of their prime ministers. Reasons varied, from personal incompatibility to policy differences, as, for example, the building of new settlements on the West Bank. Yitzhak Rabin was generally admired, though not all agreed with his policies and the Oslo Accords. His inexplicable assassination was considered a Shin Bet failure. Moreh records the director's impressions on these and many other related issues.

*The Gatekeepers* was not received favorably by all in the Israeli press. Columnist Dror Eydar called it

“sycophantic.”<sup>a</sup> But most are likely to agree with for-

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a. Dror Eydar, “The banality of Dror Moreh,” *Israel Hayson Newsletter*, 21 February 2016.

**U***nderstanding the Department of Homeland Security*, by Don Philpott (Bernan Press, 2015) 320, no index.

The Homeland Security Act was passed by Congress in November 2002, creating the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The act’s provisions integrated all or part of 22 existing organizations, each of which is mentioned to varying degrees in this book. The DHS mission is to prevent terrorist attacks, reduce vulnerability to terrorism, and “minimize damage and recover from attacks that do occur.” (3, 6)

In *Understanding the Department of Homeland Security*, journalist Don Philpott sets out in a section titled “The Rationale Behind the Creation of DHS” to explain the justification for the department and how it makes America safer. Sadly, he succeeds only in leaving the reader wondering why it was created in the first place. Philpott takes what political scientists call a normative approach to understanding—he discusses what “ought” to happen, how an organization “ought” to function, not

what actually occurred. And even then much is obscured in the narrative. For example, he discusses DHS organization without any supporting charts that clarify interagency relationships—sometimes wiring diagrams are essential. He is also prone to normative generalities, such as the statement that “DHS makes America safer [by] removing barriers to efficient border security,” without offering any specifics. (24) If understanding DHS is really the objective of this book, the reader should be informed not only about what ought to have happened but what did happen, how well it has worked, and prospects for the future.

Deprived of a summarizing last chapter and an index, readers have little chance to sort out what often appears as bureaucratic disorder. As it is, *Understanding the Department of Homeland Security* adds more confusion than understanding.

Deprived of a summarizing last chapter and an index, readers have little chance to sort out what often appears as bureaucratic disorder. As it is, *Understanding the Department of Homeland Security* adds more confusion than understanding.

**W***hy Spy?: The Art of Intelligence*, by Brian Stewart and Samantha Newbery (Hurst & Company, 2015) 216, endnotes, bibliography, index.

The late Brian Stewart had 40 years of experience in British intelligence. He left Oxford University to join the Black Watch in 1942 and fought in France after the D-Day invasion. After the war, he joined the Malayan Civil Service, learned Chinese in China, and then began a career in intelligence during the Malayan emergency before joining MI6 in 1957. His Asian assignments included Burma, Beijing, Kuala Lumpur, and Shanghai. He gained an unusual perspective on the Vietnam War in Hanoi, where he was Consul General during 1967–1968. Returning to London in 1968, he served as the secretary of the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) until 1972. It was there that he “persuaded the intelligence knights of the day to commission” a precedent-setting, five-volume,

official intelligence history of WWII. (xviii) It was at this time, too, that he began writing a book on the basics of intelligence. But the demands of work hindered progress and only after Samantha Newbery—now a lecturer on intelligence at the University of Salford—sought his counsel for her PhD dissertation did he seek her help in completing the manuscript. *Why Spy?* is the result.

Throughout the book Stewart refers to the CIA and its operations. When discussing special operations, he includes the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the Iraq War, with emphasis on the British political consequences. He also devotes a chapter to Vietnam as seen from his perspective in Hanoi, and relates ex-

changes with Bill Colby and later DCI Helms during a meeting at CIA Headquarters. In the chapters on intelligence methods, he refers to CIA's policies regarding HUMINT during the late 1970s, discusses the U-2 and other overhead collection techniques, comments on defectors in China, and discusses agent handling principles.

The book's most surprising aspect is a discussion of "commonly discussed methods" (84) that may, in fact, not be so common to US professional or civilian readers: EXINT (exile intelligence), HUNCHINT (hunch intelligence), TRASHINT (trash intelligence), CABINT (cab intelligence), DOCINT (documentary intelligence), and RUMINT (rumor intelligence). One

wonders whether they will catch on. Not to be overlooked, the authors also discuss a variety of assessment techniques that deal with how to handle the information collected by the more conventional techniques.

The chapter "Moral Dilemmas" has a lengthy treatment of the history and current policies on interrogation and torture. Stewart acknowledges that "pressure should be banned," but he allows for a category of "hard individuals [who] seldom succumb to kind words, cups of tea, or intellectual dominance"—he cites Philby as an example. (102)

*Why Spy?* provides a useful historical and practical firsthand perspective of intelligence, as seen from both sides of the pond.

## HISTORICAL

***Agent Fifi and the Wartime Honeytrap Spies***, by Bernard O'Connor (Amberley Publishing, 2015) 224, endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

Espionage novels by Ian Fleming, Len Deighton, and Jason Matthews, among others, have contributed to the conventional wisdom that intelligence officers routinely seduce their agents for the nation's greater good. But is this "tradecraft" technique a formal part of the real world intelligence profession? Beyond the use of Romeo agents by Markus Wolf's East German intelligence service, firm evidence of its use is rare among Western services. Several historians have reported use of a variation on the theme during WWII. In each case, however, British SOE officers were being tested to see if they could keep their mouths shut under seductive pressure. M.R.D. Foot mentioned that a "devastating blonde, codenamed 'Fifi' made it her business to find out" whether officers about to go overseas were likely to talk in their sleep and, if so, in which language."<sup>a</sup> David Stafford noted that one Noreen Riols also tested agents to see if they would reveal secrets, adding that one did only after she "let him hold [her] hand." Stafford also mentioned Fifi, adding that "she was the ultimate Agent . . .

who went all the way," but doubting that SOE would ever reveal the truth.<sup>b</sup> Neither Foot nor Stafford cited sources.

Well, Bernard O'Connor has now put any doubts to rest. Recently released British National archives included the file on "Our Special Agent: 'Fifi' . . ." (Foreword) Fifi's real name was Marie Christine Chilver, a native of Paris who was brought up in Riga. When the war started she returned to Paris and then made her way to London, where she was hired by SOE as an agent provocateur. (7) Three chapters of *Agent Fifi* deal with Fifi's background, recruitment, and exploits with SOE officers about to depart for France. O'Connor includes several of her lengthy reports that, with careful reading, leave no doubt as to modus operandi. There are also photos of her and some of her victims, all in nonoperational circumstances.

The final four chapters of *Agent Fifi* are filler. They deal with other women employed by MI5, three of whom were part of the Double Cross operation whose

a. M.R.D. Foot, *SOE: The Special Operations Executive 1940–1946* (BBC, 1984), 68.

b. David Stafford, *Secret Agent: The True Story of the Special Operations Executive* (BBC, 2000), 44.



stories have been told elsewhere. O'Connor has solved a mystery, but the question of clandestine calisthen-

ics tradecraft in conventional intelligence operations is still left to the imagination of the novelists.

**Church of Spies: The Pope's Secret War Against Hitler**, by Mark Riebling (Basic Books, 2015) 375, endnotes, bibliography, index.

Sometime in 1939, Pope Pius XII installed an audio recording system in his private library to capture conversations important to his new papacy. (17) According to the recent revelations of his personal assistant, Father Leiber, opposing Hitler while preserving the independence of the church in Germany were key priorities, and he wanted his views preserved. These and other sources revealed the secure communications links established with Catholic representatives in Germany. At the same time, Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, head of the Abwehr (the German security service), was exploring options for a coup d'état with colleagues opposed to Hitler. *Church of Spies* tells how these two forces made contact and worked together toward their goals.

Intelligence historian Mark Riebling writes that the first move was made by Canaris, who "set out to recruit Pius" into the initial coup plan. (35) The idea was to have the pope broker a contact with the British government that would lead to discussions regarding recognition of Germany after Hitler had been removed from power. The man chosen to meet with the pope was Josef Müller, a Munich lawyer already known to the Abwehr to be a clandestine Vatican courier.

After lengthy discussions, the pope, recalling Hitler's "vow to crush the Church like a toad," (62) agreed to contact the British through their ambassador to the Vatican. The British initially refused cooperation but later gave some conditions in the event of a successful coup. The Americans were also contacted and received simi-

lar "overtures more warmly," but "President Roosevelt refused to negotiate." Nevertheless, three plots were undertaken and, as is well known, all failed. Riebling describes them in complicated and often exciting detail, and they account for much of the narrative. He includes attempts by the Gestapo to penetrate the Vatican ring using a defrocked priest and other agents. In the event, Müller is arrested and, though tortured by the Gestapo, reveals nothing. Amazingly, he survives the war and becomes active in German post-war government.

A sub-theme of the book is the pope's intentionally low profile as he works through cut-outs to protect the church's reputation and avoid provoking Hitler to even greater atrocities. As consequence, he mentions the treatment of the Jews only once publicly, early in the war, and post-war historians have criticized him for this approach. Riebling deals fairly with the pope's theological and political rationale on these matters.

With one exception, *Church of Spies* is thoroughly documented with primary sources, interviews, and memoirs. While the latter were often written long after the fact, they will have to do until full access to Vatican archives is allowed. The exception, for which no sources are provided, is the reference to Müller's post war services "as a US intelligence agent, code-named ROBOT . . . still on the CIA's agent list."

In the end, *Church of Spies* is the best account of the subject to date. Amen!

**Codebreakers: The Secret Intelligence Unit that Changed the Course of the First World War**, by James Wyllie and Michael McKinley (Ebury Press Penguin, 2015) 346, endnotes bibliography, photos, index.

To those wondering whether this book is a comprehensive treatment of codebreaking during WWI analogous to David Kahn's original scholarly work by the same title, the short answer is: not even close. To those readers of WWI "Room 40" cryptologic history asking whether there is new material in this latest treatment of the topic, the answer is the same.

Typical subjects covered included the role of "Blinker" Hall, head of Room 40, and others who served there. The authors also go over how the organization was created, the dependence of codebreakers on captured code books, and operations against German sabotage agents in America. Other familiar topics include the Zimmer-

mann Telegram, the treatment of Herbert Yardley when he visited "Room 40" during WWI, the Irish connection, the U-boat menace, the Zeppelin threat, and efforts to penetrate German codes. Though the authors state that the contribution of the military codebreaking unit, MI1(b), is also treated, it receives much less attention.

The sources mentioned are mainly secondary and most do not indicate the page numbers associated with the titles referenced.

James Wyllie, a screenwriter and broadcaster, and journalist Michael McKinley, have provided a good summary of an oft-told story, useful as an introductory volume and nothing more.

***Donovan's Devils: OSS Commandos Behind Enemy Lines—Europe, World War II***, by Albert Lulushi (Arcade Publishing, 2016) 367, endnotes bibliography, photos, index.

The exploits of the OSS have been the subject of numerous histories, memoirs, and movies. The best-known tell stories of espionage behind enemy lines, Jedburgh teams in France, and counterintelligence operations in Europe. Less frequently mentioned are the OSS special operations groups commonly called OGs. *Donovan's Devils* gives them long overdue attention.

The concept of a special operations capability was part of Donovan's vision for US intelligence even before the creation of OSS in 1942. But it was not as readily accepted by his military masters as were the analysis and espionage functions of the OSS mission. Initial opposition to OGs came from military traditionalists who had no experience with elite units staffed with uniformed personnel and part of a civilian organization operating behind enemy lines, even when subject to the approval of theater commanders.

After reviewing the historical precedents for special operation-type units, intelligence historian Albert Lulushi recounts how Donovan overcame significant bureaucratic obstacles from senior war department generals, during wartime, to create the OGs. Donovan's main argument was that the ad hoc OG he had

created—on his own authority—to support Operation TORCH—the invasion of Northern Africa—proved valuable, and General Marshall said so in writing. (34)

In December 1942, the Joint Chiefs of Staff issued directive 155/4/D that, among other things, authorized the OGs. A typical OG unit contained four officers and 30 enlisted men. In addition to basic military skills, OG members needed language abilities for the target area, commando training (parachute, hand-to-hand combat), and signal communications proficiency. They were trained at the Congressional Country Club outside Washington, DC, and at various military facilities. The first group was ready for deployment in mid-1943 to support Operation HUSKY, the invasion of Sicily. Results were modest but encouraging.

Lulushi describes OG operations, problems, and successes, in Italy, Corsica, France, and the Balkan states. In each country this included rescuing POWs from behind enemy lines. He devotes particularly detailed attention to Operation GINNY, an ill-fated mission involving an OG unit assigned to blow up a railway tunnel on the Genoa-La Spezia line. After several failed attempts, they tried again in March 1944, which was another failure, but on

this attempt 15 members were captured. When the German commander in the area invoked Hitler's directive to execute all captured saboteurs without trial, they were shot and buried in common graves. After the war, the Germans involved were tried and convicted—the commander was hanged—in the first war crimes trial, setting an important precedent for the subsequent Nuremberg Trials.

***F. B. Eyes: How J. Edgar Hoover's Ghostreaders Framed African American Literature***, by William J. Maxwell (Princeton University Press, 2015) 367, endnotes, bibliography, photos, appendix, index.

During the Hoover era at the FBI, books that mentioned Bureau security operations and subversive subjects, especially those by authors that had received Bureau cooperation, were formally reviewed for the director after publication by special agents. One purpose was to determine whether the book contained derogatory comments about the FBI and whether authors complied with any Bureau guidance they might have been provided. In *F. B. Eyes*, Washington University (St. Louis) literary historian William Maxwell discusses another purpose—paying special attention to African-American writers because they were likely to be political radicals, communists, or just because of their race. “The FBI,” he writes, “is perhaps the most dedicated and influential forgotten critic of African-American literature.” (127)

Maxwell bases this and other judgments in the book on FBI case files beginning in 1919 and ending in 1972. For readers unfamiliar with the Bureau review program, he provides extensive detail about its evolution, functions, the treatment of the authors—that included monitoring their writings, speeches, and travel—and their reactions as they became aware of the review program's existence. And in the telling he introduces new

*Donovan's Devils* is a well-documented, superbly written account of how OSS established the model for today's Special Forces. As Jack Devine notes in his back-cover comments, it is a “must-read book for any student of OSS and the general public.”

vocabulary such as counterliterature, lit-cop, Ghostreaders (those who do the reviewing), and communist thought-control relay stations to describe its functions. (76)

Many of the authors monitored will come as no surprise to today's readers. These include James Baldwin, Lorraine Hansberry (*Raisin in the Sun*) and Langston Hughes. What is surprising is the extensive commentary on the British SIS (including, curiously, Ian Fleming), OSS, and the CIA relationship with Bureau counterintelligence. Regarding the latter, for example, Maxwell delves deeply into the thinking of James Angleton, “the master spy whose inscrutability never hid his standing as the master theorist of CIA reading.” (150) But the overall significance of this digression and its relationship to the Bureau's review program is never made clear.

*F. B. Eyes* provides numerous examples of the how the Bureau subjected African-American authors to highly questionable, if not illegal, scrutiny and harassment—although some were indeed communists—based on recently released FBI files. The book is not easy reading (the reader is challenged to find even a few simple declarative sentences). If Maxwell intended to convey some deeper message, it is lost in a semantic muddle.

***Haig's Intelligence: GHQ and the German Army, 1916–1918***, by Jim Beach (Cambridge University Press, 2013) 369, footnotes, bibliography, appendix, photos, index.

In 1943, Stewart Menzies, chief of the British Secret Intelligence Service (MI6), appointed “his old friend General Sir James Marshall-Cornwall assistant Chief

of SIS”.<sup>a</sup> Sir Marshall-Cornwall had served in the Intel-

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a. Keith Jeffrey, *MI6: The History of the Secret Intelligence Service* (Bloomsbury, 2010), 476.

ligence Corps during WWI and was a respected officer. He was also, however, the source of the controversial assessment that “Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig was kept in ignorance of the [true military] situation through a deliberate policy of concealment carried out by his chief of intelligence, Brigadier-General John Charteris.” (1) Marshall-Cornwall claimed that Charteris had told him that he “believed it to be his duty to keep up the morale of the commander-in-chief and that if he gave him too much depressing intelligence, Haig might lose his determination to win the war.” (1) In *Haig’s Intelligence*, British historian Jim Beach revisits this astounding allegation and more broadly the role of military intelligence in wartime.

The first part of the book concentrates on the development of British military intelligence in the War Office, at GHQ, the field headquarters. In 1914 the Intelligence Corps officers were inexperienced and, as demands in the field grew, their ranks were augmented by hastily-recruited nonconformists, who were “the untidy, the unmilitary, the unusual, the eccentric, and the lateral thinkers.” (85) Nonetheless they became essential to the conduct of the war. Beach focuses on three senior officers, Gen. George Macdonough at the War Office, the controversial Gen. John Charteris who served Haig for much of the war, and his successor, General Cox. These officers developed

the battlefield intelligence system, on the job, that influenced the wartime combat. Part One also describes the use of POWs, deserters, espionage, signals intelligence, and photography as important intelligence sources.

Part Two of *Haig’s Intelligence* is devoted to the influence of intelligence on the major battles fought under Haig’s command. The contributions of Charteris and Cox are of critical importance to these operations. Beach deals with Charteris’s personal relationship with Haig. He argues that Charteris’s “personal pessimism” and his “official optimism” (322) regarding assessments during the third battle of Ypres, with its high casualties, led to his relief. His replacement Cox, “restored both the standing and morale of the intelligence staff after Charteris’s controversial tenure.” (302) But “when his assessments began to diverge openly from Haig’s,” (322) he was sidelined before his untimely death. Haig was his own intelligence officer.

In the end, Beach concludes that, while “the intelligence system was far from perfect and many of Charteris’s assessments were clearly wrong, these shortcomings cannot be used to absolve Haig of responsibility.” (321) The buck always stops with the commander. *Haig’s Intelligence* is splendid history, wonderfully documented. A major contribution to military intelligence history.

***JFK’s Forgotten Crisis: Tibet, the CIA, and the Sino-Indian War***, by Bruce Riedel (Brookings Institution, 2015) 256, endnotes, bibliography, maps, index.

In October 1962, President Kennedy dealt with two crises affecting the national security of the United States. One involved Soviet missiles in Cuba and has been long remembered. The other concerned the Chinese invasion of India and prompts a Wikipedia moment, if mentioned at all. In *JFK’s Forgotten Crisis*, former CIA officer Bruce Riedel explains how the Sino-Indian War originated, why the United States was involved, how the crisis was resolved, and its lasting impact.

The origins of the war, writes Riedel, were in long-standing Chinese-India border disputes and claims that Tibet was a Chinese province, not an independent state. Each time China proposed a compromise

settlement, it was rejected by the Nehru government, which gave sanctuary to the Dalai Lama.

US involvement was initially peripheral. Its primary interest in the area was its agreement with Pakistan that allowed use of two of its airbases to support CIA clandestine U-2 missions over the Soviet Union, China, and Tibet. Soviet operations from the Peshawar base ended after the U-2 flown by Gary Powers was shot down over the Soviet Union on 1 May 1960. U-2 coverage over China continued, however, as did CIA flights in support of the “rebellion in Communist China’s Tibet province.” (xii) But in 1961, when President Kennedy indicated he would honor India’s request for a billion dollar economic

aid package, Pakistani president, Gen. Ayub Khan, suspended the program as a signal that a “tilt toward India at Pakistan’s expense would have its costs.” (xiii)

In July 1961, General Khan visited Washington, and President Kennedy hosted a state dinner in his honor at Mount Vernon (the only state dinner ever held at George Washington’s home). (ix) At the suggestion of Allen Dulles, President Kennedy used the occasion to request that Khan allow the “missions over Tibet to resume.” Khan agreed, but only after Kennedy promised that “if China attacked India, he would not sell arms to India without first consulting Pakistan.” But when China invaded India in October 1962, Kennedy ignored his promise, and sent India “critical aid including arms without consulting Khan” (xiii) since the Chinese invasion risked crippling India and raised the possibility that the United States would have “to start bombing Chinese forces.” (1) Thus Kennedy was faced with the dilemma of helping India, maintaining Pakistan’s support of the CIA’s covert program, and preventing Pakistan from tilting toward China.

Kennedy employed multiple approaches in dealing successfully with these problems. Riedel tells how he employed the undisciplined John Kenneth Galbraith, his effective ambassador to India, who frequently bypassed the greatly irritated State Department while communicating directly with the president as he made decisions on his own. Jacqueline Kennedy also played a soothing

role by establishing a positive relationship with Nehru and Khan and visiting both when tensions were high. A key point in the war occurred when Nehru requested in writing that the United States “join the war against China by partnering in an air war to defeat the PLA.” (136) Curiously, Indian historians later denied such a letter existed, but Riedel found a copy, and he explains how Kennedy and Galbraith attempted to deal with the matter. In the end, the Chinese decided the issue by abruptly declaring a unilateral cease fire on 21 November 1962.

The aftermath of the crisis “saw a dramatic improvement in American relations with India, both politically and militarily,” (160) but the situation changed rapidly after Kennedy’s death. President Johnson was not inclined to view India as a key South Asian partner. Riedel summarizes the geopolitical consequences of that position that persist to this day. He also includes a useful section on the “lessons learned about presidents and their relationship to the Intelligence Community,” that emphasizes the links between covert action and policy goals. (176ff)

*JFK’s Forgotten Crisis* does more than comment on some little known aspects of the Kennedy administration, although Riedel does include some of the Camelot charm. Viewed broadly, it establishes the foundation for courses of action and political relationships that exist in India, China, and Pakistan to this day in a vital region of the world.

***The Man with the Golden Typewriter: Ian Fleming’s James Bond Letters***, edited by Fergus Fleming (Bloomsbury, 2015) 391, photos, index.

When Ian Fleming finished his first James Bond novel, *Casino Royale*, he ordered “a gold-plated typewriter—a Royal Quiet deluxe, \$174.00—from New York.” Ian Fleming, then a few hundred thousand dollars shy of being a millionaire, asked a diplomat friend to send it on as part of his luggage to avoid customs duty. (13) But as author-editor Fergus Fleming reveals, his famous uncle almost didn’t submit his book to a publisher. (3) These and other insights about Ian make reading *The Man with the Golden Typewriter* an enjoyable and informative experience.

Readers should not be misled, however, by the subtitle: there are no letters from Bond. The book concerns Ian Fleming’s correspondence with friends and notables in the James Bond era. As a bonus, Fergus Fleming adds a “potted biography” (3) that outlines his uncle’s early life at Eton and Sandhurst—the latter did not go well—and subsequent events that led to his writing career. He adds further personal details throughout the book, for example, Ian’s serious book collecting—an admirable hobby that led to acquisitions of first editions

such as *The Communist Manifesto*— and his purchase of a bibliophile’s magazine, *The Book Collector*. (11)

The book is roughly arranged with a chapter for each Bond novel, which quotes the associated letters. Fergus intersperses ancillary material that deals with Ian’s sometimes awkward relationship with his wife, his battles with his publisher and movie producers, his extensive correspondence with friends and other writers, and his often precarious health. In the chapter entitled “Notes From America,” Fergus provides a fascinating account of Ian’s friendship with Ernest Cuneo, a wartime friend and intellectual colossus who was the wartime liaison between OSS, BSC (MI6 in New York), and the White House. In a curious comment in the chapter

on *You Only Live Twice*, Ian writes: “Just off to lunch with Allen Dulles! Perhaps he will inspire me. Ever seen him? I doubt his powers to enthuse.” (351)

Ian Fleming’s extensive research efforts, after writing *Casino Royale* from memory, are described in the chapter, “Conversations with the Armourer.” While discussing *Diamonds Are Forever*, Fergus includes an account of how his uncle came to write his nonfiction book, *The Diamond Smugglers*. After completing *The Spy Who Loved Me*, Ian suffered a major heart attack and spent his convalescence writing the children’s novel, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*.

Ian’s Fleming’s Bond books have sold more than 100 million copies in English. (378) He truly was *The Man with the Golden Typewriter*.

***Patriotic Betrayal: The Inside Story of the CIA’s Secret Campaign to Enroll American Students in the Crusade Against Communism***, by Karen M. Paget (Yale University Press, 2015) 527, endnotes, photos, index.

In his 1980 memoir *Facing Reality*, Cord Meyer, the former Chief of CIA’s International Affairs Division, referred to the 1967 “rash of publicity concerning Agency involvement with American voluntary organizations . . . that revealed that the National Student Association (NSA), the organization representing American college students, had for several years secretly been receiving funds from the CIA to help finance its international activities.”<sup>a</sup> The public had first heard of the program in an article that appeared in *Ramparts*<sup>b</sup> magazine, which cited the “sinister spectre of CIA involvement” in organization’s affairs. *Patriotic Betrayal* revisits this story, adding new detail based on recently declassified documents and interviews.

Author Karen Paget and her then-husband were members of NSA in 1967. Though she is largely silent about their experiences, in *Patriotic Betrayal* she asserts that the CIA-NSA relationship went far beyond financing

international activities: “[w]hat began as a straightforward operation to thwart Soviet influence at home and abroad grew, multiplied, and divided like a vast spider plant. . . . Intelligence gathering and espionage—despite CIA denials—were integral to its nature.” (6)

Paget gives some examples that caused her distress, which unintentionally reveal her own lack of understanding. One mentions Raymond Garthoff, later a CIA officer, who reported that many African and South Asians “seemed tremendously impressed with Moscow.” (194) She adds that his conclusions “would have played on the CIA’s worst fears.” Paget doesn’t acknowledge, or realize, that his reporting of the truth was just what the CIA wanted or that Garthoff’s work hardly amounted to espionage. Other aspects of the CIA-NSA program that Paget finds objectionable were the attempts to disrupt Soviet propaganda functions. Gloria Steinem was involved in one such operation and Paget devotes a chapter to her role. (214ff)

But beyond criticizing many examples of covert operations, Paget has another agenda. As Sol Stern—the author of the *Ramparts* article mentioned above—notes in his

a. Cord Meyer, *Facing Reality: From World Federalism to the CIA* (Harper & Row, 1980), 86.

b. Sol Stern, “A Short Account of International Student Politics and the Cold War with Particular Reference to the NSA, CIA, Etc.,” *Ramparts*, March 1967.

review of the book,<sup>a</sup> Paget “insists that it was the political ideology of ‘liberal anti-communism’ that constituted the original sin leading to the betrayal of democracy.” Or as Paget wrote, liberal anti-communism, beginning in the 1930s, “created a generation of leaders dedicated to purging communist influence in liberal organizations. It swelled the ranks of Cold Warriors willing to combat the Soviet Union by any means necessary.” (13) These leaders included Eleanor Roosevelt, Cord Meyer, Allen Dulles, Frank Wisner, and those responsible for the Congress of Cultural Freedom. Paget insists that, had the United

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a. Sol Stern, “Ramparts, the CIA, and Cold War Revisionism,” *National Review.com*, 2 April 2015.

***The Pentagon’s Brain: An Uncensored History of DARPA, America’s Top Secret Military Research Agency***, by Annie Jacobsen (Little, Brown and Company, 2015) 552, endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

The Advanced Research Project Agency (ARPA) was created in January 1958 in response to the launch of Sputnik 1 in October 1957. It reported directly to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and was independent of the military services. In March 1972 it was redesignated the Defense Advanced Research Project Agency (DARPA).<sup>b</sup> Its mission is to sponsor research and development projects at and beyond the frontiers of technology so as to prevent technological surprise in the future and to surprise potential enemies if required.<sup>c</sup> *The Pentagon’s Brain* invents a more melodramatic, hyperbolic view of the DARPA mission: “to create revolutions in military science and to maintain technological dominance over the rest of the world.” (1) Or in another formulation, “DARPA’s stated mission is to create weapons systems.” (Prologue)

The latter is, of course, not DARPA’s “stated mission” and the inaccuracy is emblematic of Jacobsen’s approach to her subject. While she acknowledges that “DARPA created the Internet, the Global Positioning Systems (GPS), and stealth technology . . . and drones.”

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b. NB: In 1993 DARPA once again became ARPA, only to revert to DARPA, its current name, in 1996.

c. DARPA Report, “Bridging The Gap Powered By Ideas,” February 2005, 1.

States followed Henry Wallace, the leader of communist front groups, (12) and accepted Khrushchev’s peaceful coexistence proposals (170) while ignoring the liberal anti-communists, the CIA-NSA program would not have been necessary and the world would have been a better place. Paget ends with a warning against a repetition of Cold War policies in the fight against radical Islam.

*Patriotic Betrayal* illuminates the CIA-NSA program in the kind of great detail that a participant can provide, but it is poor history, slanted by the far-left views of someone who seems to be seeking victim-hood status and who has an uncommon understanding of the Cold War.

(Prologue) And while it is true that “DARPA makes the future happen . . . DARPA creates,” she does not make the case that “DARPA dominates, DARPA destroys.” (6–7)

In fact, DARPA creates only paperwork, as Jacobsen herself acknowledges: “DARPA does not conduct scientific research;” its relatively small staff oversees projects contracted to experts; all decisions on what will become operational are made by the Secretary of Defense. (1) DARPA is a facilitator not an implementer. So from the outset, readers should take care as Jacobsen “shines light on DARPA’s secret history.” (6)

What, then, does *The Pentagon’s Brain* have to offer? With two exceptions, its 26 chapters tell interesting stories about the organization’s work, and Jacobsen includes detailed vignettes of the principal players involved. The central theme, however, is the DARPA-sponsored research. Some projects, like computer research applications, occur in ever more complex forms throughout the book. Others, as for example “Human-Robotic Interaction (HRI)” clearly worry her, as they could escape control. A sampling of other projects includes: Vietnam War studies—counter-insurgency and Agent Orange, the Motivation and Morale Project, and the electronic fence. On the technical side, she discusses the DARPA role with the

CIA in the CORONA satellite program, stealth aircraft, electronic command and control issues, Internet applications, and biological warfare issues. During the Iraq War, DARPA worked with NGA to develop three-dimensional maps as part of its Heterogeneous Urban Reconnaissance Surveillance and Target Acquisition (HURT) program.

Two exceptions curiously speak to stories of events that predate the agency. The first chapter describes the first H-bomb test in 1954. It makes no explicit reference to ARPA, which should not be surprising since ARPA was created four years later. The second case is even more puzzling since it deals at length with the story of Allen Macy Dulles—Allen W. Dulles’s son—who in Korean in 1952 received a “catastrophic traumatic brain injury,” (101) which resulted in permanent short-term memory

**Rendezvous at the Russian Tea Rooms: The Spyhunter, the Fashion Designer, and the Man from Moscow**, by Paul Willetts (Constable, 2015) 480, endnote, photos.

American embassy code clerk, Tyler Gatewood Kent, was imprisoned by the British during WWII for violating the Official Secrets Act. If that statement rings the *deja vu* bell it is because the story has indeed been told before at least twice. In 1991, Ray Bearse and Anthony Read focused on Kent’s espionage in Britain and dismissed indications he had also been a Soviet agent. In 2013, Peter Rand covered the same ground but concluded there were strong clues that Kent had spied for the NKVD.<sup>a</sup> *Rendezvous at the Russian Tea Rooms* agrees with Rand and adds extensive new detail to support his conclusion.

China born, Virginia native, Princeton-educated Tyler Kent was a Russian linguist of independent means. He failed to qualify for the foreign service but accepted a lowly position as a clerk in the American embassy in Moscow in the late 1930s. Despite persistent difficulties with embassy staff, he managed to advance to a position as code clerk and then began a practice of copying diplo-

matic traffic for his own purposes. He also had a Russian mistress, owned a gun, had a car and was involved in the black market—all in the Stalinist Soviet Union. For these and other reasons, rather than create an incident, the embassy transferred him to London in 1939, where he continued work as a code clerk and his practice of retaining copies of classified diplomatic traffic. Kent’s political views and his desires for feminine companionship brought him into contact with Anna Wolkoff, an active anti-fascist. Wolkoff’s White Russian expatriate parents ran the Russian Tea Room in London. Kent met many of Wolkoff’s colleagues there and was recruited to help their cause. MI5 was aware of their activities, and Kent was arrested, with the cooperation of the US ambassador, Joseph Kennedy.

*The Pentagon’s Brain* concludes noting that some have said DARPA must forever sponsor—she says conduct—“pre-requirement research.” But, she adds, “One might also look at DARPA’s history and its future, and say that it is possible at some point that the technology may itself outstrip DARPA as it is unleashed into the world. This is a grave concern of many esteemed scientists and engineers.” (451) None is identified. Jacobsen’s own portrayal of DARPA’s track record doesn’t support her admonition.

British journalist Paul Willetts covers this ground in much greater detail than his literary predecessors. He adds additional participants, British and Russian, together with accounts of their clandestine meetings, and the material Kent passed along. He also makes a convincing case that Kent was a Soviet agent—identifying his case officer—while in London and Moscow, and names his clandestine contacts in both countries.

a. Ray Bearse and Anthony Read, *The Conspirator: The Untold Story of Tyler Kent* (Doubleday, 1991) and Peter Rand, *Conspiracy of One: Tyler Kent’s Plot Against FDR, Churchill, and the Allied War Effort* (Lyons Press, 2013). The Rand book was reviewed in *Studies in Intelligence* Vol. 57, no. 4 (Winter 2013–2014), 74–75.



But what Willetts fails to provide are sources for his facts. The extensive footnotes are descriptive and only extend remarks made in the narrative. Moreover, the additional source material he says may be found on his website does the same. Thus the reader

is left with a robust tale, rich with new revelations, that has the ring of truth. But the task of documentation is left to the reader. *Rendezvous at the Russian Tea Rooms* is really a rendezvous with frustration.

***Special Branch—A History: 1883–2006***, by Ray Wilson and Ian Adams (Biteback Publishing, 2015) 411, footnotes, bibliography, index.

In January 1950, when Jim Skardon of MI5 obtained a signed confession from Klaus Fuchs acknowledging he spied for the Soviet Union, Skardon could not arrest him: the Special Branch of the Metropolitan (MPSB) had that responsibility. “The Branch” as it is known, originally called the Special Irish Branch, was formed in 1883 to deal the Fenian Dynamiters then creating havoc in London. It soon became just Special Branch, a name it retained until 1986 when it was redesignated Special Operations 12 (SO12), and finally in 2006, when combined with SO13 it became SO15. *Special Branch—A History* tracks the Branch from its early days with emphasis on its mission, personnel, organizational changes and selected operations.

Authors Ray Wilson and Ian Adams, both Special Branch veterans, review a wide range of cases. For example, anarchists were a persistent problem at the turn of the twentieth century and they add details to a number of cases such as the “Greenwich Park Bomb” incident made famous by Joseph Conrad in his book, *Secret Agent*. The Branch also had a counterespionage mission until MI5 assumed that responsibility after WWI. The authors cite many examples of German espionage, including the treason of Roger Casement and the interrogation of Mata Hari, both handled

personally by Basil Thompson—then in charge of Special Branch. The authors’ claim that Mata Hari was executed in Spain is, however, incorrect: it was France. (94) In the post WWI era, the focus turned first to the communist and fascist threats, followed by multiple challenges from the IRA that persist in various forms until the present.

From the interwar period to the end of the Cold War, the authors discuss the Branch’s involvement with well-known cases, such as the Cambridge spies, and some lesser known problems with Zionist extremism (230), and a new mission, VIP protection. Espionage cases during this period, such as the Fuchs case, were worked with MI5. Two interesting examples of this cooperation are the Erwin Van Haarlem and Michael Smith cases, both worth attention. (351)

*Special Branch—A History* concludes with a discussion of the transfer of its longtime mission against IRA terrorism to MI5, then headed by Stella Rimington. This did not end the Branch’s traditional functions of “prosecuting espionage offenders and monitoring anarchists” write the authors, that are professionally performed to this day. (390) They have produced a fine history of Special Branch-SO15.

**MEMOIR**

***Out of the Shadows: The Life of a CSE Canadian Intelligence Officer***, by Ron Lawruk (Friesen Press, 2015) 156, photos, no index.

Author Ron Lawruk joined the Communications Branch of the National Research Council (CBNRC) in 1958. In 1975 it became the Communications Security Establishment (CSE), but its mission—to monitor foreign signals intelligence—remained the same. As with its American counterpart, NSA, the details of CSE operations are classified and thus, with few exceptions Lawruk adds little beyond the titles of the organizational elements where he worked. In one exception, Lawruk heads a SIGINT team on a Canadian warship during a NATO training exercise. The team’s mission is to “penetrate the protective shield of the U.S. ‘Blue Team’ vessels escorting the nuclear powered aircraft carrier USS Nimitz, undetected” to within firing range of a nuclear missile. (79) They succeeded to the graceful chagrin of the exercise commander. On another

occasion, he describes his assignment to head the team that assessed the impact on Canada of the Walker spy case.

Lawruk’s personal story sets an impressive example of what can be achieved with hard work, without a college degree. He started at a rather humble level and advanced steadily to very senior positions that included a tour as liaison to NSA and assignments as the CSE representative at several multinational SIGINT conferences. He traveled widely, often with his family, and he comments on the places visited and the people involved.

*Out of the Shadows* is a memoir of 56 years of service spanning CSE’s ever increasing responsibilities, which ended with Lawruk’s retirement to life as a novelist.



