

# *Studies in Intelligence*

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**A “Spy” Who Made His Own Way: Ernest Hemingway**

**The United States, Britain, and the Hidden Justification  
of Operation TPAJAX**

**Reviews:**

*Thinking, Fast and Slow*

*Espionage and Covert Operations:  
A Global History*  
—An Audio Course

*The Orphan Master’s Son: A Novel*

**Intelligence Officer’s Bookshelf**



Center for the Study of Intelligence

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## Ernest Hemingway, Wartime Spy

Nicholas Reynolds

“  
**As an auxiliary spy, Hemingway more than once demonstrated willingness to take risks and work hard, but in the end, no matter what others had in mind for him, Hemingway made his own way through the war....**  
”

During World War II, Ernest Hemingway happily devoted much more of his time and energy to the field of intelligence than to his normal literary pursuits. He had relationships with the intelligence section of the US embassy in Havana as well as with at least three US intelligence agencies: the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI), the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). In addition, he dealt with the Soviet Union's intelligence service at the time, the NKVD.<sup>a</sup>

The threshold question for each organization was, what could, or should, Hemingway do for the war effort? Two of the organizations decided officially not to have anything to do with the novelist; the others tried to put him to work as an auxiliary spy. In that capacity he more than once demonstrated willingness to take risks and work hard, but in the end, no matter what others had in mind for him, Hemingway made his own way through the war and, for the most part, did

not produce much for anyone except himself and his literary executors.

Although many of the details of Hemingway's wartime work are not well known, the general outlines of the story are. At the beginning of 1941, before the United States entered WW II, Hemingway and his third wife, Martha Gellhorn, were living in Cuba. In the first quarter of that year, the two went to China on an assignment for *Collier's Weekly*, a well-regarded magazine that featured investigative reporting and commentary.<sup>1</sup> Upon their return to Cuba, they settled back into their comfortable routine at Finca Vigia, a spectacular hillside estate by the sea, a few miles outside Havana.

There, Hemingway had a remarkable circle of friends and acquaintances, from literary figures and artists, to barmen and prostitutes, sailors and hunters, and even some government officials. Among those officials was Spruille Braden, the colorful and energetic American ambassador, and his

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<sup>a</sup> The NKVD, the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, was a predecessor of the KGB, the Committee for State Security, which was established in 1954.

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Hemingway (right) and Martha Gellhorn (second from the left) were met en route to China in January 1941 by film star Gary Cooper and his wife. Photo © Bettmann/CORBIS.

subordinate, Robert P. Joyce. Both Braden and Joyce were, by chance, Yale graduates and willing not only to think outside the box, but also to invent new boxes if necessary. In his unpublished memoir, Joyce remembered that

*I first met Ernest Hemingway...in the early summer of 1941.... I felt in him a mild but polite hostility and a complete lack of interest in any future meetings. This attitude, I soon learned, was his habitual stance of dislike and suspicion in all his dealings with civilian government officials and authority in general. [But] Ernest soon found out I was a poorly disciplined,*

*inefficient, and unenthusiastic bureaucrat.<sup>2</sup>*

This meant that Hemingway and Joyce could become friends. By the time the United States entered the war in December 1941, Joyce had been invited to many long dinners at the Finca—where he and his wife were often the only guests—and felt that he knew Hemingway well:

*I suppose the reason why we got on so well was that we agreed in hating the same*

*things such as Hitlerism, Marxist-Leninist totalitarian communism, ... petty bourgeois conformity, and all abuses of state power to police and restrict human freedom.<sup>3</sup>*

When they met in the summer of 1942, Hemingway and Braden discussed what the writer could do for the war effort. It is not clear who first broached the idea of intelligence work. Hemingway may have volunteered his services in a general way, leaving it to Braden to come up with the idea for Hemingway “to organize an intelligence service” to keep an eye on fascist sympathizers in Havana.<sup>4</sup> What Braden had in mind was actually more of a counterintelligence service than an intelligence service: Heming-

way was to use his contacts in Havana to keep an eye out for Axis spies, especially in the city’s large Spanish community. Hemingway readily agreed—ever since his experiences in Spain during the Spanish Civil War, Hemingway had been a dedicated antifascist—and got to work on what he came to call “the Crook Factory,” his variation on “crime section,” which was the more bureaucratic term that the embassy used for the operation.

As head of the Crook Factory, Hemingway reported to Joyce, for whom Braden had created the unusual position of chief of intelligence. For the unfortunate Joyce, this meant that he would have to do his best to coordinate his own intelligence operations, like the Crook Factory, with the work of other sections in the embassy that were also conducting intelligence operations in Cuba: the naval and army attaché offices and the FBI. For a few months in the second half of 1942, Hemingway appears to have tried his best to uncover Axis spies for Joyce. He found none, although he produced a number of reports of varying quality. Some of them were wildly implausible; others were accurate but not important.<sup>5</sup> The man who was probably the only bona fide Nazi spy in town, Heinz Luening, was unmasked, not by anyone in Havana, but by British censors in Bermuda who detected anomalies in his correspondence and found that it contained secret writing. (Ironically, Luening was a heavy drinker and ladies’ man

who ran in the same kinds of circles as many members of the Crook Factory.<sup>6</sup>)

While Hemingway was working for the embassy, Braden and Joyce added another group to his target list: communists. Braden was an early anticommunist and claimed in his memoirs that he had told the members “of [his] amateur intelligence organization” to keep an eye on local communists and “find out who [the] most dangerous enemies were” so that he could attempt to tamp down Cuban enthusiasm for Stalin and the Red Army.<sup>7</sup> A draft of a note from Joyce to Hemingway written in the summer of 1942 captures the diplomat’s frame of mind:

*As you know, Commies are putting on in Mexico City, starting next Monday, September 5th...their traveling peace circus. Commie big shots throughout Latin America are scheduled to attend. Plus fuzzy-minded liberals from universities... I have discussed this matter with Spruille [Braden]... and think it would be an excellent idea if you could find yourself in Mexico City next week...in a position to make...comment on peace conference of a deflationary nature.<sup>8</sup>*

There is no evidence that Hemingway went to Mexico to attend the “peace circus.” He did travel to Mexico City in 1942, but not in September. Hemingway’s trip took place in

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*A major by-product of Hemingway’s work in the Crook Factory—and one of Joyce’s biggest headaches—was friction with the FBI.*

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March 1942, and it came to the attention of the FBI because, according to a confidential informant, the author was residing in a hotel in Mexico City “under an assumed name” and having what appeared to be secretive meetings with the disillusioned communist Gustav Regler, a good friend from the time of the Spanish Civil War.<sup>9</sup>

A major by-product of Hemingway’s work in the Crook Factory—and one of Joyce’s biggest headaches—was friction with the FBI. The extent of the enmity emerges from FBI memorandums and even more clearly from Joyce’s memoirs. Though Joyce liked to think of himself as an unenthusiastic bureaucrat, he knew enough about the art form to consult the legal attaché at the embassy, an FBI agent named R. G. Leddy, before enlisting Hemingway’s services. Leddy described the meeting to his headquarters in Washington saying “that Mr. Joyce was advised that there was some question of the attitude of Mr. Hemingway to the FBI,” to include Hemingway’s signature on a denunciation of the FBI and his remark upon meeting Leddy for the first time that the FBI was “the American Gestapo.” Joyce promised to ask Hemingway whether this was an accurate reflection of his views on the FBI and, not surprisingly, soon got back to Leddy with the answer: Hem-

ingway had explained that he was always signing one petition or another without focusing on its content, and that he had been joking when he compared the FBI to the Gestapo.<sup>10</sup>

This was not true, and Joyce knew it. As Joyce himself wrote, “Ernest reacted with violent hostility to the FBI and all its works and personnel.” For one thing, Hemingway believed that, because many FBI agents happened to be Roman Catholics, they were Franco sympathizers. He liked to refer to the FBI as “Franco’s Bastard Irish” and “Franco’s Iron Cavalry.” Hemingway also believed that, in Joyce’s words, the FBI understood “nothing about the subtleties of sophisticated intelligence in wartime” and was undermining his work in Cuba. In one instance, the Cuban police picked up a member of the Crook Factory. Hemingway was certain that the FBI was behind the arrest, and he drove immediately to Joyce’s apartment even though it was after hours. Joyce remembered that Hemingway was “in a towering rage” when he arrived. Joyce summoned the FBI agent on duty and, while Hemingway and the agent glared at each other, asked that the FBI intervene on the Crook Factory’s behalf, which it apparently did.<sup>11</sup>

Hemingway was wrong when he accused the Bureau of lacking sophistication. Declassified

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*It would all be highly secret. Hemingway clearly relished the secrecy and the danger.*

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FBI records show a nuanced reaction to his encroachment on its turf. While at least one agent believed that the amateur needed to be confronted and revealed as “the phony” that he was, J. Edgar Hoover himself stepped in to ensure that the Bureau trod carefully in the Hemingway case. On the one hand, Hoover directed that his agent in Havana relay his concerns about using a volunteer for intelligence work, instructing him “to discuss diplomatically with Ambassador Braden the disadvantages” of allowing someone like Hemingway, who was not a government official, into the fold.

On the other hand, Hoover did not want to press the case because Hemingway had the ambassador’s ear, as well as connections to the White House. (Hoover knew this because the president had told him about a request by Hemingway for the US government to help Europeans interned in Cuba, most of whom were victims of fascism.) None of this, Hoover added, changed his conclusion that “Hemingway is the last man, in my estimation, to be used in any such capacity. His judgment is not of the best.” Hoover continued with an apparent expression of concern about Hemingway’s evident lack of sobriety in the past.<sup>12</sup>

Before long, Hemingway tired of the Crook Factory and suggested that the embassy make

arrangements for a Spanish refugee named Gustavo Durán to come to Cuba to run it.<sup>13</sup> This would free Hemingway up for another project that interested him far more. Hemingway pitched the idea to Braden, Joyce, and the ONI. According to Braden, Hemingway claimed that the embassy should “pay” him for starting the Crook Factory by supporting another one of his schemes, patrolling the waters on the north coast of Cuba in his cabin cruiser, the *Pilar*, in search of Germans.<sup>14</sup>

While other American sailors were volunteering their boats and their time along the East Coast to spot U-boats, Hemingway’s concept of operations went further. He would pretend to be fishing, wait until a German submarine came alongside to buy fresh fish and water, and then attack the enemy with bazookas, machine guns, and hand grenades. Hemingway would use Basque jai alai players to lob the grenades down the open hatches of the unsuspecting U-boat.

Hemingway had a good ONI contact, the redoubtable Marine Col. John A. Thomason, who was the writer’s kind of man: a veteran of World War I infantry combat, a distinguished short-story writer and sketch artist, a heavy drinker, and an intelligence officer. Thomason told Hemingway that he and his crew would stand no chance of success against the highly

trained submariners of the Third Reich, but the Marine could not say no to Hemingway, especially since the author had the support of the ambassador. In the end, the ONI arranged for Hemingway to receive just enough gear—guns, ammunition, grenades, a direction finder, and a radio—to make the mission viable. The ONI even threw in an experienced Marine to sail with Hemingway. It would all be highly secret. Hemingway clearly relished the secrecy and the danger. He especially enjoyed developing his cover, which was that he was performing oceanographic research for the American Museum of Natural History. The *Pilar’s* war cruises lasted from the second half of 1942 through most of 1943. Although Hemingway patrolled diligently for much of the time, he only spotted one German submarine, which sailed away on the surface as he approached.<sup>15</sup>

By late 1943, it was clear that the focus of the war had shifted eastward. The submarine threat in American waters had receded. The Allies had invaded North Africa in late 1942 and ejected the Germans from Tunisia by the summer of 1943. It was now only a matter of time before the Allies would invade the mainland of Europe. Gellhorn traveled across the Atlantic in the fall and started working as one of the few female war correspondents. She wrote back to Cuba to urge Hemingway to join her. Hemingway resisted stubbornly, urging her instead to return to



Hemingway on his beloved boat, *Pilar*, in an undated photograph. During the war, he patrolled the Caribbean on the *Pilar* for more than a year in search of German submarines. Not content merely to find them, he hoped to sink any that he and his armed crew encountered. They saw only one U-boat and didn't get close enough to do (or suffer) damage. Photo ©Gamma-Rapho via Getty Images.

Cuba to keep him company. Gellhorn did not give up easily and, in February 1944, went so far as to ask the OSS for help in getting her husband into the war.

Gellhorn encountered Joyce in Bari, Italy, where he was serving as the OSS base chief. Like many others, he had joined the OSS in search of excitement. He found it easy to separate from the Foreign Service, which he thought was too stuffy and hidebound for a free spirit like himself.<sup>16</sup> With his background in Cuba and friendship with Hemingway, Joyce was just the kind of man Gellhorn was looking for. She laid the family issue out for Joyce: she was having a good war, but Heming-

way wanted her to come home. She told Joyce that she was prepared to obey "the orders of her lord and master," but was desolate about the prospect of giving up her plans to cover "the big show," meaning the Allied invasion of France. She thought that Hemingway might have made plans to come to Europe in some capacity, but that he seemed to have run into transportation and perhaps passport difficulties.<sup>17</sup>

The record is silent on whether Gellhorn then asked for Joyce's help, or if Joyce offered to do what he could. In any case, Joyce cabled OSS headquarters with the suggestion that OSS Director Donovan and Whitney Shepardson,

the sophisticated international businessman who was head of Secret Intelligence (SI, the espionage branch of the OSS), consider approaching Hemingway about working for SI.

This message caused some head scratching as it worked its way around the OSS. Just what could Hemingway do for the OSS? wondered Lt. Cdr. Turner McWine, the chief intelligence officer for the OSS in the Middle East. The author's prominence and reputed temperament would make it hard for him to fit in.<sup>18</sup>

Joyce addressed these concerns in a long letter to Shepardson a month later. He enumerated Hemingway's attributes: he was an authority on Spain; he knew more non-Franco Spaniards than "any other American"; he had run intelligence organizations himself; and, from the Spanish Civil War, he had a firsthand and extensive knowledge of guerrilla warfare and special operations. Joyce defended Hemingway from traditionalists like the head of military intelligence, Maj. Gen. George V. Strong, a perennial thorn in the side of the OSS. Joyce claimed that Strong's criticism of Hemingway was related more to the author's lifestyle and sympathies for the Spanish Republic than to his abilities. What did it matter to the OSS if Hemingway had been married three times? Joyce summed up that Hemingway was a man "of the highest integrity and loyalty," about as

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much of a communist or fellow traveler as the head of Chase National Bank. Joyce repeated his suggestion that Shepardson consider inviting Hemingway to Washington for high-level discussions to explore how he could be useful to the OSS, perhaps in Spain or Italy.<sup>19</sup>

The record shows that the OSS staffed the request carefully. Shepardson solicited the opinions of Donovan's inner circle and received comments from OSS Deputy Directors Brig. Gen. John Magruder and G. Edward Buxton. Like others, Magruder expressed reservations about Hemingway's temperament and left-wing politics, adding the snide comment that Joyce was "an extremely intelligent and somewhat temperamental individual who would not be improved by association with...Hemingway."<sup>20</sup> For his part, Buxton wondered if Hemingway might have more potential for Morale Operations (MO), the OSS's black propaganda arm, than for the work of SI.<sup>21</sup> Hemingway's file duly made its way over to MO, whose leaders concluded a few days later that Hemingway was too much of an individualist even for their unconventional mission.<sup>22</sup> No one suggested that the 44-year-old Hemingway was suitable for a role in OSS's paramilitary branch. In the end, Shepardson cabled back to Joyce that he had

*decided in the negative about Hemingway. We may be wrong, but feel that although he undoubtedly has conspicuous ability for this type of work, he would be too much of an individualist to work under military supervision.*<sup>23</sup>

It was a good call. Hemingway's attitude toward the OSS was typically ambivalent, and he probably would not have been any more of a company man, even in a relatively unconventional organization like OSS, than he had been as an adjunct member of the US embassy in Cuba.

There were some people in OSS that Hemingway admired, and some that he was quick to criticize. He was endlessly proud of his son, John Hemingway, an OSS paramilitary officer who parachuted into occupied France with his fly rod, and there was never any question about his feelings for men like Joyce, once it was clear that they were more comfortable outside the box than anywhere else. Similarly, he was positive about men like Milton Wolf, a wartime member of the OSS who had been with the Lincoln Battalion, a

unit made up of left-wing Americans who had gone to Spain to fight against Franco. But for those who were a little more conventional, even though they were in the OSS, Hemingway had nothing but scorn. As he wrote to Wolf after the war, "many things...about O.S.S. when [I] had contact with them were chicken and others really excellent."<sup>24</sup>

Another of the OSS officers Hemingway found excellent was David K. E. Bruce, a Virginia aristocrat who headed the organization's operations in Europe and who after the war became a prominent diplomat. Theirs is a colorful, oft-told story.<sup>25</sup> Hemingway had decided to travel to France as a war correspondent. He was eager to



David K.E. Bruce in 1961. He would become the chief US negotiator in peace negotiations with North Vietnam for the Nixon administration and the first envoy to the People's Republic of China after relations were restored in 1973. Photo © Bettmann/CORBIS.

participate in the liberation of Paris and by 19 August 1944 had set off on the road to the capital.

Along the way, he bumped into a small group of communist Maquis from a group known as the Francs-Tireurs et Partisans Français (FTP) and helped to arm and clothe them from US Army stocks. The Maquis subordinated themselves to the charismatic American who spoke their language and, with Hemingway almost literally calling the shots, the small group made its way to Rambouillet, a town outside Paris.

Hemingway then went on briefly to a US divisional headquarters at Chartres, where, by

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*Since Hemingway had by far exceeded his brief as a correspondent, he turned to Bruce for protection in case of "trouble."*

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chance, he ran into Bruce, who wrote in his diary that he had been "enchanted" to meet Hemingway.<sup>26</sup> (Bruce was usually more reserved, but he appears to have idolized Hemingway, describing him as "patriarchal, with his gray beard, imposing physique, much like God, as painted by Michelangelo."<sup>27</sup>) The author persuaded Bruce to meet him in Rambouillet, which was closer to the front lines and a good stepping-off point for Paris. Bruce seized the opportunity and, with Hemingway and a leader of the FTP, established a small tactical intelligence headquarters.

For a little more than three days, Hemingway, Bruce, and the French irregulars ran paramilitary intelligence operations from Rambouillet. They sent agents out into the surrounding countryside to collect information from locals; they scouted for Germans; they captured and interrogated prisoners of war; and they reported their useful (but not decisive) results to the US and French armies. Along the way, Hemingway impressed Bruce with his talent for battlefield reconnaissance. When the time was right, they made their way to Paris, where they "liberated" the Ritz and started celebrating. It was, Hemingway would write to Bruce after the war, "a lovely story and one you and I can both be proud of."<sup>28</sup>

Since Hemingway had by far exceeded his brief as a correspondent, he turned to Bruce for protection in case of "trouble," by which the author apparently meant losing his accreditation (let alone capture by the Germans, who were given to shooting combatants not in proper uniform). According to a letter that Hemingway wrote after the war, Bruce had obliged him by writing out a simple set of orders, tantamount to temporarily attaching Hemingway to the OSS. If it ever existed, this bit of paper did not survive the war; Hemingway claimed that he had destroyed it to protect Bruce.<sup>29</sup> However, there is in the Hemingway archives a somewhat



Hemingway seen just before beginning a flight over France soon after D-Day landings began on 6 June 1944. Photo © Bettmann/CORBIS.

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*That Hemingway would have accepted the [NKVD] pitch is stunning.*

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formal handwritten note from Bruce to “Dear Mr. Hemingway,” dated in Rambouillet, 23 August 1944:

*I am leaving...for Paris in the morning. If you can conveniently arrange the transportation there of the twelve Resistance men who have done such excellent service here, I would be very grateful. I feel that it is important to keep them together to be used for certain future purposes that I have in mind.<sup>30</sup>*

Considering Hemingway’s ability to clothe and arm the Maquis using US military materiel, as well as his relationship with OSS officers in theater, some scholars have hinted that there might have been more to the story than meets the eye. Was there something else, some other kind of secret work, perhaps with the French resistance or American intelligence that Hemingway biographers have missed?<sup>31</sup> Perhaps, but the official OSS correspondence about using him ended less than four months prior to his time at Rambouillet, which would suggest that what happened there was nothing more than a momentary, unofficial collaboration between Hemingway and Bruce, governed by chance and personal chemistry. Supporting that conclusion is the fact that, after the liberation of Paris, Heming-

way went back to being a war correspondent with the infantry, staying through the Battle of the Bulge and then returning to Cuba in March 1945.

The liberation of Paris was the high-water mark of Hemingway’s history with US intelligence during the war. But it was not the end of his relationship with the NKVD, which had begun quietly in January 1941, possibly while Hemingway was in New York en route to China with Gellhorn. According to transcripts of NKVD files prepared by a Russian historian who subsequently fled to the West, Hemingway “was recruited for our work on ideological grounds” by an operative named Jacob Golos.<sup>32</sup> It is not clear exactly what transpired between the two men, only that Hemingway accepted a material password for contact with another, unknown NKVD operative and that Golos came away satisfied that Hemingway had accepted the pitch. Golos’s words were: “I am sure that he will cooperate with us and will do everything he can [to help the NKVD].” He was assigned the codename “Argo.”<sup>33</sup>

That Hemingway would have accepted the pitch is stunning. It is hard to reconcile with his individualism and many of his statements about communists and communism. He admired a number of communists and how they fought for their ideals, but he said that he did not sub-

scribe to their ideology. Like many others, Joyce remembered Hemingway as “apolitical”:

*The leftist intellectuals...were angry...because he always refused to enter their “camp”.... [Hemingway said,] “I like communists when they’re soldiers but when they’re priests, I hate them.” He was always particularly contemptuous of the “ideology boys.”<sup>34</sup>*

Considering the timing, it is especially hard to reconcile Hemingway’s becoming a spy for the NKVD with his long-standing antifascist views. In January 1941, when Hemingway reportedly accepted the pitch, the Hitler-Stalin pact was still in force; the Nazi and Soviet dictators were allies. More than 70 years later, it is hard to appreciate what a blow the cynical pact, signed in 1939, had been to many on the left, especially those who had seen Stalin as the only real counterweight to Hitler. Lifelong communists experienced agonizing doubts. More than a few, like Hemingway’s communist friend Regler, abandoned the party. Those who found a way to rationalize the Hitler-Stalin alliance were on their way to qualifying as true believers.

Could Golos have misunderstood Hemingway’s response or reported it incorrectly? The short answer is that it is not likely that he made a mistake. Golos is an intriguing figure in



the history of Soviet espionage in the United States.<sup>35</sup> An old Bolshevik who emigrated to the United States before WW I, he eventually became a US citizen and a senior member of the Communist Party of the United States (CPUSA). Along with his work for the party, he became a key contact for the NKVD stations in New York and Washington.

Golos appears to have started out as a support asset, using his contacts to obtain US passports for NKVD personnel. He went on to work as a spotter, case handler, and case manager. There is even a reference to him in the NKVD files as the de facto chief of station in the United States for periods when the service was shorthanded (which occurred more than once during Stalin's purges). He personally handled such famous and enormously productive spies as Julius Rosenberg and Elizabeth Bentley. In short, while Golos was not a professional intelligence officer, he was both experienced and successful when it came to spying in the United States. All of this makes it unlikely that he had somehow misinterpreted the meeting with Hemingway.

Nor was Hemingway a fleeting target of opportunity for the NKVD. Hemingway had come to the attention of the NKVD as early as 1935, when he had written an article for the far-left American journal, *The New Masses*.<sup>36</sup> The article was an angry denunciation of the US establishment for leaving a

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*Orlov's literary executor wrote that the NKVD station chief considered Hemingway to be "a true believer."*

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large group of veterans, who were working in government service, to die in the path of a hurricane. The NKVD was pleasantly surprised by the ideology that seemed to underlie the article.<sup>37</sup> It was just as pleased with Hemingway's speech in New York in June 1937, when he shared a podium at a writer's conference with CPUSA Chairman Earl Browder and forcefully attacked fascism, the "one form of government that cannot produce good writers." Without mentioning another type of government that also limited freedom of speech, he concluded, "A writer who will not lie cannot live and work under fascism."<sup>38</sup>

For the NKVD, the speech was said to have been pivotal. From that moment on, the NKVD would extend to "Hemingway *carte blanche* on any wish or endeavour he might hope to pursue on his return to Spain." The NKVD station chief in Madrid, Alexander Orlov, stepped in on more than one occasion to make sure that Hemingway got access to the people and places he needed for his stories, not to mention all the Soviet vodka and caviar he wanted in wartime Madrid, where shortages were the order of the day for most. Orlov even arranged for Hemingway to visit a secret NKVD training camp for guerrillas, where Hemingway took in sights and sounds that he would be able to use in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*,

his best-selling classic novel about the war. When Hemingway met Orlov in Madrid on 7 November 1937 for a celebration of the Bolshevik Revolution, Hemingway thanked him for the unusually good bottle of vodka that Orlov had given him at the camp, and went on to "vehemently denounce Franco and the nationalists while...having nothing but praise for the [Communist] International Brigades' commanders and the Republicans."<sup>39</sup>

Orlov's literary executor wrote that the NKVD station chief considered Hemingway to be "a true believer." Despite numerous statements and actions to the contrary, Hemingway did occasionally write or talk like a true believer, especially in the cause of antifascism and, by extension, its communist and Soviet supporters. Robert Jordan, the American guerrilla who is the hero of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, is disturbed by atrocities on both sides of the Spanish Civil War, to say nothing of the cynical intrigues of at least one communist leader that undermine the war effort. But, for the greater good, he decides to suspend judgment for the duration of the war.

Is Jordan speaking for himself or for Hemingway when he extols the benefits of communist discipline—"the best...and the soundest and sanest for the prosecution of the war"? Then

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[Hemingway's] NKVD file reflects the service's frustration in keeping in touch with its agent, let alone getting him to produce...[and] summarizes Hemingway's poor record as a Soviet spy.

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there is Philip Rawlings, the hero in Hemingway's little-known play *The Fifth Column*. Rawlings is an American journalist who, behind the scenes, is happy to help a ruthless communist counterintelligence officer uncover fascist spies by spotting them in the cafes and hotels of Madrid, all in order to save the Spanish Republic.

In a remarkable letter dated 13 February 1947 and written in his own handwriting, Hemingway appeared to be speaking for himself when he defended the Soviet Union and its work in Spain. He started with the disclaimer that is familiar to generations of Hemingway readers: "It's politics I do not agree with." Then he continued with more passion than logic, sounding like many other true believers on the left who argued that the ends justified the means, to include political killings.

He wrote he had known the Russians quite well in Spain, and that none of the Russians whom he had admired had ever been executed. He had, however, known some people who had "deserved shooting" who had been shot. He knew nothing about the purges in Russia. Knowing Arthur Koestler, he found it hard to believe his book about the purges, although he admitted it was an excellent work. (This was an apparent reference to Koestler's famous

anti-Stalinist book, *Darkness at Noon*.)

Hemingway went on in the letter to lament that his good and brave friend Gustav Regler had left the Communist Party at the time of the Hitler-Stalin Pact. Hemingway said that he had visited Regler in Mexico, and that to hear him talk, one might have thought that "Spain was only [about] NKVD [Soviet intelligence] torture cells." Yes, men had been executed, "many times wrongly," but that was only "the smallest part of what went on." It was more important to remember the cause that they were fighting for.<sup>40</sup>

Regler, who was a literary figure in his own right, wrote about that March 1942 visit in his memoir. He remembered Hemingway's passionate plea for communism because it was still the best hope for beating the Nazis:

*Hemingway came from Cuba to see the bullfights ... [At one point] he clapped his hand on my shoulder and thrust me against the marble façade [of the Tampico Club]. "Why did you leave them [the Communists]?...[H]e would not let me go; he was in an alarming state of emotional confusion. "Why did you believe [in] them in Spain? There has*

*to be an organization, and they have one. Go back to them!... The Russians are the only ones doing any fighting."*<sup>41</sup>

If, then, the transcripts are correct, and the NKVD did recruit Hemingway for ideological reasons, what did the NKVD want from him? The record suggests that the NKVD wanted to start by carefully weighing his potential, and then steer him in the right direction. The fact that the NKVD referred to him as a journalist suggests that, for the NKVD, he might have had the same kind of potential as other well-placed American journalists whom it recruited: as a source of direct reporting and referrals to other potential spies, perhaps as a principal agent or agent of influence who could write articles for them.<sup>42</sup> Hemingway had an impressive range of contacts. He could report what prominent Americans were saying or thinking. He was also in a position to influence many members of the public through his writing. It was not too different from what Braden and Joyce had wanted from him, only on a grander scale.

The first thing that the NKVD needed to do after the pitch was to get Hemingway to the next meeting, which is why Golos gave him a material password. Hemingway did not make good use of the password. His NKVD file reflects the service's frustration in keeping in touch with its agent, let alone getting him to

produce. A NKVD operative met with Hemingway twice between September 1943 and April 1944 in Cuba, once in June 1944 in London, and once in April 1945 in Cuba. The NKVD file summarizes Hemingway's poor record as a Soviet spy:

*Our meetings with "Argo" in London and Havana were conducted with the aim of studying him and determining his potential*



If there was any suspicion about Hemingway's involvement with the NKVD, it is not evident in this 1947 ceremony in which he was awarded the Bronze Star medal from the US Army for his service as a war correspondent. Photo © Bettmann/CORBIS.

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*Perhaps Hemingway eventually concluded that working with the KGB was not patriotic —by all accounts, he always thought of himself as a loyal American.*

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*for our work. Through the period of his connection with us, "Argo" did not give us any polit. Information [sic], though he repeatedly expressed his desire and willingness to help us. "Argo" has not been studied thoroughly and is unverified.<sup>43</sup>*

Perhaps the work that the NKVD had in mind for him did not suit Hemingway, just as the Crook Factory turned out to be less interesting than conducting a private war at sea aboard *Pilar* or operating with the Maquis and David Bruce to help liberate Paris. Perhaps he decided that it was no longer necessary to support the Soviets once it had become clear that the Axis would be defeated.

Hemingway eventually may have concluded that working with the NKVD was not patriotic—by all

accounts, he always thought of himself as a loyal American. As he angrily wrote to an American correspondent who asked why he had gone to live in Cuba, it was "an unqualified obscenity" for anyone to wonder if he planned to become a citizen of any other country. He had revolutionary forebears "but none of them was named Benedict Arnold."<sup>44</sup> Or perhaps he simply held conflicting sets of beliefs. It is impossible to know; there is just not enough information, and that situation is unlikely to change unless his entire NKVD file becomes accessible or previously unknown Hemingway letters come to light. We are left with the irony that four organizations that could not agree on much—the NKVD, OSS, FBI, and Department of State—all arrived separately at the same conclusion: Ernest Hemingway may have wanted to be a spy, but he never lived up to his potential.

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**Endnotes**

1. In *Hemingway on the China Front: His World War II Spy Mission with Martha Gellhorn* (Potomac, MD: Potomac Books, 2006), Peter Moreira argues that Hemingway went to China on a spy mission for the US Department of Treasury and that the mission awakened in him a passion for intelligence work. However, Hemingway's trip had little to do with intelligence. There was nothing secret about it. He and Gellhorn functioned largely as journalists and gathered their information openly. After their return, he wrote for Treasury a lengthy and totally unclassified report about his impressions. While it is true that Hemingway was developing a taste for intelligence work, most authors look for its origins in the Spanish Civil War, not in China. See, for example, Stephen Koch, *The Breaking Point: Hemingway, Dos Passos, and the Murder of José Robles* (New York: Counterpoint, 2005).
2. Robert Joyce Papers, Box 1, Folder 5, p. 45, Yale University Library. The Robert Joyce Papers are his memoirs, written in the 1970s.
3. *Ibid.*, 46.
4. Spruille Braden, *Diplomats and Demagogues: The Memoirs of Spruille Braden* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1971), 283. Contemporary FBI files describe the process whereby Hemingway met Braden and "volunteered his service to engage in intelligence work." See R. G. Leddy, "Memorandum for Mr. Ladd Re: Intelligence Activities of Ernest Hemingway in Cuba," 13 June 1943, published in Thomas Fensch, *Behind Islands in the Stream: Hemingway, Cuba, the FBI and the crook factory* (New York: Universe, 2009), 49. Fensch has performed the useful service of publishing the FBI files on Hemingway, which are also available in the FBI's FOIA reading room online.
5. Joyce Papers, Box 1, Folder 5: 47-54. Joyce offers a general discussion of his role in the embassy, as well as Hemingway's work. See also Fensch, *Behind Islands in the Stream*, 57, for the FBI take on Crook Factory reporting.
6. Luening's story, set in the context of German intelligence initiatives in Latin America, is carefully described and analyzed in Thomas D. Schoonover, *Hitler's Man in Havana: Heinz Luening and Nazi Espionage in Latin America* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2008). To be fair to the Crook Factory, Luening was arrested around the time that the Crook Factory began its operations.
7. Braden, *Diplomats and Demagogues*, 302.
8. Joyce to Hemingway, no date, Incoming Correspondence, The Ernest Hemingway Collection, JFK Presidential Library, Boston. Since Hemingway's relationship with the embassy did not start until mid-1942, and Joyce's tour ended in August 1943, the reference to "September" was almost certainly to September 1942.
9. Daniel Robinson, "My True Occupation is that of a Writer': Hemingway's Passport Correspondence," *The Hemingway Review* 24, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 87-93.
10. Fensch, *Behind Islands in the Stream*, 50. Fensch includes a reproduction of Leddy's, "Memorandum," dated 13 June 1943.
11. Joyce Papers, Box 1, Folder 5: 50-2.
12. Edward A. Tamm, "Addendum," 21 May 1943; J. Edgar Hoover, "Re: Ernest Hemingway," 17 December 1942; and J. Edgar Hoover, "Memorandum for Mr. Tamm [and] Mr. Ladd," 19 December 1942. All are reproduced in Fensch, *Behind Islands in the Stream*, 58, 25, and 27.
13. Joyce Papers, Box 1, Folder 5: 54-5. Durán was another interesting and controversial character with a communist past and some experience as a secret policeman. See, for instance, Fensch, *Behind Islands in the Stream*, 75-84.
14. Braden, *Diplomats and Demagogues*, 283-84.
15. The primary source for the *Pilar's* war patrols is Terry Mort, *The Hemingway Patrols: Ernest Hemingway and His Hunt for U-boats* (New York: Scribner, 2009). Some of the same ground is covered in a new book on Hemingway and his

boat; see Paul Hendrickson, *Hemingway's Boat: Everything He Loved in Life, and Lost, 1934-1961* (New York: Knopf, 2011).

16. Joyce describes his disengagement from the Foreign Service in Joyce Papers, Box 1, Folder 6: 1. His OSS personnel record also contains material relating to his application to and service in the OSS. See "Robert P. Joyce," OSS Personnel Files, Record Group 226, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD.

17. Joyce to Shepardson, 16 March 1944, CIA FOIA Release. This letter contains references to an earlier message from Joyce to Shepardson on 9 February 1944. I obtained the March 1944 memo, which apparently was released in February 1983, courtesy of the scholar Daniel Robinson. These records were subsequently moved to NARA in College Park, where I have been unable to locate them. The CIA FOIA database currently contains only one page of this release.

18. McBaine to Shepardson, 14 February 1944, CIA FOIA Release.

19. Joyce to Shepardson, 16 March 1944, CIA FOIA Release.

20. Magruder to Shepardson, 6 April 1944, CIA FOIA Release.

21. Ibid. Buxton's note is on the same page as Magruder's memorandum to Shepardson.

22. Bigelow to Shepardson, 21 April 1944, CIA FOIA Release.

23. Shepardson to Joyce, 1 May 1944, Record Group 226, Entry 99, Box 53, Folder 6: Metro Pouch Review (1 Feb – 27 May 1944), National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD. This is a summary of miscellaneous communication received in the field, and does not include other messages relating to Hemingway.

24. Hemingway to Wolf, 14 April 1945, Private Collection of Kenneth Rendell. I am indebted to Mr. Rendell for sending me a copy of this letter. "Chicken" was likely an abbreviation for "chickenshit," the word that Hemingway abbreviated in the preceding paragraph as "chickens\_."

25. The classic version is in Carlos Baker, *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story* (New York: Scribner's, 1969), 408–18. Another useful source is Denis Brian, *The True Gen: An Intimate Portrait of Hemingway by Those Who Knew Him* (New York: Grove Press, 1988), 157–67. The most detailed and careful description of Hemingway's movements in the summer of 1944 is in H. R. Stoneback, "Hemingway's Happiest Summer," *The North Dakota Quarterly* 64, no. 3 (1997), 184–220.

26. Nelson Lankford, ed., *OSS Against the Reich: The World War II Diaries of Colonel David K. E. Bruce* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1991), 160.

27. Quoted in Nelson Lankford, *The Last American Aristocrat: The Biography of Ambassador David K. E. Bruce* (Boston: Little Brown, 1996), 155.

28. Hemingway to Bruce, 27 November 1948, Outgoing Correspondence, The Hemingway Collection, JFK Presidential Library, Boston.

29. Hemingway to Leahy, 26 June 1952, Outgoing Correspondence, The Hemingway Collection, JFK Presidential Library, Boston. Judge Paul Leahy never met Hemingway but took an interest in his affairs after serving with the executor of F. Scott Fitzgerald's estate and reading some of the Hemingway-Fitzgerald correspondence.

30. Bruce to Hemingway, 23 August 1944, Incoming Correspondence, The Hemingway Collection, JFK Presidential Library, Boston.

31. See, for example, Michael Reynolds, *Hemingway: The Final Years* (New York and London: Norton 1999), 105.

32. John Earl Haynes, Harvey Klehr, and Alexander Vassiliev, *Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 154. The Russian researcher was Vassiliev himself. This exhaustive work includes translated quotations from the original transcripts, which are also available in translation online and at the Library of Congress. I have relied on the book itself and on the rele-

vant PDF files of the English-language translations of the transcripts. They are titled “White Notebook” and “Black Notebook,” and can be downloaded from [www.wilsoncenter.org](http://www.wilsoncenter.org).

33. Haynes, Klehr, and Vassiliev, *Spies*, 153–54, and White Notebook, 29. (The page number for White Notebook corresponds to the pagination of the PDF file.)

34. Joyce Papers, Box 1, Folder 5: 47. Some of these quotes, or others like them, commonly appear in other works on Hemingway’s political views. See, for example, James R. Mellow, *Hemingway: A Life Without Consequences* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1992), 503 and 520.

35. Information about Golos is available in Haynes et al., *Spies*, especially 497–98 and 504–505.

36. Ernest Hemingway, “Who Murdered the Vets?” *The New Masses* (17 September 1935): 9.

37. Edward Gazur, *Alexander Orlov: The FBI’s KGB General* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2001), 124. Gazur was an FBI agent who handled the defector Orlov and became his friend and literary executor. Gazur writes that he took extensive notes during conversations with Orlov. John Costello and Oleg Tsarev’s *Deadly Illusions: The KGB Orlov Dossier Reveals Stalin’s Master Spy* (New York: Crown, 1993) is a work that relies on KGB files and is far less sympathetic to Orlov. Costello and Tsarev argue that Orlov was an unreconstructed Stalinist until his death.

38. The speech is described in Baker, *Ernest Hemingway*, 314.

39. Gazur, *Alexander Orlov*, 129–30, and 138.

40. Hemingway to Craipeau, 13 February 1947, Outgoing Correspondence, The Hemingway Collection, JFK Presidential Library, Boston. The letter is to a “Miss Craipeau,” who apparently sent Hemingway a book and an article about the Soviet Union. Craipeau may well have been a relation of Yvan Craipeau, a French Trotskyite who was the author of works about the Soviet Union. To similar effect, in *The Breaking Point*, Koch describes a Hemingway who went to considerable—and unsavory—lengths to support the Soviet allies of the Spanish Republic.

41. Gustav Regler, *The Owl of Minerva/The Autobiography of Gustav Regler* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Cudahy, 1960), p. 357.

42. See “The Journalist Spies” in Haynes et al., *Spies*, 145–193.

43. *Ibid.*, 154. See also the file summary in Black Notebook, 89.

44. Undated draft of telegram to “Walter,” Outgoing Correspondence, The Hemingway Collection, JFK Presidential Library, Boston



# The United States, Britain, and the Hidden Justification of Operation TPAJAX

Torey L. McMurdo

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***TPAJAX was in fact rooted in a complex web of political and economic gamesmanship.***  
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With the overthrow of Iran's Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadeq by a CIA-led and British-backed coup d'état on 19 August 1953, the landscape of Western involvement in the Middle East was forever changed. The event, today seen as one of the most prominent examples of US intervention in the Middle East, was rooted in a complex web of political and economic factors and gamesmanship played by the British and US governments. Correspondence between the government of Prime Minister Clement Attlee and the administration of President Harry S. Truman leading up to TPAJAX illuminates not only shifting Anglo-Iranian relations but also a widening gap in the Anglo-American power structure.

This essay examines the differing views of the United States and Britain on the post-war situation in Iran. In it I argue that although the US government justified the coup as an effort to turn Iran from the path of communism, the United States, in fact, was led to intervene on behalf of the British government, which emphasized the communist

threat in order to encourage US action. The British concerns were less political, however. They were primarily economic and centered on the threatened loss of currency reserves that would follow nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC). This, in turn, threatened a rapid depletion of British dollar reserves, a loss of international purchasing power, and a further drop in London's international economic standing.

By contrast to the United Kingdom, the United States, had little stake, economic or political, in Iran until it came to be seen as a key in the West's competition with the Soviet Union. An Iran oriented toward Moscow, it was argued, would open the door to the spread of communism throughout the Middle East. The Attlee and Churchill governments therefore worked to emphasize this vulnerability to a Washington increasingly concerned about Soviet expansion.

## ***Background***

The issues that arose in Persia in the early 1950s stemmed from disagreements between

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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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### **The British Economic Situation in 1953**

The British economy was still being buffeted by the impact of the war and changes to the international monetary structures brought about by the Atlantic Charter (August 1941) and the Bretton Woods Agreement (July 1944). Primarily, it was trying to adjust to a world where the dollar had become the larger reserve currency. The loss of Persia's oil revenues cut into London's ability to earn sterling to help pay for much needed imports, which remained disproportionately high while Britain retooled back to a peacetime economy.

The British were slow to realign from their wartime production and so were unable to export enough goods to gain the currency they needed to pay for imports and to pay back the large loans they had taken out to finance the war effort. Finances were also short because Britain had been reluctant to scale back spending to maintain its international empire.

The abrupt end of Lend-Lease, although relieving Britain of the burden of repaying the loans, left it in an even weaker position to pay for imports. The United States did not seem to realize or to care very much that the UK was bankrupt. In the negotiation of the Anglo-American Loan Agreement that followed the end of Lend-Lease, Washington used its leverage to cajole/coerce Britain into agreeing to the Bretton Woods system, which had its roots in the economic themes laid out in the Atlantic Charter, and insisting on the convertibility of international sterling reserves.

The relatively undamaged US economy was much better equipped to take advantage of freer trade and convertible currency regimes than Britain, or the rest of Europe for that matter. Britain continued to bleed currency, causing it to devalue the pound in 1949, but in 1953, it was still concerned about its ability to raise dollars to finance its balance of payments.

the AIOC and the Persian government and people. Relations between the company and the Tehran government were dictated by the Concession of 1933, a contract between the Iranian government and AIOC, which was overseen by the League of Nations. Under it, disputes between the company and Persia were not to be argued in Persian courts and the Persian government was not allowed to cancel or expropriate the concession without compensation. At the same time, unilateral legislative action by Tehran's parliament was prohibited.<sup>1</sup>

While the concession was profitable to the AIOC, the same could not be said for Persia. In

1950, for example, had Persians controlled their own oil revenues, they would have earned £275 million; instead, Persia made only £37 million.<sup>2</sup> In addition to this lopsided revenue split, the AIOC maintained unfair labor practices. Persia's workers were often subjected to cramped living quarters, lengthy work weeks, and low pay. In an attempt to alleviate the situation, the oil company's employees founded a political party, the National Front, in October 1949. Although the group was in many ways splintered, drawing members from socialist, nationalist, and ultranationalist groups, it found a political figure it could easily relate to in

Mohammed Mossadeq, a nationalist who advocated taking control of Iran's oil production.<sup>3</sup>

In 1949, boosted by recent electoral victories over Mohammed Reza Shah, a new government hoped to sweep out the existing oil policy and asked to open a renegotiation of British oil concessions in the country. However, because Iran was credited with producing 76 percent of the AIOC's total output that year, the existing arrangement was seen in London as vital to Britain's postwar economic recovery. The AIOC and the British government resisted and instead offered minimal concessions.<sup>4</sup> As the noted Iran authority, Kenneth Pollack, comments in his book, *The Persian Puzzle*,

*All they were willing to offer was an increase in the minimum annual royalty to £4 million, a further reduction in the area in which AIOC could drill, and a promise to train more Iranians for administrative positions.... Iran had made £16 million that year; so the increase in the minimum royalty was irrelevant; the reduced AIOC concession area would still contain all of Iran's proven oil fields; and the company had repeatedly flagrantly disregarded its previous promises to train and promote Iranians.<sup>5</sup>*



These uncertainties and unkept promises caused the Persians to reject the new terms. Instead, with extreme nationalists in control, the Majles, Persia's parliamentary body, began in February 1951 to advocate nationalization of the oil fields at Abadan. This coincided with the assassination of Prime Minister Ali Razmara after he renounced nationalization proposals and was labeled a "British stooge." The champion of nationalization, Mossadeq replaced him, and on 30 April, the Majlis voted to nationalize Persian oil.<sup>7</sup>

### **Nationalization**

Nationalization presented a slew of issues for the British government. As a result, its ideas on how to deal with the situation varied. The possibility of imposing economic sanctions on Persia frequently made its way to the top of agendas in Parliament, but the consequences of these sanctions were estimated to be severe. According to a telegram sent from Britain's Tehran post to the Foreign Office, economic penalties would affect about 75 percent of Persia's foreign exchange earnings, and around 30 percent of its foreign exchange resources. Large-scale unemployment in Persia's oil-producing regions would result, and its internal financial standing would further weaken. Put simply, "Persia would be faced with 'economic chaos.'"<sup>8</sup>

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*Once the global repercussions of significant economic sanctions were assessed, and the hesitancy to use them grew, the possibility of military intervention increased.*

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The British also determined that the political risks of imposing sanctions were cause for concern. Economic chaos would work to the advantage of the communists and the Tudeh Party,<sup>1</sup> which might create hostility toward Britain in the United Nations and the United States. The US response was London's primary worry, however, as described in a 5 May 1951 Foreign Office telegram:

*Rather than see Persia fall into economic and political chaos, the U.S. government might even decide to send oil experts and U.S. tankers to Abadan and provide financial aid to offset H.M.G.'s financial sanctions.<sup>9</sup>*

Not only did British Foreign Office officials fear US intervention because it would be harmful to British negotiations, but also because it might be detrimental to Anglo-American relations, as the United States would appear to have "stepped into AIOC's shoes." The economic impact would also undoubtedly negatively affect Britain's relationship with other Middle Eastern countries.<sup>10</sup>

Once the global repercussions of significant economic sanc-

tions were assessed, and the hesitancy to use them grew, the possibility of military intervention increased. One of the primary questions became how to extract British citizens working for the AIOC in Abadan (particularly if Persia were to try and take the fields by force), both to ensure the safety of British employees of AIOC and to send a message to the Persian government that its decision to nationalize oil was unacceptable and would be costly to the country. The removal of British workers, who supplied most of the expertise behind the operations, would have severely slowed operations.

A fundamental split in British and US ideological approaches soon emerged, as the British government preferred to use force to mitigate any problems that might arise, while the United States, particularly Secretary of State Dean Acheson, believed that military intervention would drive Persia into what would be welcoming Soviet arms. Furthermore, the US government felt that Mossadeq and his nationalist followers were in fact capable of revising Iran's political structure and ensuring that the country did not fall into the hands of the Soviet Union.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Formed in 1941 by Marxists who had been jailed by Mohammad Reza Shah, the Tudeh Party had been encouraged by Stalin and the Soviets to stir up political awareness for their causes. The party would ultimately be most utilized by the CIA, however, which staged disturbances in the guise of the Tudeh that eventually led to riots and the overthrow of Mossadeq.

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*Despite US qualms about the use of force, the British continued to draw up plans to evacuate their AIOC employees from Abadan.*

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The use of force, US officials feared, might change this. The British were well aware of US concerns; a cabinet document titled, "The Political Implications of Armed Intervention in the Persian Oil Dispute" notes,

*The U.S. government draws a distinction between the use of force to protect the oil installations: a) when there is a regularly constituted government in Persia, and b) to counter a Communist coup. They don't accept the argument that to fail to protect Persia's oil industry might invite such a coup. We could not expect support from the U.S. Government, and American opinion at-large would be actively hostile.<sup>12</sup>*

This distinction would later lead Attlee and Churchill to present oil nationalization as an issue of communism rather than one of financial stability.

### ***Proposals for Military Intervention***

Despite US qualms about the use of force, the British continued to draw up plans to evacuate their AIOC employees from Abadan. In a July 1951 cabinet meeting led by Attlee, both the

AIOC and Britain's ambassador in Tehran favored the policy as a way of displaying their resilience to Persia. Attlee agreed with this stance, while warning that it was unwise to assume that if Britain succeeded in overturning the Persian government, any successor would be more favorable to the British government and the AIOC. After all, Mossadeq had gained power by earning the support of Persians who were dissatisfied with corrupt groups in Persian political circles.<sup>13</sup>

With this in mind, the British moved forward with preparations for military intervention. Three plans, Midget, Midget Reinforced, and Lethal, were proposed. Plan Midget was designed solely to protect and withdraw British nationals. Midget Reinforced would protect UK nationals but also allow forces to remain in Abadan if the opposition was weak. Plan Lethal would seize and hold Abadan Island in case of Persian opposition.<sup>14</sup>

Herbert Morrison, Britain's secretary of state for foreign affairs, advocated protecting British lives while seizing, holding, and operating the refinery. Not only would this allow the flow of refined oil to continue, he determined, but it could result in the downfall of Moss-

adeq and perhaps even encourage a regime more friendly to the British to take over. This was in direct contrast to the wishes of Washington, which at the time felt that the sitting Persian government should maintain power in order to prevent the country from falling into communist hands.<sup>15</sup>

The British insistence on the use of military force, despite US concerns, showed that they believed they were in complete control of the situation. This sentiment is best seen in a cabinet meeting in July 1951, when Morrison discouraged Sir Francis Shepherd, British ambassador to Iran, from meeting with US Ambassador to Britain W. Averell Harriman<sup>1</sup> because a meeting might cause harmful speculation in the press and among Persians. If Harriman helped mediate the dispute, Morrison argued, the Persian government might be led to believe that he was acquiring more favorable terms for Persia.<sup>16</sup>

Ultimately, Attlee's concern over the potential negative consequences of military action seemed to win out in the early stages of the oil nationalization dispute. Rather than withdraw AIOC personnel and provoke a disastrous Persian response, he decided that the British should instead remain in Abadan and execute Midget only if necessary.<sup>17</sup> This would allow further negotiations to occur, and would give the British gov-

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<sup>1</sup> Harriman would maintain a close relationship with the British government throughout his public service career, in this instance as ambassador and later as US secretary of commerce.

ernment time to discuss joint-force operations with the United States, which was still apprehensive about involving itself in the issues in Abadan and in greater Persia.

Attlee's cabinet meetings in the summer of 1951 would prove to be only the start of a long line of discussions of forceful action in Persia. They would also prompt conversations on what would prove to be a much broader and more strategic attempt to garner US diplomatic and military support for intervention in Iran.

### ***America's Growing Economic Leadership***

#### ***The Atlantic Charter***

While on the surface the United Kingdom faced an immediate loss of revenue with the nationalization of Iran's oil, its larger concern was deeply rooted in a growing currency crisis that plagued the British economy throughout the postwar period. With the conclusion of the war, Britain was slow to realign from wartime production back to a peace time economy. At the end of the war, nearly 55 percent of Britain's gross domestic product was derived from production associated with making war.<sup>18</sup> As a result it was unable immediately to produce and export goods to gain currency to pay for imports and to pay back its large war loans.

By contrast, as the war drew to a close, the United States had been able to improve its position in international trade

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*The Atlantic Charter would come to be seen as a sign of America's growing economic leadership and of the dire straits of Britain's sterling currency.*

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and enter markets it previously could not access. In many ways, the 1941 Atlantic Charter paved the way for American macroeconomic leadership. Among the eight points listed under the agreement were the principles of lowering trade barriers; establishing more global economic cooperation and advancement of social welfare; and ensuring freedom of the seas, a key component for advancing the shipment of US goods and exchanges on the international market.<sup>19</sup>

The charter, drafted by Winston Churchill and President Franklin D. Roosevelt, solidified the bond between Britain and the United States and would serve as a model for future international contracts, including the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the postwar liberalization of trade in French and British goods.<sup>20</sup> It would come to be seen as a sign of America's growing economic leadership and of the dire straits of the pound sterling.

#### ***Lend-Lease***

Shortly after the Japanese announced their surrender, the United States stopped its Lend-Lease Program, which had been a vital contributor to Britain's economy throughout the war. Under Lend-Lease, the United States had provided the United Kingdom, Soviet Union, China, France, and a host of other

Allied countries with war materials and supplies. Britain received an estimated \$31.4 billion in wartime shipments, the most of any country listed under the agreement.<sup>21</sup> When Lend-Lease was abruptly cancelled, the UK was virtually bankrupt and still in need of financial assistance, even though the United States had decided to negotiate Lend-Lease settlements without requiring repayments on wartime deliveries. This arrangement had other costs for the recipients of Lend-Lease aid:

*The decision to settle Lend Lease debts without monetary or financial repayments had a profound impact on the shape of the postwar economic system. The United States decided to extract foreign policy promises from the United Kingdom and require its participation in a new world economic framework. This also meant that the State Department, rather than the Treasury Department, would be the lead US government agency responsible for handling the consideration. While the Treasury Department would have primary authority for handling postwar international monetary and finance issues, the State Department took the lead in most*

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*Although the British eventually accepted, negotiations over the loan were sometimes heated, and with good reason.*

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*other postwar arrangements, such as creating the United Nations and negotiating postwar trade agreements.<sup>22</sup>*

This is important in the context of Britain's Persian oil crisis, because the US Department of State, rather than the Department of Treasury, handled monetary negotiations with and between Persia and Great Britain, lending a distinctly political flavor to the pressing economic crisis. In addition, then-Secretary of State Cordell Hull "aimed to...extract from the United Kingdom a pledge to abolish imperial preferences and secure Britain's support for a more liberal and nondiscriminatory international trade regime."<sup>23</sup> Indeed, this statement was a sign of things to come and would have a direct impact on the Anglo-American Loan Agreement, a major driver behind Britain's actions in the Persian oil crisis. In addition, the resulting agreement was to demonstrate how quickly the United States had come to fulfill its potential as a deal maker or deal breaker on the international political stage.

### ***The Anglo-American Loan Agreement***

Although the United States did not charge for most material sent to recipients of Lend-Lease assistance, it did want the return of large durable goods like warships, and it expected payment for material

delivered or on the way after the war's end. In addition, as noted above, Britain was still bankrupt. Hopeful of favorable terms for a loan to carry the country through the postwar period, the Atlee government sent economist John Maynard Keynes to seek financial assistance in the summer of 1946. Apparently not appreciating the full extent of British economic decline, the United States and Canada offered only loans, not a grants of aid as many British had hoped. The United States offered a loan of \$4.3 billion, at an annual interest rate of 2 percent.

Although the British eventually accepted, negotiations over the loan were sometimes heated, and with good reason. While Britain felt the pangs of a damaged economy, the United States saw the long-term importance of convertible currencies, then thought to be a necessity for a successful multi-lateral trading scheme, and pressed for including convertibility of the sterling as a condition to the loan. British concerns over the effect this would have on UK dollar reserves were noted in final documentation of the conditions:

*In order that Great Britain might be able to claim a waiver of interest (which, it is to be noted, is a final surrender; not a mere deferment) both of two conditions must be*

*satisfied. The first...in effect is that, in the judgment of the British Government (1) payment of the interest due would leave Britain with inadequate international reserves and (2) present or prospective conditions of multi-lateral clearing are such that Britain is or will be unable to get dollars for a large part of her export proceeds.<sup>30</sup>*

After extended negotiations, the condition remained and would kick in a year after ratification of the loan in 1947. This caused countries with sterling to almost immediately begin drawing from British dollar reserves. Within one month, nearly \$1 billion had been taken, resulting in the British government's decision to place a hold on conversions and to start cutting funding for domestic and foreign projects.<sup>27</sup> This loss of dollars reflected the growing weakness of sterling, which by 1949 was devalued from \$4.02 to \$2.80.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, it was through this sterling conversion that the roots of Britain's crisis in Persia really began to take hold.

### ***The Problem with Servicing Dollar Loans to Persia***

British concerns over sterling convertibility and decreasing dollar reserves extended beyond postwar repayments to the United States. By providing monetary assistance to Persia, the British feared additional depletion. In a 25 September 1950 memorandum on the ser-

ving of dollar loans to Persia, Britain's situation with regard to providing loans to Mossadeq's government becomes clear, as do Anglo-American agreements and disagreements on the issue. The memorandum notes,

*We and the Americans are agreed on the urgent necessity of providing immediate financial assistance to Persia. Last Spring the influence of the communist-controlled Tudeh party was increasingly disturbing because a series of inefficient Governments had destroyed public confidence in the ability of the regime to improve economic standards.... The importance of Persia's oil to our economy, and the political necessity of preventing her falling under communist domination, need no emphasis.*<sup>31</sup>

The latter half of this passage is most important, as it reflects the importance of Persian oil to Britain as well as Britain's emphasis on the communist threat in discussions with the United States. The memo continues,

*Mr. Razmara (the new Prime Minister) has applied to the American Export-Import Bank for a loan, which the bank is virtually committed to grant up to a figure of \$25 million and to the International Bank for a loan which will probably amount to \$9 mil-*

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*British Treasury officials were particularly concerned about the effects of dollar loans.*

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*lion...the difficulty which has arisen is in respect of the dollar servicing them....*

*The Persian Government has virtually no source of dollar income and her dollar needs are provided by ourselves under the terms of an agreement known as the Memorandum of Understanding between the Bank of England and the Persian Bank Melli, under which sterling held by Persia is convertible into dollars for the purposes of a) essential imports not obtainable from sterling sources, and b) certain other specific items such as diplomatic and educational expenses.*

*We have been considering giving sterling aid to Persia...but the Treasury have felt that if we were to do this, and if we were also to agree to provide the sterling backing or half of any assistance in local currency which Persia might require, we could reasonably expect the Americans on their side to provide all the dollar assistance required, including the servicing of the dollar loans, and also the dollar backing for half Persia's internal currency needs*<sup>32</sup>

Through this, Britain's concern over the nationalization of

oil and America's role in the crisis peaked. If Persia acquired dollars from the United States, then it would not need Britain's dollars under the Memorandum of Understanding. This would allow Britain to preserve dollar holdings and trade with the US government, helping it to remain a major economic power. If Britain could buy oil in pounds in sterling areas, Persia would be empowered to buy British manufactured goods with those pounds, leading to a better balance of trade. If oil started to be priced in dollars and Persia was lost, however, then Britain would be left with the question of where to acquire dollars to pay for oil, potentially leading to the cutoff of its pipeline.

British Treasury officials were particularly concerned about the effects of dollar loans. In a note from the Treasury Chambers to the prime minister, they argued,

*We could not tolerate a situation where Persia was freely converting her sterling balances here into dollars...they can use the sterling not so much to acquire dollars as to acquire dollar commodities.*<sup>33</sup>

In doing so, Britain's dollar reserves would decrease, as would its ability to purchase goods in dollars. This would have a severely negative impact on British purchasing power and the economy as a whole.

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*The US government seemingly dismissed British concerns.*

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***America's Response to Britain's Economic Woes***

Washington's response to Britain's concerns over payments to Persia was indicative of its newfound role as a leader in the global economic network. The US government seemingly dismissed British concerns, believing that communism was the greater threat in Iran and, therefore, all involved should compromise for the sake of stopping its spread. A telegram from New York to the British Foreign Office states,

*Mr. Acheson said that the sum involved in dollars was a relatively small one and the United States Government hoped that in view of the political importance to both countries of taking all possible steps to counteract Soviet pressure on Persia, His Majesty's Government would be prepared to waive their objections and agree that the Persians should be allowed to convert the necessary amount of sterling into dollars.<sup>34</sup>*

This view was supported by a telegram from the US ambassador in Tehran, who was most anxious that "the loan could be agreed by October 1st so that the announcement should forestall that of the Russian Trade Agreement [with Iran]."<sup>35</sup> To the United States, the stability of Britain's economy was secondary to the threat arising from the influence of commu-

nism in the region, particularly via the communist-backed Tudeh Party.

***The Presentation of the Communist Threat***

The presentation of the situation in Persia as an issue of communism changed little throughout the Attlee and Churchill governments, as both realized that America's stake in the issue was far different than their own. Attlee, more of a negotiator than a fighter, continuously took a diplomatic approach when dealing with US concerns toward Persia. Churchill, while more brazen in his attempts to secure US support, also worked the political scene to emphasize to the United States the growing communist threat, even from the early stages of the crisis. In a letter to Prime Minister Attlee, dated 9 July 1951, Churchill expressed his determination to present the crisis to the United States as one plagued by the potential of a communist takeover:

*We have urged that the strongest representation should be made to the United States to take positive action in supporting the common interests of the Atlantic Powers, which would be deeply endangered by the Sovietization of the vital area between the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf, and*

*we are glad to know that there is no question of our asking for mediation.<sup>36</sup>*

The letter reflects the general determination within the broader British government to obtain US support by constantly emphasizing Persia's vulnerability, particularly to communist influences. In a telegram from the Foreign Office to Washington, the shared desire to deter Soviet engagement with Persia is discussed, as is the level of concern over issues in Persia:

*We are at least as concerned as the State Department to prevent Persia falling under Russian or Communist domination. Where we differ from them is in our feeling that the present Persian Government, whilst in theory constitutional, appears to be embarking on a course of action which, if not stopped, can hardly fail to produce such administrative and economic chaos as must inevitably facilitate the establishment of a Communist-dominated régime.<sup>37</sup>*

The telegram underlines the threat posed by communism while questioning America's resolve on the issue:

*We are not sure whether the State Department fully appreciates the danger to Persia's future which in our view is pre-*

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*A significant policy shift took place in the United States when Eisenhower replaced Truman in 1953.*

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*sented by Dr. Musaddiq's régime. Our information regarding his character and behaviour, together with his lack of any positive programme apart from oil nationalisation, do not suggest that he or his Government are capable of tackling the many and grave problems before them.<sup>38</sup>*

Combined, the excerpts from this telegram reflect the dire attempts of both Attlee and Churchill to involve the United States in a solution to the oil crisis by emphasizing the weakness of Mossadeq's regime and the growing strength of communist influence in the region. With the Korean War underway, it would be this latter issue that would finally assure US support in ousting Mossadeq in 1953.

### ***The Importance of Character***

While Truman was more interested in economic negotiations and Churchill in military solutions with regard to the Persian oil crisis, both would find common ground on the nationalization issue—first because of the fear of depleting dollar reserves, and second because of the threat of Soviet influence in Persia. Britain would present these concerns in reverse order to the United States, however. When studied in a historical perspective, one realizes that the end result was, in part, created by the multiple

characters involved in the negotiations.

In the UK, little had changed in the approach toward Persia during the Attlee and Churchill governments, but a significant policy shift took place in the United States when Eisenhower replaced Truman in 1953. Truman, whose personality resembled Attlee's, preferred a more diplomatic approach to the problems in Persia, both through loan negotiations and economic sanctions. Eisenhower, who entered the 1952 presidential race promising to combat "communism, Korea and corruption," would keep his word in countering communism in Persia, both in committing to the 1953 overthrow of Mossadeq and in establishing the Eisenhower Doctrine in 1955. This doctrine promised to Middle Eastern countries the support of America's military and economic aid in order to "secure and protect the territorial integrity and political independence of nations requesting such aid, against over armed aggression from any nation controlled by International Communism."<sup>39</sup>

Meanwhile, Mossadeq's own personality and approach added to his country's crisis. His inability to make decisions and his tendency to create waves within the Persian government concerned the United States and Britain enough to ignite coup planning. This begs question of whether Mossadeq's

overthrow only occurred because of US and British intervention or whether Mossadeq was essentially "doomed from the start" as a result of the internal political situation in Persia. To answer this question would be to exceed the limits of historical evidence reviewed for this essay, but Musaddiq's volatile relationship with the Majlis certainly makes the latter scenario at least a noteworthy possibility.

### ***In Closing***

The 1953 overthrow of Mohammed Mossadeq cannot be analyzed as a sudden decision intended only to rid the Middle East of an unstable and vulnerable regime. Instead, it must be considered through a broad historical lens, taking into account more than a decade of economic, political, and military changes across the world, from the United States to Britain, Persia, and the Soviet Union.

At its core, Mossadeq's overthrow was inspired not by a communist threat, but by an economic one. World War II had left postwar Britain grasping for fresh economic policies that would help them rebuild into a global economic power. Bugged down in loan repayments and debt following the end of Lend-Lease, however, London had little choice but to borrow money on as favorable terms as possible, the Anglo-American Loan Agreement. A more dominant

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*Operation Ajax ... demonstrated to the Arab world that Britain was, essentially, finished as a major power in the Middle East.*

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US economic strategy further kept Britain from regaining its economic power, as the sterling convertibility clause of the loan agreement would ultimately prove devastating for the British economy and cause it to cut funding for a variety of domestic and foreign projects.<sup>40</sup>

The sterling conversion issue would play a major role in the oil nationalization crisis. Faced with the opportunity to float or devalue the pound in 1952, Churchill chose to do nothing. On political grounds, the Tories refused to devalue or float, believing that floating would undermine Bretton Woods, anger the United States, and harm the British economy. Churchill ultimately maintained the status quo, having expended so much political capital complaining about the Labour view that he failed to act decisively otherwise. Believ-

ing that this would be a symbol of power, it was, in reality, the one thing that needed fixing.

Churchill's approach in soliciting the assistance of the United States differed little from his predecessor, however, as both worked to gain American support by emphasizing the threat of communist penetration in the Middle East. Truman sought to mediate the situation through loans and monetary sanctions, and tried to find a practical solution that would avoid military intervention. Eisenhower, in an effort to rid the world of "communism, Korea and corruption," alternatively decided to try and eliminate communism's role in the Middle East through a CIA-led and British-backed coup in 1953, commonly referred to as Operation Ajax. In its quest for economic revitalization, the British saw in the Eisenhower

administration an opportunity to involve the United States in the unseating of Mossadeq. Without that motivation, and without the new administration in Washington, it is doubtful that the CIA would have been commissioned to carry out his overthrow.

Operation Ajax made the Suez Crisis in 1956 all the more acute, and also demonstrated to the Arab world that Britain was, essentially, finished as a major power in the Middle East. From the post-Suez period onward, the United States would be catapulted to center stage in the region, a position it still largely maintains to this day. Thus, the 1953 overthrow of Mossadeq ushered in a new era of power shifts. America's role in the Middle East grew substantially, as Britain's sterling crisis depleted not only its dollar reserves, but also its position in a more globalized economy.





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## *Thinking, Fast and Slow*

Daniel Kahneman, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011), 418 pp.

**Reviewed by Frank J. Babetski**

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Few books are “must reads” for intelligence officers. Fewer still are “must reads” that mention Intelligence Community functions or the CIA only once, and then only in passing. Daniel Kahneman has written one of these rare books. *Thinking, Fast and Slow* represents an elegant summation of a lifetime of research in which Kahneman, Princeton University Professor Emeritus of Psychology and Public Affairs, and his late collaborator, Amos Tversky, changed the way psychologists think about thinking. Kahneman, who won the 2002 Nobel Prize in Economics for his work with Tversky on prospect theory, also highlights the best work of other researchers throughout the book. *Thinking, Fast and Slow* introduces no revolutionary new material, but it is a masterpiece because of the way Kahneman weaves existing research together.

Expert intelligence officers at CIA, an agency with the “human intelligence” mission at its core, have come through experience and practice to understand and exploit the human cognitive processes of which Kahneman writes. These expert officers will have many moments of recognition in reading this book, which gives an empirical underpinning for much of their hard-won wisdom.

Kahneman also may challenge some strongly held beliefs. *Thinking, Fast and Slow* gives experts and newer officers, regardless of the intelligence agency in which they serve, an enormously useful cognitive framework upon which to hang their experiences.

The title of the book refers to what Kahneman, adapting a device that other researchers originally proposed, calls the “two systems” of the human mind. System 1, or fast thinking, operates automatically and quickly with little or no effort and no sense of voluntary control. Most System 1 skills—such as detecting the relative distances of objects, orienting to a sudden sound, or detecting hostility in a voice—are innate and are found in other animals. Some fast and automatic System 1 skills can be acquired through prolonged practice, such as reading and understanding nuances of social situations. Experts in a field can even use System 1 to quickly, effortlessly, and accurately retrieve stored experience to make complex judgments. A chess master quickly finding strong moves and a quarterback changing a play sent to him from the sideline when he recognizes a defensive weakness are examples of acquired System 1 thinking.

System 2, or slow thinking, allocates attention to the mental activities that demand effort, such as complex computations and conscious, reasoned choices about what to think and what to do. System 2 requires most of us to “pay attention” to do things such as drive on an unfamiliar road during a snowstorm, calculate the product of 17x24, schedule transportation for a teenage daughter’s activities, or understand a complex logical argument.

Kahneman focuses much of the book on the interactions of System 1 and System 2 and the problems inherent in those interactions. Both systems are “on” when we are awake. System 1 runs automatically and effortlessly but

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System 2 idles, because using it requires effort and is tiring. System 1 generates impressions and feelings, which become the source of System 2's explicit beliefs and deliberate choices. System 1, when it encounters something it cannot quickly understand and did not expect (in other words, a surprise), enlists System 2 to make sense of the anomaly. The alerted System 2 takes charge, overriding System 1's automatic reactions. System 2 always has the last word when it chooses to assert it.

The systems operate to minimize effort and maximize performance and are the result of hundreds of thousands of years of human evolution in our environment. They work extremely well, usually. System 1 performs well at making accurate models and predictions in familiar environments. System 1 has two significant weaknesses: it is prone to make systemic errors in specified situations—these are “biases”—and it cannot be turned off. System 2 can, with effort, overrule these biases if it recognizes them. Unfortunately, System 2 is demonstrably very poor at recognizing one's own biased thinking. Trying to engage System 2 at all times to prevent System 1 errors is impractical and exhausting.

In terms of Kahneman's construct, a significant part of the missions of intelligence agencies boils down to seizing opportunities presented by the flawed interactions of the System 1 and System 2 thinking of foreign actors while at the same time recognizing and mitigating the flaws of their own System 1 and System 2 interactions. Hostile services and organizations try to do the same thing in return. Operations officers rely on the biases of foreign counterintelligence officers, essentially advising assets to avoid exciting any System 2 thinking in people positioned to do them harm. Aldrich Ames's Soviet handlers preferred that we not focus System 2 thought on how he bought a Jaguar on a GS-14 paycheck—System 1 found a tale about his wife's inheritance cognitively easy to accept.<sup>a</sup>

A target's biases put the “plausible” in plausible deniability during covert actions. Effective deceptions also fundamentally rely on a target's unchallenged biases and so make it easy for the target to believe what they already are predisposed to believe. Effective fabricators, especially those with tantalizing access, rely on our biased desire to believe them. One or two plausible reports from such a person may be enough to engage the exaggerated emotional coherence or halo effect. Roughly put, once lazy System 2 is satisfied, it tends to defer to System 1, which in turn projects positive qualities in one area into a generalized positive assessment.

Terrorists rely on these biases, but they are also vulnerable to them. Terrorism works because it provides extremely vivid images of death and destruction, which constant media attention magnifies. These images are immediately available to a target's System 1. System 2, even when armed with reliable statistics on the rarity of any type of terrorist event, cannot overcome System 1's associative reaction to specific events. If you are a CIA officer who was working in Langley on 25 January 1993, then chances are that you cannot make the left turn into the compound from Dolley Madison Boulevard without thinking of Aimal Kasi, the Pakistani who killed two CIA officers and wounded three others at that intersection that day.

The 9/11 hijackers on the first three planes could count on passengers to stay seated, relying on their ability to quickly remember accounts of previous hijackings in which the hijackers were motivated to survive—this is what Kahneman calls the availability bias. However, because of their success at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the terrorists unwittingly and immediately rendered hijacking a less effective tactic. The passengers on Flight 93, quickly armed with knowledge of the other three flights, were able to engage System 2 to overcome System 1's existing avail-

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<sup>a</sup> If you think that you certainly would have known Ames was a Soviet spy had you known of his Jaguar, then you are probably guilty of hindsight bias, or the tendency to underestimate the extent to which you were surprised by past events. On the other hand, you are not guilty of hindsight bias if you think this (before having read about Ames) and have ever reported a colleague to counterintelligence for owning a Jaguar.

ability bias and make the decision to physically overpower the terrorists.

Kahneman's insights pertain to the entire spectrum of intelligence operations. We accept information security practices that demonstrably impede productivity in order to reduce the danger of worse losses posed by cyberattack or penetration. At the same time, we would almost certainly consider the same amount of lost productivity a major defeat if a hacker had inflicted it on us. This is what Kahneman calls the loss aversion bias. System 2 does not assert control over System 1's cognitive ease at imagining a disaster because increased productivity is much more difficult for System 2 to imagine.

Any intelligence officer making budget decisions should read Kahneman's thoughts on the biases underlying the sunk-cost fallacy, or the decision to invest additional resources in losing endeavors when better investments are available. People find it difficult to engage System 2 to cut their losses in such situations, especially when System 1 can easily convince them of the loss of prestige that would surely follow. How often does the same officer who started an expensive major project also decide to kill it? You likely did not have to engage System 2 to answer the question.

Likewise, none of us are immune to what Kahneman calls the planning fallacy, which describes plans and forecasts that are unrealistically close to best-case scenarios and could be improved by consulting statistics in similar cases. This review, for example, took twice as long to write as I thought it would, just like almost every other paper I have ever written.

Intelligence analysts should pay particularly close attention to Kahneman's chapters on the nested problems of prediction, intuition, and expertise.<sup>a</sup> Forecasting and prediction are core mission elements for analysts. Kahneman breaks them down into two main varieties. The first, such as those engineers make, rely on

look-up tables, precise calculations, and explicit analyses of outcomes observed on similar occasions. This is the approach an analyst uses to predict the amount of explosive force needed to penetrate a certain thickness of concrete, or calculate how much fuel a certain type of airplane needs to complete a certain type of mission.

Other forecasts and predictions involve intuition and System 1 thinking. Kahneman further breaks down this variety of prediction into two subvarieties. The first draws on the skills and expertise acquired by repeated experience, in which a solution to the current problem comes quickly to mind because System 1 accurately recognizes familiar cues. The second subvariety of intuitive prediction, which is often indistinguishable from the first, is based on biased judgments. This type of intuitive prediction, typically forwarded with considerable confidence, very often leads to trouble. The expanded use in intelligence analysis of structured analytic techniques and approaches adopted in the wake of the 9/11 attacks and the National Intelligence Estimate on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction represents in part an effort to eliminate this latter type of prediction.

The trick is in using structured techniques and approaches—or applied System 2 thinking—in a way that eliminates biased intuitive forecasts and predictions without also discouraging, delaying, or even eliminating the intuitive insights that true expertise provides. This dilemma probably explains in part why some experts in the CIA's Senior Analytic Service remain ambivalent about structured analytic techniques and approaches.

Kahneman, despite his stated preference for statistics and algorithms, cannot dismiss out of hand the value of intuitive prediction borne of true expertise. His "Expert Intuition: When Can We Trust It?" chapter centers on what he calls his adversarial collaboration with Gary Klein, a leading proponent of Naturalistic Deci-

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<sup>a</sup> Many intelligence analysts are familiar with some of these theories from Richards J. Heuer, Jr.'s *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis* (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Intelligence, 1999), which is based in part on earlier versions of Kahneman's and Tversky's work. This publication is available online at <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/books-and-monographs/psychology-of-intelligence-analysis/index.html>.

sion Making, who rejects Kahneman's emphasis on biases and focuses instead on the value of expert intuition and on how intuitive skills develop. It is not difficult to imagine that their collaboration was more difficult than Kahneman generously portrays it to have been, which makes the areas on which they were able to agree even more noteworthy.

They agreed that the confidence that experts express in their intuitive judgments is not a reliable guide to their validity. They further agreed that two basic conditions must be present before intuitive judgments reflect true expertise: an environment that is sufficiently regular to be predictable and an opportunity to learn these regularities through prolonged practice. An expert firefighter's sensing the need to order his men to evacuate a burning building just before it collapses or a race driver's knowing to slow down well before the massive accident comes into view are due to highly valid clues that each expert's System 1 has learned to use, even if System 2 has not learned to name them.

Learning, in turn, relies on receiving timely and unambiguous feedback. Many if not most of the issues with which intelligence analysts are seized are what Kahneman and Klein would probably call "low-validity" environments, in which the intuitive predictions of experts should not be trusted at face value,

irrespective of the confidence with which they are stated. Moreover, they would probably consider the feedback available to analysts—from policymakers and events—inadequate for efficient learning and expertise development. Kahneman was not referring specifically to intelligence analysts when he wrote, "it is wrong to blame anyone for failing to forecast accurately in an unpredictable world," but he has given interviews in which he discusses intelligence analysts in this context. At the same time, he also wrote, "however, it seems fair to blame professionals for believing they can succeed in an impossible task." In short, Kahneman concedes that intuition has to be valued, but it cannot necessarily be trusted.

*Thinking, Fast and Slow* provides intelligence officers with an accessible vocabulary to discuss the processes of human cognition—the interactions between System 1 and System 2 thinking—which are at the center of their work. It does not, however, provide solutions or reliable approaches to bias mitigation. According to Kahneman, the best we can hope to do is learn to recognize situations in which mistakes are likely, and try harder to avoid specific errors when the stakes are high. Kahneman also spends very little time discussing how biases work in collaborative environments, despite his own very insightful accounts of his collaboration with Tversky. We can hope he will explore that in his next work.



## *Espionage and Covert Operations: A Global History—An Audio Course*

Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius. (Chantilly, VA: The Great Courses, 2011) 12 CDs, 12 hours.

**Reviewed by Nicholas Dujmovic**

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As countless commuters know, hours of unproductive time in cars can be transformed into learning experiences with interesting material on audio CDs, iPods, or other devices. The CIA Library has done the Agency's workforce a great service by providing a multitude of audiobooks and courses on a wide range of subjects. But what has been missing—because it hasn't been available commercially—is an audiocourse on intelligence. For many years, The Great Courses, a Virginia-based enterprise formerly named The Teaching Company, has offered recordings on a wide variety of subjects in the sciences and the humanities. In history, the courses, often taught by giants in the field, cover the gamut from ancient civilizations to the rise of modern terrorism. But only recently has The Great Courses produced a history of intelligence. *Espionage and Covert Operations: A Global History* is the first commercially available course that I've seen on the world of intelligence. It is a first, I'd say wobbly, step in the right direction, and one hopes it has set the stage for better in the near future.

The course teacher, Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, is a professor at the University of Tennessee. He has an academic background in European history, particularly in diplomacy and war, which he teaches on four other sets of audiocourses prepared by The Great Courses. Liulevicius, whose resume includes an impressive list of published works on 20th century European history, is engaging and often witty, with impressive knowledge of the historical and cultural backdrop to the episodes he describes. This knowledge is used to good effect, making the course valuable for intelligence officers wishing to better understand the

historical context of their profession. In this respect, the breadth of *Espionage and Covert Operations* is impressive, covering in its 24 lectures spying and operations throughout human history, from ancient Mesopotamia through today's era of terrorism, cyber war, and Wikileaks. In addition—and this is an especially useful aspect of the course—Liulevicius discusses how spies and spying have been perceived in terms of spy scares, cultural attitudes, and spy fiction during various periods.

On the downside, Liulevicius evidently has researched the subject of intelligence, but he lacks experience and significant academic background in the field. It shows in the course's lack of depth, impersonal approach, and lack of systematic arrangement—weaknesses professional intelligence officers will recognize immediately and have to accept if they are to continue the 12 hours of instruction. For example, Liulevicius's first lecture is an overview of terms that, while marginally acceptable for a general audience, will rightly be seen as flawed by knowledgeable professionals. His bifurcation of intelligence collection into HUMINT and SIGINT is oversimplified and unaccountably ignores IMINT, which he does cover later in the course. Analysis is not even mentioned up front as an intelligence matter, as if what is gathered immediately makes sense and is useful to political authorities. Still, he covers prominent analytic issues later. (One senses that the course was cobbled together on the fly and without a full conceptualization of what was to follow.)

On basic terminology, Liulevicius seems an eager but not very precise beginner, guilty of

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many of the same terminological gaffes evident in journalism and popular stories about intelligence. CIA officers are not “agents,” and Aldrich Ames and Robert Hanssen were not “double agents.” A “walk-in” is inexplicably termed a “covert operator.” He is not, at least not when he walks in to offer services.

He labels the use of Navajo code talkers during World War II “an intelligence success” when it was really an innovative and effective communications security measure. Herbert Yardley, the early 20<sup>th</sup> century US cryptographer, was no “whistle blower”—he was a self-promoting publicity hound. A “fifth column” is not a “Trojan Horse.”

Liulevicius also seems shaky or inconsistent in relating basic concepts. He defines “covert operations” as “secret action” by governments to achieve some result, presumably an action with a connection to intelligence, but this is frequently not the case. Liulevicius categorically overreaches, calling the stealing by Venetian merchants of St. Mark’s relics from Alexandria in the 8th century a “covert operation.” Likewise earning the “covert” label are the passage of a ship manned by escaping slaves from Charleston harbor during the Civil War, the operation of the Underground Railroad, the bomb plot against Hitler, or, most bizarrely, the Holocaust. It would have helped if Liulevicius had sorted out the differences among “covert,” “clandestine,” and “secret” ahead of time. Liulevicius is very good in addressing the historical theme of intelligence in the service of internal repression, but mentioning the Nazi and Soviet secret police in the same breath as the McCarthy era in the United States is breathtakingly inappropriate.

Arguably one can ignore these quibbles and focus on Liulevicius’s strength, which is his enthusiasm for telling stories that demonstrate the ubiquitous nature of espionage and, yes, “covert operations” throughout history. By the end of the first half of the course the listener has learned something about the Rus-

sian secret police, from Ivan the Terrible’s *oprichniki* to Lenin’s Cheka; about the continental intrigues of France’s Cardinal Richelieu and Prussia’s Wilhelm Stieber; about the American intelligence legacy of the Revolutionary and Civil wars; and about much else. Specialists will never be happy with the lack of depth on any particular subject, but overall this is an impressive achievement.

The course’s second half, however, will disappoint listeners knowledgeable about CIA history, and it may mislead those without a fair background in that Agency’s story. In the context of world history, beginning a breezy and shallow treatment of CIA on the ninth of a dozen discs probably is unavoidable. Some of the faults in this portion of the lecture series could easily have been rectified. These especially include the lack of coverage of the development of US intelligence in the period between the end of the OSS and the establishment of the CIA, and the muddled discourse, riddled with omissions and errors, on aspects of CIA history—e.g., the origins of covert action, Cold War covert influence campaigns, the U-2 program, and the Ames and Hanssen cases. Most galling, Liulevicius repeats the canard—disproven by the record and by recent scholarship—that the decline and fall of the Soviet Union came as a surprise and therefore represented a “massive intelligence failure” on the part of the CIA and other Western intelligence services.

In sum, this audiocourse is a good, pioneering effort—a B minus in my judgment—that I hope will spark in listeners a greater appreciation for and an interest in the role of intelligence in human history. I also thank Liulevicius for citing the Web site of the Center for the Study of Intelligence (CSI) as an online resource, but I urge him to use CSI materials and the rest of his good course bibliography to increase his familiarity with this subject.





## *The Orphan Master's Son: A Novel*

Adam Johnson, (New York: Random House, 2012), 443 pp.

### **Reviewed by John Ehrman**

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Let's ask the obvious question first: Is *The Orphan Master's Son*, published in early 2012 to enthusiastic reviews in almost every major newspaper and journal, as good as the critics say? My answer is a resounding "yes." Adam Johnson has constructed a fascinating plot, set it in a carefully detailed world, and written in a style that captures the reader from the first page.

Johnson's novel follows the adventures of a North Korean, Jun Do, who grows up in an orphanage run by his father. From there, he goes into the army, where he serves in a unit trained to fight in the total darkness of the tunnels under the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea. Next, Jun Do is assigned to an intelligence unit that kidnaps Japanese. Success in this assignment leads to English language training, a stint as a radio intercept operator on a fishing boat, and then a trip to Texas as a translator for a Korean delegation.

Upon Jun Do's return from Texas, Johnson sends the story in unexpected directions. Jun Do is imprisoned in a labor camp where prisoners work in mines until they die. When the minister of prison mines, the brutal and thug-gish Commander Ga, visits the mine, Jun Do kills him, dons his uniform, and assumes Ga's persona.

Johnson uses the substitution to drive home a critical point, that in North Korea the truth is whatever people are told it is. With no one daring to question his new identity, Jun Do thus becomes Commander Ga and moves in with Ga's wife—an acclaimed film star named

Sun Moon—and Ga's young children. Sun Moon, of course, is not fooled but reluctantly accepts him and lives with Jun Do as if he were Ga. As Commander Ga, Jun Do also meets with Kim Jong-il—who, bizarrely, accepts the imposter even though he knew Ga—while simultaneously plotting the escape of Sun Moon and her children from North Korea. Johnson uses multiple narrators for this part of the story, a device that enables him to maintain suspense as the plot twists to its conclusion.

Johnson, however, is not content just to tell an interesting story. He has a larger goal, which is to bring home to his readers the awful realities of life in totalitarian North Korea. Toward this end, Johnson has done his homework—not only did he travel to Pyongyang, but his detailed references to Korean customs and descriptions of daily life and North Korea itself demonstrate careful research. The resulting portrait is unrelentingly grim; Johnson's North Korea is a place of starvation, casual brutality and extraordinary hardships in almost every aspect of life, and it is a place where everyone fatalistically assumes that at some point they will be arrested and sent to a labor camp. All of this takes place amidst a constant din of Orwellian propaganda, with the regime telling the people how good their lives are, and the people, in turn, carefully repeating slogans to stay out of trouble. The point is not just that North Korea is a place of material hardship and physical suffering, but also that it is a place where the state seeks total control of each person's soul. For anyone who has read about Mao's China or Stalin's Russia, even if they know little about North Korea, Johnson's descriptions ring true.

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In trying to bring North Korea to life, Johnson seeks to follow other writers who have used fiction to tell the truth about totalitarianism. He is working in the tradition of Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*, George Orwell's *1984*, and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, among many others. What these books have in common, it is important to note, is that their authors had not only researched and visited the communist states of the 20th century, but actually had lived in them or been involved in communist politics. Their fiction was grounded in long personal experience.

This is where *The Orphan Master's Son* stumbles. Johnson's mistake is to insert a genuine leader into the story, something that neither Koestler nor Orwell did. Indeed, Number One and Big Brother were all the more menacing because they were unseen. Thus, in the imaginations of their subjects, victims, and

readers, these rulers came to be seen as omnipresent and invincible. Johnson portrays Kim Jong-il, however, as being just as caught up in the regime's propaganda fantasies as much as anyone else is; in his acceptance of Jun Do as Ga, he seems unable to tell where his own fictions end and reality begins. Moreover, Johnson's Kim at times seems less evil than befuddled. It may be unintentional, but Johnson has humanized Kim and thereby demoted him from monster to curiosity.

Nonetheless, I highly recommend *The Orphan Master's Son* for anyone who wants to gain insight into North Korea. We probably will not have a full understanding of North Korea until the Kim dynasty has been gone for many years—Stalin has been dead for almost 60 years, and scholars are still making fresh discoveries—but until then, Johnson's descriptions and insights provide a fascinating portrait of life in this tragic land.



## **Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf**

*Compiled and reviewed by Hayden Peake*

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### **Current Topics**

***America The Vulnerable: Inside the New Threat Matrix of Digital Espionage, Crime, and Warfare***, by Joel Brenner.

### **General**

***The Art and Science of Intelligence Analysis***, by Julian Richards.

***Eyes on Spies: Congress and the United States Intelligence Community***, by Amy B. Zegart.

***Fixing the Facts: National Security and the Politics of Intelligence***, by Joshua Rovner.

***Intelligence and Intelligence Analysis***, by Patrick F. Walsh.

***Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy*** (Fifth Edition), by Mark M. Lowenthal.

### **Historical**

***Castles Made of Sand: A Century of Anglo-American Espionage and Intervention in the Middle East***, by André Gerolymatos.

***The Fear Within: Spies, Commies, and American Democracy on Trial***, by Scott Martelle.

***Mastermind: The Many Faces of the 9/11 Architect, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed***, by Richard Minter.

***Operation Fortitude: The Story of the Spy Operation that Saved D-DAY***, by Joshua Levine.

***Red Conspirator: J. Peters and the American Communist Underground***, by Thomas Sakmyster.

***The Wars of Afghanistan: Messianic Terrorism, Tribal Conflicts, and the Failures of Great Powers***, by Peter Tomsen.

### **Memoir**

***The Vietnam War from the Rear Echelon: An Intelligence Officer's Memoir, 1972–1973***, by Timothy J. Lomperis.

### **Intelligence Abroad**

***FAREWELL: The Greatest Spy Story of the Twentieth Century***, by Sergei Kostin and Eric Raynaud.

***Guerrilla Leader: T. E. Lawrence and the Arab Revolt***, by James J. Schneider.

***Michael Collins and the Anglo-Irish War: Britain's Counterinsurgency Failure***, by J.B.E. Hittle.

***SMERSH: Stalin's Secret Weapon; Soviet Military Counterintelligence in WWII***, by Vadim Birstein.

***Spies and Commissars: Bolshevik Russia and the West***, by Robert Service.

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## Current Topics

***America The Vulnerable: Inside the New Threat Matrix of Digital Espionage, Crime, and Warfare***, by Joel Brenner. (New York: Penguin Press, 2011), 308 pp., endnotes, index.

Joel Brenner, a Harvard Law School graduate, served as the National Security Agency's inspector general and later as the national counterintelligence executive (NCIX), jobs in which he gained a genuine understanding of the contemporary cyberthreat. To gain the attention of readers, he begins his story by stating that the Chinese downloaded "up to twenty terabytes of information from the Defense Department—equal to about 20 percent of all the data in the Library of Congress. And we don't know what they took." (1) Now those who have served in the Pentagon may conclude that if the stolen documents were written in "Pentagonese," China may never do it again. On the other hand, if the downloads contained sensitive material, a serious problem exists. *America the Vulnerable* assumes the latter and goes on to describe this "new form of espionage: how it works; what the biggest and most valuable targets are; who does it best; as well as what it means for the future of warfare, intelligence, market competition, and society at large." (2) It is a sobering account—he is talking billions in potential losses of secret technology.

But the vulnerability is not confined to cyberespionage. He makes a very strong case that personal data and social networks are being electronically undressed. Likewise, commercial secrets that could threaten the economy, and the

power grid are all targets. Corrective action can't, he suggests, be taken serially. The vulnerability is present simultaneously.

Brenner identifies numerous real-world problems and some hypothetical ones that are anything but unrealistic. One real-world example is the criminal organization called ShadowCrew, which operated worldwide and demonstrated the hazards of not attending to security when using the internet. (27-31) Other examples include the cyberattacks on Google technology and commercial cyberespionage against the Ford Motor Company. He offers a hypothetical scenario that suggests how such capabilities can affect international security.

A review of an assassination in Dubai in the chapter "Spies in a Glass House" illustrates the risks associated with the today's surveillance society—such as drones and GPS—and the threat from groups like WikiLeaks. The title is taken from an experiment in transparency conducted by architect Philip Johnson, who built a glass house and was confounded by society's reaction. (11, 244)

*America the Vulnerable* deals with an alarming situation without being alarmist. It is very well written and concludes with some suggestions to Congress, the executive branch, individuals, and the private sector for "managing the mess." No one person can implement defensive measures; that burden is on us all. Brenner does not estimate the likelihood of success.

## General

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***The Art and Science of Intelligence Analysis***, by Julian Richards. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 197 pp., footnotes, index.

After obtaining a PhD in Political Violence in Pakistan from Cambridge University, Julian Richards spent 17 years as an intelligence analyst with the UK Ministry of Defence before re-

turning to academia. He is now deputy director of the Centre for Security and Intelligence Studies at the University of Buckingham. *The Art and Science of Intelligence Analysis* is a

thoughtful and practical two-part introduction to the topic.

In preparation for an examination of the components of intelligence analysis, Part I begins with a discussion of the definition of intelligence, in which Richards concludes that it is a complex system and that no single definition adequately applies. He then identifies the prevention of surprise as a key analytic goal and recognizes the difficulties imposed by the huge volume of data in the contemporary information environment.<sup>1</sup> In order to deal with this problem, Richards argues that a theory of an “intelligence system” is necessary and suggests how the “system” should work in any given circumstances. Such an approach is required, he argues, in order to understand why intelligence fails. Further background in this part of the book covers the evolution of the current intelligence threat and how analysis today also applies to law enforcement and security functions. Part I concludes with a discussion of how the

roles of analysts are influenced by organizational cultures, politics, and ethical considerations.

Part II of the study first considers aspects of analytical theory that are more art than science. These are elements requiring judgment, critical thinking, communication, and intuition. Richards notes in passing that these topics have received significant attention at Center for the Study of Intelligence and the Sherman Kent School at the CIA. (117) The scientific elements of analysis are then reviewed—for example, hypothesis formulation and testing and other tradecraft techniques; the role of social networks; the value of timelines; and massive data extraction techniques. A basic assumption for all analysts, he stresses, is that they all obtain extensive background knowledge and training.

*The Art and Science of Intelligence Analysis* is a basic primer for anyone concerned about what it takes to become an intelligence analyst. Well documented and clearly written, it is a worthwhile introduction to the topic.

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***Eyes on Spies: Congress and the United States Intelligence Community***, by Amy B. Zegart. (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 2011), 130 pp., footnotes, index.

Author and former Assistant Director of Central Intelligence for Analysis and Production Mark Lowenthal recognized that “the oversight of intelligence has always been a problem.”<sup>2</sup> University of Georgia professor Loch Johnson wrote that “oversight is better than it used to be, but nowhere near as good as it should be.”<sup>3</sup> The 9/11 Commission called Congressional oversight “dysfunctional.”<sup>4</sup> These observations are typical of those of many commissions that have investigated intelligence. While each one suggests possible functional corrections and improvements—larger staffs, a joint intelligence committee, and no term limits are just three examples—none have addressed the fundamental

question: why aren’t the intelligence committees doing their job? *Eyes on Spies* answers that question in simple declarative sentences.

While UCLA professor and Hoover Institution senior fellow Amy Zegart strongly supports legislative oversight and the post-9/11 congressional reforms, she argues persuasively that “Congress has been largely unable to reform itself.” (3) Or put another way, “many of Congress’s biggest oversight problems lie with Congress” as an institution. (9) With regard to intelligence oversight, she is more specific: “Simply put, Congress has never expended as much effort overseeing intelligence as other pol-

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<sup>1</sup> His use of the “signal-to-noise” metaphor (29) in this regard is, however, incorrect. By definition, noise has no signal content.

<sup>2</sup> Mark Lowenthal, *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy* (Washington, DC: Sage, 2012) 217.

<sup>3</sup> Loch Johnson, “Accountability and America’s Secret Foreign Policy,” in *Intelligence: Critical Concepts in Military, Strategic & Security Studies, Volume 4* (New York: Routledge, 2011) 61.

<sup>4</sup> *The 9/11 Commission Report: The Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 2004) 420.

icy areas.” (10) The reasons for this situation are straightforward, she concludes: “the intelligence oversight system...is well designed to serve the reelection interests of individual legislators and protect congressional committee prerogatives but poorly designed to serve the national interest.” (11) Current practice is weak on monitoring accountability, meeting strategic objectives, and “ensuring compliance with the law and public trust for agencies that...must hide much of what they do.” (6)

In order to get a handle on the problem, Chapter 2 of this six-chapter study examines the question: What does good oversight look like? After reviewing the history of oversight and its problems of partisanship, turf battles, and conflicting bureaucratic interests, Zegart concludes poor oversight is hard to define but is easily recognized. Her interviews support this assertion. One legislator called oversight “horrible.” (32)

Zegart then identifies two metrics that suggest an additional reason for poor oversight: the number of hearings held and the number of bills passed. She presents persuasive data that indicate the intelligence committees rank poorly on both counts when compared with other committees. Why is this the case?

Subsequent chapters look at answers suggested by analysts using political science techniques and various intelligence study methods. The literature they have produced identifies functional weaknesses, Zegart suggests, but misses the key

point—the limited electoral incentives for service on the intelligence committee do not justify the effort required to get the job done properly. Chapter 5 reinforces this conclusion by considering the deficiencies that apply to the intelligence committees in particular. She provides ample evidence that they are “not designed to oversee intelligence agencies well,” restricted as they are by inexperienced members and staff, term limits on the committees, “weak budget authority” splintered among other committees, and a lack of other incentives for service. (112)

In conclusion, Zegart suggests steps to improve the situation. The main one is giving the intelligence committees sole control over the Intelligence Community budget. In effect this means “Congress will have to reform itself,” something she does not see happening in the current environment—electoral self-interest and protection of turf are very powerful factors. Finally, she notes that while “executive branch secrecy may make meaningful oversight difficult...Congress’s self-inflicted weaknesses make it next to impossible.” (120-1) One point not considered, however, is whether effective oversight would increase the already excessively time-consuming burden on the IC.

*Eyes on Spies* focuses critical attention on intelligence oversight to the same degree that Sherman Kent’s *Strategic Intelligence for American World Policy* did on intelligence studies. It is a bold, articulate book and should be taken as seriously.

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***Fixing the Facts: National Security and the Politics of Intelligence***, by Joshua Rovner. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), 263 pp., endnotes, index.

When an intelligence system fails as it did before 9/11 or its judgments are as wrong as they were before the Iraq War, severe consequences result, and the relationships among foreign, military, and homeland security policymakers suffers. In order to prevent such occurrences, it is necessary to examine why they happen and what needs to be done to avoid them in the future. Dr. Joshua Rovner, an MIT political science graduate and currently an associate professor of strategy and policy at the US Naval War College, addresses these issues in *Fixing the Facts*.

The facts to be fixed, however, are not errors by intelligence analysts, as a glance at the title of this book would suggest. Rovner takes a different approach. He is concerned with “the connection between intelligence officials and policymakers...a relationship prone to dysfunction.” (3-4) For purposes of his study, he assumes the intelligence disseminated is as correct as possible, although perhaps not as complete or on point as may be desired by policymakers. Understanding the intricacies of the resulting friction or dysfunction is essential to fixing the problem.

Rovner analyzes the problem from a political science point of view, in which interactions are characterized by three “pathologies of intelligence-policy relations”: neglect, excessive harmony, and politicization. (5) Neglect occurs when policymakers disregard intelligence that doesn’t conform to their expectations. Excessive harmony causes groupthink. Since these first two pathologies have been studied elsewhere, Rovner chooses to focus much of his discussion on the third, politicization, which he defines in detail and with many examples. After listing criteria to test the impact of the three pathologies, Dr. Rovner applies them to three cases: the Johnson administration and Vietnam, estimates about the Soviet Union in 1969 and 1976,

and US and British estimates on Iraq during 1998-2003. In a chapter on each case, he discusses the interaction of the three pathologies.

The concluding chapter summarizes Rovner’s theoretical constructs using examples—the implications of then DCI Richard Helms’s judgment in the Vietnam order-of-battle controversy and George Tenet’s “slam dunk” assessment, to name two. Whether application of the models describing sound intelligence-policymaker relations will reduce friction and dysfunction in the future is impossible to say. That the models identify key issues to be considered and a construct for doing so is evident. *Fixing the Facts* is a stimulating and challenging contribution.

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***Intelligence and Intelligence Analysis***, by Patrick F. Walsh. (New York: Routledge, 2011), 332 pp., bibliography, index.

Australian Patrick F. Walsh is a senior lecturer in criminal intelligence at Charles Stuart University. Before that he was an intelligence analyst in the Office of National Assessments in Canberra. *Intelligence and Intelligence Analysis* examines the post 9/11 reforms in the profession in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and the United States. In particular, he looks at the changes that have necessitated a closer relationship between domestic security agencies (17) and the traditional foreign intelligence organizations in each of those countries.

however. There are chapters on leadership and management, the need for innovation and collaboration, the importance of education, and the value of research and theory building.

The discussion of each topic is accompanied by commentary on current literature dealing with the subject and what Walsh calls case studies. The latter are actually summaries of what the countries in his book are doing on each topic. For example, in the chapter on intelligence frameworks and or organizational issues, there is a case study on how each country has applied a new framework to a problem. In the case of the United States, for example, it is fusion centers; in New Zealand, it is the integration of intelligence into its single police agency.

After reviewing the situation before 9/11, Walsh looks at two areas in which new practices have emerged to meet the changed threat: corrections and biosecurity. Both illustrate the magnitude of the challenges and the need for rapid exchange of integrated information. Subsequent topics include improving operational capacity at various levels of government, intelligence models and frameworks that may achieve this goal, and how to assess effectiveness. Walsh does not neglect the contributions of individuals,

*Intelligence and Intelligence Analysis* does not pretend to present answers to meeting all post 9/11 challenges, but Walsh has provided examples across five nations, making clear that the problems are recognized and are being addressed by each. It is a unique contribution.

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***Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy*** (Fifth Edition), by Mark M. Lowenthal. (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2011), 386 pp., bibliography, appendices, index.

In 1984, perhaps looking toward retirement, Mark Lowenthal hypothesized that well-written books describing the Intelligence Community

(IC) would require new editions in perpetuity. In this, the fifth edition of *Intelligence*, Dr. Lowenthal—who has served with the Congressional

Research Service, the State Department, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, the National Intelligence Council, and the Director of Central Intelligence—provides an expanded update of this basic text.

The 15 chapters that cover the basic functions of the profession and the IC remain unchanged, and there are 51 new pages. Additions include changes concerning operational matters—for example, the use of drones, policy initiatives of the Obama administration, and personnel changes since 2009. There are also several new sections in the chapter on transnational issues: demographics, support to the military, and cyberspace. The latter replaces the section on network warfare. The chapter on intelligence

reform has been substantially revised and updated, as has the chapter on foreign intelligence services. New sources have been added to the suggestions for further reading at the end of each chapter.

*Intelligence* is more than a description of the functions, operational mandates, and other obligations of the IC. Lowenthal has included analysis of performance, suggestions for improvement, the role of ethics, and the need for community-wide accountability and reform. For these reasons, the book is both a valuable introductory text and a source of information on contemporary issues facing the IC. Only source notes could improve its quality.

### Historical

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***Castles Made of Sand: A Century of Anglo-American Espionage and Intervention in the Middle East***, by André Gerolymatos. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2010), 347 pp., endnotes, bibliography, chronology, index.

The track record of the attempts of foreign nations to control and influence political events in the Middle East is a mix of short-term success and long-term failure. In *Castles Made of Sand*, Simon Fraser University historian André Gerolymatos explores the role of Anglo-American espionage and intervention operations in the region. The story he tells, however, is not confined to intelligence and covert action. He includes the political determinants and the contributions of other national players—for example, Germany, France, Israel, and Russia—and Islamic movements like the Muslim Brotherhood.

Gerolymatos begins with the effects of the Crusades on current Islamic politics. He also covers the British imperial era, focusing on Egypt and the local anti-Christian wars that resulted. Other major events include WW I and the Arab Revolt—and Lawrence of Arabia—the end of the Ottoman Empire and imperial Islam, the forced creation of the modern Middle Eastern States in 1922 (Churchill's fix), and the origins of turmoil in Palestine under British mandate. Also includ-

ed are the WW II and postwar policies of the Truman and Eisenhower presidencies—specifically, in Iran, Crete, Syria, and Pakistan—that continue into the present period.

*Castles Made of Sand*, however, is chronologically disjointed. Chapter 1, "Assassination," for example, looks at attempts on the life of Gamal Nasser by the Muslim Brotherhood and the role played by MI6. The next chapter concerns disruptions in Egypt and Sudan in the late 19th century, only to be followed by a chapter on events in 1924. This, in turn, is followed by a chapter concerning events in 1916. Though the ordering improves in the second half of the book, Gerolymatos never makes clear the reason for this confusing chronology and doesn't establish a smooth flow of events or ideas.

Some of the topics Gerolymatos covers really don't fit well. One example may be found in the chapter on CIA subversive operations. It includes background on Otto Skorzeny, Reinhard Gehlen, Carmel Offie, and covert actions in Eu-



rope, but there are no apparent links to the Middle East.

The book is mostly drawn from secondary sources, not all of them reliable. In the chapter titled “Spies, Adventurers, and Religious Warriors,” for example, Harry St. John Philby is identified as both a British civil servant and an intelligence officer; he was never the latter (53). On the topic of the CIA in the Middle East, Gerolymatos discusses the role of James Angleton and his links with Israeli intelligence, information from a source identified only as “close friend.”

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***The Fear Within: Spies, Commies, and American Democracy on Trial***, by Scott Martelle. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2011), 296 pp., endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

The 1940 Smith Act set criminal penalties for advocating the overthrow of the US government.<sup>5</sup> It also required all noncitizen adult residents to register with the government, and it barred admission into the country of communists from abroad. The rationale for the act “was not abstract—Hitler’s Abwehr and Stalin’s NKVD were actively trying to plant spies in the United States.” (3) During WW II the act was used to prosecute Nazis without public objection. But author Scott Martelle argues that when the act was used in 1949 to justify jailing leaders of the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA), authorities were guilty of overreaction. Worse yet, it was a threat to the American way of life. The Warren Supreme Court eventually ended Smith Act prosecutions, having concluded that intent to advocate overthrow of the government by violence was insufficient for conviction—one had to try and do it before the law was violated. *The Fear Within* tells the story of the convicted communist leaders and attempts to draw parallels with the PATRIOT Act of 2001.

The spy scare began in the mid 1940s when four agents of the Soviet Union defected—Igor Gouzenko in Canada and Louis Budenz, Elizabeth Bentley, and Whittaker Chambers in the

The final chapter considers Pakistan and its Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) organization, from its creation to the present. The US and British intelligence roles were relatively minor. The focus in this chapter is on ISI’s role in assassinations, its support to the Taliban, and its links to radical Islam.

*Castles Made of Sand* stops at that point, badly in need of a summary chapter that isn’t there. Overall, a disappointing contribution.

United States. Martelle reviews the consequences of the evidence they presented. Each claimed firsthand knowledge of American communists who were spying for the Soviet Union. Some identified leaders of the CPUSA as active agents. But there was no firsthand evidence admissible in court except for what Chambers produced, and espionage charges were not possible since the statute of limitations had run out. Curiously, even though evidence of Chambers’ espionage has long been documented, Martelle raises doubts that Chambers “was indeed a communist” and claims that evidence of his “working for the Soviets remains murky.” (264, fn 33) Thanks to Kim Philby, the Soviets quickly learned of the defections and shut down the networks. The FBI was unable to gather direct evidence of espionage, so the Justice Department decided to prosecute the party leaders under the Smith Act. (31)

Martelle discusses the case against the CPUSA leaders in detail, emphasizing their family ties and personal circumstances, while admitting they were indeed committed communists. He also describes the often disruptive public reaction to the trials from the right and left, and the consequences for left-leaning faculty in academia. He admits that the arrogant behavior of

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<sup>5</sup> Alien Registration Act (18 U.S.C. § 2385) of 1940.

the CPUSA leaders hurt their position. And when the FBI produced witnesses who had penetrated CPUSA meetings and added documentary evidence—somehow obtained from CPUSA files—the outcome was clear. Eleven were convicted. All appealed. Some went directly to jail; others jumped bail but eventually landed in prison.

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***Mastermind: The Many Faces of the 9/11 Architect, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed***, by Richard Minter. (New York: Sentinel, 2011), 278 pp., endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

How did a young, 5' 4" Kuwaiti graduate of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (NCA&T) end up in a Guantanamo Bay prison seeking martyrdom? Is he really a member of al Qaeda, as he claims, and if so, how did he join? Was he the so-called "mastermind" behind 9/11, and if so, why did he do it? What is his real name? In *Mastermind*, investigative journalist Richard Minter attempts answers to these questions. Working from official reports, unattributed interviews, and secondary sources, he begins piecing together a view of Khalid Shaikh Mohammed's (KSM) early life. From interviews with people who knew him at NCA&T, Minter describes KSM's often unhappy student days in America. He examines the formative influences of the Muslim Brotherhood and the role of KSM's extended family on the path to his calling: His sister-in-law was an MIT graduate charged with the attempted murder of a US soldier (5); one nephew was involved with Richard Reid and the shoe bomber plot; another nephew, Ramzi Yousef, helped carry out the first Twin Towers bombing; and one of KSM's brothers was a leader of a terrorist group in Pakistan.

Minter traces KSM's Islamic radicalism from his college days, where KSM claimed to have planned the murder of Meir Kahane, a rabbi and founder of the Jewish Defense League. This is followed by training in Afghanistan, experience

*The Fear Within* argues that the victims of the Smith Act prosecutions were just good Americans with different points of view about the political future. The government and the public overreacted to their radical views, which were permitted under the First Amendment of the Constitution. Martelle warns—and this is the main point of the book—that we risk doing the same thing today.

in Bosnia, and his debut terrorist act, planned by KSM but carried out by Yousef. It was after that event that he met Osama bin Laden and was encouraged to continue the good work. Opportunities were everywhere, and KSM considered killing the pope, President Clinton, and Benazir Bhutto. He also began thinking about the use of airplanes as bombs. Of these, he attempted only the Bhutto plot, and it failed. Minter then tells of the events that led to KSM's capture.

Minter traces the psychological, religious, and operational connections between various terrorist events. He answers some of the questions raised above and speculates on others. He also reviews different CIA interrogation techniques and examines al Qaeda's functioning. But has he got it right? Many key points in *Mastermind* are based on sources that can't be positively corroborated, including many of KSM's. At least one of those can be verified, however—there is a video of his beheading *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl. Minter is careful to distinguish between the verifiable and the unverifiable.

*Mastermind* conveys the motivations and determination that drive terrorists in general and KSM in particular. It is a discouraging story but well worth contemplating.

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***Operation Fortitude: The Story of the Spy Operation that Saved D-DAY***, by Joshua Levine. (London: HarperCollins, 2011), 316 pp., bibliography, photos, index.

The codename for the deception plan for the Allied invasion of France on 6 June 1944 was Fortitude. Several lengthy, scholarly books have

been written about it.<sup>6</sup> What, then, is left to say? Is *Operation Fortitude* more than just a good summary of those well-known events? The an-

swer is a qualified “yes.” The “more,” though it is not extensive, mostly touches on three areas.

The first concerns three previously unreported German agents in Britain. The account of the undetected agents disproves, Levine suggests, the MI5 claims that all Abwehr agents dispatched to England after the beginning of the war were identified and captured. However, these three had nothing to do with Fortitude and are included here only as part of the historical background.

The second area includes the addition of new details to a few well-known spy cases. These include material about MI5 officer Christopher Harmer derived from letters to which Levine was given access.

The third area involves correction of a previous account of deception—the case of GARBO, the Double-Cross agent to which the book’s subtitle refers. Here Levine offers new facts based on letters GARBO sent as part of the Fortitude deception.

The most interesting new material concerns two other contributors to the Allied deception,

British Commando Lt. George Lane (a Hungarian whose true name was Dyuri Lányi) and a German general, Hans Cramer, who had been released in a prisoner exchange before D-Day. Lane landed in France on a reconnaissance mission and was captured before the invasion. Eventually he was interrogated, over tea, Lane later wrote, by German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, who was in command of German troops in Western Europe. Cramer also met Rommel. Together, Lane and Cramer further convinced Rommel that the main invasion target was the Pas-de-Calais. Lane, though not part of the deception plan, did so cleverly in his conversation with Rommel. Cramer as part of the deception operation achieved the same result. Levine documents this effort in a narrative essay on sources. In the Cramer case, he corrects a version of the story previously reported by Anthony Cave Brown in his book *Bodyguard of Lies*. Brown’s version differs substantially and was not documented, while Levine relies on firsthand accounts obtained after the war.

*Operation Fortitude* is a well-written summary of the principal and most successful deception operation of WW II and is a useful addition to the historical literature on intelligence.

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***Red Conspirator: J. Peters and the American Communist Underground***, by Thomas Sakmyster. (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2011), 251 pp., endnotes, bibliography, index.

J. Peters was a major figure during the heyday of communist agents in the United States. From 1932 to 1938 he was associated with underground operations of the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA). At various times he worked with the NKVD and the GRU and dealt with American agents like Whitaker Chambers, Alger Hiss, Hede Massing, Hal Ware, and Victor Perlo. Peters has not received much scholarly attention, mainly because he took the Fifth Amendment before Congress and because he left the United States in 1949, before the FBI could prove he was a spy.

Thomas Sakmyster, professor emeritus of history at the University of Cincinnati, has exam-

ined documents about Peters in US and Hungarian archives—including Peters’s own unpublished autobiography—and interviewed former US colleagues. The story he unearthed begins in Hungary, when WW I veteran Sándor Goldberg—Peters’s true name—became a communist. Postwar economic conditions offered little opportunity, and he emigrated to the United States in 1924, telling officials at Ellis Island that he was a doctor. Curiously, they didn’t believe him, the documents show, but he was allowed stay anyway. For the next eight years, Peters worked at a variety of jobs. Finding he had a talent for writing, he began editing a Hungarian language newspaper. Soon contacts developed with various communist workers’

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<sup>6</sup> See for example: Roger Hesketh, *FORTITUDE: The D-Day Deception Campaign* (London: St. Ermin’s Press, 1999); and Thaddeus Holt, *The Deceivers: Allied Military Deception in the Second World War* (New York: Scribner, 2004).

organizations and eventually the Comintern. In 1931 he went to Moscow and Berlin, where he received training in conspiratorial operations and became what Sakmyster calls an *org practi-cant*, an agent. On his return to America, Peters began espionage activities, although he kept a hand in CPUSA matters. (40)

Sakmyster deals at length with the years Peters spent operating “the Washington Set-up,” the name he gave his illegal apparatus. He describes the problems Peters had coordinating with the CPUSA, the NKVD, and the GRU, and his successful efforts setting up and servicing mail drops, providing false passports, placing and handling agents in the federal government, transmitting documents, and battling turf-sensitive contemporaries from Moscow. By 1937,

with Stalin’s purges in full swing, Peters’s operations began to fall apart when Chambers decided to defect. After that event, Peters changed his name to Alexander Stevens and went underground. He eluded the FBI until 1943, when he was identified during a search for communists. With no hard evidence of espionage, the Immigration and Naturalization Service pursued a charge of illegal immigration against Peters. Before he was deported in 1949, Peters left voluntarily for Hungary, where he died in December 1990. (180)

*Red Conspirator* fills a gap in the story of communist agents and activity in America. It is an important contribution to counterintelligence history.

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***The Wars of Afghanistan: Messianic Terrorism, Tribal Conflicts, and the Failures of Great Powers***, by Peter Tomsen. (New York: PublicAffairs, 2011), 849 pp., endnotes, bibliography (online at [publicaffairsbooks.com](http://publicaffairsbooks.com)), maps, index.

Author and career Foreign Service officer Peter Tomsen served in Thailand, Vietnam, India, the Soviet Union, China, and in various senior State Department positions before President George H. W. Bush appointed him Ambassador and Special Envoy on Afghanistan in 1989. His task was to “coordinate United States policies and programs with the Afghan resistance.” (277) Part three of *The Wars of Afghanistan* tells the story of his ultimately unsuccessful efforts to accomplish his mission. Here, he focuses on the post-Soviet era and the American-Afghan relationship during this period as influenced by their devious mutual ally Pakistan. The first two parts of the book review the history of Afghanistan from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the era of the “Great Game,” to the end of the Soviet occupation in 1992. Readers unfamiliar with this period will learn of the centuries-long tribal traditions that still dominate Afghanistan’s way of life. Tomsen also identifies the key players, their Islamic pedigrees, and the rationale behind their sudden and frequent shifts in loyalties.

The dominant themes of *The Wars of Afghanistan* explain Afghanistan’s geopolitical importance and why all attempts by Britain, the Soviet Union, the United States, and Pakistan to control its tribal society have failed. Tomsen identifies the political issues, internal bureaucratic battles, and turf wars that complicated attempts to achieve peace, while stressing the role of the various forms of Islam in shaping every decision.

In Tomsen’s view, his extensive efforts to work out a reasonable settlement to the Afghan wars after the Soviet withdrawal were complicated by two factors. The first was an ambivalent US policy, which CIA complicated by supporting—against official US policy—radical Islamic elements backed by Pakistan. Those elements, he argues, were attempting to establish an Afghan government by force and opposed moderate forces favored by the State Department. This view is not universally held, as former CIA officer Charles Cogan explains in his review of Tomsen’s book last year<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Charles Cogan, *Foreign Policy*, 15 September 2011.

The second factor complicating Tomsen's efforts was the behavior of duplicitous Pakistan, the "ally from hell that created the Taliban." (531) Pakistan's continued support of the Taliban thwarted all attempts for a peaceful settlement on terms acceptable to the United States.

*The Wars of Afghanistan* ends with Tomsen's recommendations for preventing Afghanistan from returning to the era of shattered tribal

zones with no effective central government—the worst case scenario—when US troops leave. The focus here is on Pakistan, not Afghanistan, (692) and takes into account Pakistan's relationship with India and the Taliban. The key component, however, is that a lasting solution must rest with moderate Muslims that the West can support. Tomsen has provided a fine panoramic view of the problem, with all its attendant frustrations.

### Memoir

***The Vietnam War from the Rear Echelon: An Intelligence Officer's Memoir, 1972–1973***, by Timothy J. Lomperis. (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2011), 270 pp., endnotes, photos, chronology, index.

Many memoirs by former military intelligence officers who served in Vietnam tell of service as advisers or of field operations.<sup>8</sup> Author Timothy Lomperis, now a professor at St. Louis University, tells a different story. As Lieutenant Lomperis, he was a staff intelligence officer at the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) from March 1972 until January 1973. Several events influenced his tour. These included President Nixon's Cambodian policy, the Easter invasion of South Vietnam by the North Vietnamese regular army, and the Paris Peace negotiations. With the help of post-tour hindsight and perspective gained later at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, Lomperis explains their impact.

Lomperis was born in India to missionary parents. He returned to the United States in 1965 to attend college. Vietnam was the lead story on TV every night, and the atmosphere on campus was decidedly left of center. He explains how he dealt with the antiwar mindset, went to officer candidate school, and became a US Army intelligence officer. After learning Vietnamese, he was off to the MACV, where he began his not very exciting staff duties. Given the more risky—though career-enhancing—option of join-

ing a long-range reconnaissance patrol, he declined and remained with the staff. (77) The balance of his Army tour gave him a firsthand, though low-level, inside view on how the war was run. He devotes a chapter to that topic. Lomperis was also concerned with implementing general guidelines from Washington into practical concepts for ending the war. As an aside, throughout the book, he adds sidebars of moral reflection that make clear how the war influenced him. In short, he saw what was happening, couldn't make sense of much of what he saw, and really couldn't do much about it. That clearly bothered him.

With the Paris Peace Agreement, his military tour ended in March 1973, and Lomperis accepted a civilian appointment that lasted until August. He relates the changes in his life, personal and professional, that resulted from his new status. In particular, he tells a story of an unsuccessful "secret assignment to end the war" that had not stopped with the Paris Accords. (210) Overall, Loomis concludes it was a lousy war. Vietnamization was a poorly supported but serious effort that turned into a political disaster. Lomperis has provided a candid and unusual view of staff intelligence in Vietnam.

<sup>8</sup> See for example: Lt. Col. John L. Cook, *The Advisor: The Phoenix Program in Vietnam* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Military History, 1997); and Jeff Stein, *A Murder in Wartime: The Untold Story that Changed the Course of the Vietnam War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992).

## Intelligence Abroad

**FAREWELL: The Greatest Spy Story of the Twentieth Century**, by Sergei Kostin and Eric Raynaud, translated by Catherine Cauvin-Higgins. (Las Vegas, NV: AmazonCrossing, 2011), 429 pp., photos, no index.

In February 1981, Vladimir Vetrov, a KGB officer assigned to the Scientific and Technical Directorate, offered his services to the French DST (Direction de la Surveillance du Territoire—equivalent to the FBI) rather than the SDECE (Service de Documentation Extérieure et de Contre-Espionnage—equivalent of the CIA), which would have made more sense. Vetrov knew what he was doing. He had served in Paris, where he knew Frenchmen linked to the DST. He knew, too, that if the DST sent the right handler, he would escape KGB notice since they were concerned only with officers in the SDECE. And that is what happened. The DST secured Prime Minister Mitterrand's approval and then, without informing the SDECE, assigned Vetrov the English codeword FAREWELL, hoping that in the event it became known, the KGB would look to the MI6 or the CIA for the source—and they did. During the next 12 months, Vetrov provided extensive details on all manner of Soviet scientific data. In February 1982, authorities in the USSR arrested Vetrov for murder, not espionage. In 1985 he was executed for espionage, not murder, the authors explain why.

While elements of the case have been mentioned in the press since 1986, many questions remained.<sup>9</sup> Authors Sergei Kostin and Eric Raynaud have delved deeply into Vetrov's life, examining records and interviewing participants—including his wife, mistress, and various intelligence officers. *FAREWELL* presents the results of that research.

Vetrov's family had no KGB connections. He grew up in Moscow, became a mechanical engineer, and went to work in a factory. He played sports well and met his wife-to-be at the Dynamo Sports Club. In 1959, he was recruited by the KGB directorate responsible for foreign intelligence collection during its post-Khrushchev "Se-

cret Speech" expansion. He did well in early KGB training and found he had a gift for languages. His first foreign assignment was to France. He later served in Canada, where he accepted a recruitment pitch, according to the authors. But if anything ever came of it, they were unable to learn what it was. Back in Moscow after the birth of a son, Vetrov had professional problems, began drinking too much, and acquired a mistress. In need of money, he contacted a Frenchman who traveled frequently to Moscow and let it be known he was interested in cooperating with French intelligence.

Kostin and Raynaud explain the unusual relationship of his recruitment and handling. The material he provided, they say, was passed to the CIA, which set up a special unit to handle it. The authors claim that the CIA, with National Security Council consent, arranged to have false data leaked to the KGB to lead its scientific efforts astray, but they cannot provide documentary evidence. At some point—the authors are not sure just when or how—a mole passed clues to the KGB that material was finding its way to Washington. Vetrov was one of only a few who had access to that material. Before proof was found, Vetrov murdered a man in the aftermath of a lovers' quarrel. He was arrested, tried, and sent to the Gulag. While there, he wrote to his wife asking her to contact his French friends and ask for help. The KGB intercepted the note. He was interrogated and promised only a prison term if he confessed. He did, and he was executed.

FAREWELL is an incredible tale of espionage with many unexpected twists, turns, and unusual tradecraft elements. Whether it is "the greatest spy story of the century" is open to question. But it is a very interesting case and well worth reading.

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<sup>9</sup> See Thierry Wolton, *Le KGB en France* (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1986).

***Guerrilla Leader: T. E. Lawrence and the Arab Revolt***, by James J. Schneider with a foreword by Thomas E. Ricks. (New York: Bantam Books, 2011), 328 pp., endnotes, index.

The 1962 motion picture *Lawrence of Arabia* starred 6'2" Peter O'Toole as T. E. Lawrence, a British Army intelligence officer who led an army of camel-riding Arabs to victory over Turkish troops during WW I. In *Guerrilla Leader*, Professor Emeritus James Schneider covers much of the same ground, but his account is more accurate.<sup>10</sup> While the movie projects a heroic image of Lawrence's leadership as a given, Professor Schneider analyzes how the 5'5" Lawrence, a civilian archeologist with no military experience at the beginning of the war, did indeed become the successful leader of the Arab Revolt. He explains how Lawrence developed his relationship with Arab leaders by applying his language skills and his sensitivity to Arab culture and traditions, and how he came upon the idea of using guerrilla tactics rather than fighting a war of annihilation—a major departure for British army doctrine. Most important, however, Schneider focuses on Lawrence's leadership skills and especially on how he conceived and applied them.

Schneider analyzes how the stress of British efforts at political deception of the Arabs weighed on Lawrence. But more significant was the stress of battle and the demands of leadership. According to Schneider, it was the latter that eventually led to what he identifies as post-traumatic stress disorder, an affliction that followed Lawrence for the remainder of his life. A turning point, writes Schneider, occurred when his Arab troops discovered that Turkish soldiers had massacred civilians in the village of Tafas. He quotes Lawrence as commanding, "The best of you bring me the most Turkish dead," and lat-

er his order to "take no prisoners." (293-4) Lawrence, professor Schneider concludes, was never the same after that defining experience.

But there was another incident—which Schneider inexplicably does not mention—that contributed to Lawrence's psychological condition. He does allude to Lawrence's reconnaissance of the town of Deraa (183) but omits his capture by the Turks and the humiliation of a sexual assault by Turkish guards before he escaped. In his book *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, Lawrence discusses this event and the lasting impact it had on him. While some Lawrence biographers questioned whether it had in fact occurred, the most reliable narratives take it seriously, arguing that it accounts for much of Lawrence's eccentric behavior after the war<sup>11</sup>.

The only source notes in *Guerrilla Leader* refer to Lawrence's writings. Schneider suggests other sources were omitted to make the narrative read more easily, though he does not explain why eliminating reference numbers should have this effect. In any case, the reader is left to wonder how he knew of many of the details in the book. In fact, the account of Lawrence's illegitimate origins, education, and intellectual pursuits tracks well with the available record. As to Schneider's psychological interpretation of them and their links to Lawrence's leadership qualities during the Arab Revolt, the reader must make a judgment. *Guerrilla Leader* is a thoughtful book that addresses the fundamental question of leadership in its many forms through the life of an extraordinary individual.

<sup>10</sup> Schneider is professor emeritus of military theory at the School of Advanced Military Studies at the United State Army Command and General Staff College (USACGSC) in Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas.

<sup>11</sup> For an account that questions whether the incident occurred, see James Barr, *Setting the Desert on Fire: T. E. Lawrence and Britain's Secret War in Arabia, 1916-1918* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2006), 195ff. For the most authoritative account that argues the incident did take place and discusses the impact on Lawrence, see John E. Mack, *A Prince of Our Disorder: The Life of T. E. Lawrence* (Boston: Little Brown, 1976), 229ff. Mack was a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical school.

***Michael Collins and the Anglo-Irish War: Britain's Counterinsurgency Failure***, by J.B.E. Hittle. (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2011), 296 pp., endnotes, bibliography, appendices, index.

During the failed Easter Rising of 1916, a group of Irish rebels attempted to gain independence from England. Taking a different tack, on 21 January 1919, a group of Sinn Féin party members recently elected to the British Parliament declined the honor and instead issued the Irish Declaration of Independence. On the same day, two Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) officers were killed in an ambush. These incidents precipitated the undeclared Anglo-Irish War. *Michael Collins and the Anglo-Irish War* is a study of that war and the events that led to the creation of the Irish Free State, a Dominion of Great Britain, in December 1921.

Michael Collins, the chief of the IRA's Intelligence Department—just one of his many titles—is the central character battling the British in numerous works. Retired CIA operations officer-turned-academic J.B.E. Hittle readily acknowledges those histories and the controversies they ignited. His approach to the subject differs in that he looks at events from the perspective of an intelligence officer. Consequently, his interpretations differ in many cases from those of academic historians. For example, when Collins discovered that William Doran, a porter at the hotel where Collins met colleagues, was a British informer, he ordered Doran executed. When Doran's wife, who believed her husband worked for Collins, applied to Sinn Féin for a pension, it was granted.

The family was allowed to believe the assassination was the work of the British. When Michael T. Foy, a historian at Queen's University, Belfast, described the incident, he concluded that Collins "did not have the heart to tell [Doran's wife] the truth and authorized financial assistance to the family<sup>12</sup>." Hittle sees the

act differently. It was, he argues, "simply good tradecraft" and preserved the unit's reputation in a battle "against a cunning, numerically superior, and extremely dangerous adversary." (36-7)

*Michael Collins and the Anglo-Irish War* begins with a review of the history that led to the war and follows Collins's ascent from a minor participant in the Easter Rising to a principal player—who had contacts with Churchill—in the Irish rebellion. Particular attention is given to the network of informers Collins organized, the insurgency techniques he developed and exploited so effectively, the role of propaganda, and his ruthless use of assassination to achieve his goals. The most famous example of the latter is Bloody Sunday, when his IRA men eliminated most of Britain's intelligence officers in Dublin.

British intelligence and its attempts to counter Collins's operations is a parallel theme of the book, and Hittle provides detailed critical analysis of those efforts. He concludes that the post-war bureaucratic battle for the counterterrorist mission in Britain created confusion, mixed with egocentric incompetence, that accounted for much of the Irish success.

This book is not a primer on the IRA—of which the modern IRA is a political offshoot—and its many predecessors, affiliates, and successors. Readers with limited knowledge on these subjects may wish to read the concluding chapter first. It contains a fine summary of events that may ease understanding of earlier chapters. This fresh look at familiar history is a very worthwhile addition to the literature.

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<sup>12</sup> Michael T. Foy, *Michael Collins's Intelligence War: The Struggle Between the British and the IRA 1919-1921* (Phoenix Mill, UK: 2006), 181.



***SMERSH: Stalin's Secret Weapon; Soviet Military Counterintelligence in WWII***, by Vadim Birstein with a foreword by Nigel West. (London: Biteback Publishing, 2011), 512 pp., endnotes, photos, index.

Some words by their very sound convey an impression of malicious intent. For readers of fiction, Scrooge, the Grinch and SMERSH—the latter thanks to Ian Fleming's James Bond—are familiar examples. Now Russian-American historian, Vadim Birstein, provides a thoroughly documented nonfiction story of SMERSH with an unprecedented level of evil behavior that was unknown to Fleming. This is not the first book on SMERSH in English. Dr. Birstein reviews the other two and also discusses relevant Russian literature only recently made available.

The original proposal for a new Soviet counterintelligence organization named it SMERINSH—an acronym for the phrase “death to foreign spies.” In the version approved and signed by Stalin in March 1943 and sent to Viktor Abakumov, the organization's first and only chief, the word “foreign” had been eliminated and SMERSH—“death to spies,” foreign and domestic—was created. Birstein provides several chapters describing events that led to the creation of SMERSH; his final chapter records the reasons for its demise in 1946.

The bulk of the book, however, is devoted to the operations of SMERSH officers who were assigned, with no distinguishing badges on their uniforms, throughout the Red Army and Navy.

***Spies and Commissars: Bolshevik Russia and the West***, by Robert Service. (New York: MacMillan, 2011), 440 pp., endnotes, bibliography, photos, maps, index.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 surprised leaders throughout the world during WW I—even among the Bolsheviks. For the next four years, Bolshevik protagonists employed all forms of power to create a government and promote the revolution throughout the world. It is a story, as historian Robert Service acknowledges in his first sentence, that “has been told a thousand times...to the exclusion of the global situation,” a judgment readers of George Kennan and Richard Pipes may find hard to accept. The basic story covers the travels of Lenin and Trotsky from foreign lands to join the uprising

They reported all suspicious and “inappropriate” behavior to Abakumov, and he reported only to Stalin. It was SMERSH that sent Solzhenitsyn to the gulag for criticizing Stalin in a letter, and it was SMERSH that some accounts say executed the “spy” Raoul Wallenberg. One element of SMERSH worked against spies of the German army and often turned them into double agents. Another dealt with Nazi defectors, and the still unsolved case of the “Klatt Bureau,” a German espionage network that operated in the USSR, is told from the Soviet point of view. (153ff.) After the war, SMERSH interrogated POWs held in German camps and sent most to Soviet camps. Only one group of Soviet prisoners escaped the grasp of SMERSH. They found refuge in Liechtenstein, population 12,141 in 1945, where the government ignored SMERSH threats. With the help of Allen Dulles and OSS, the ex-POWs subsequently made their way to Argentina. (320-1) It was SMERSH, too, at Stalin's insistence, that represented the Soviet Union at the Nuremberg Trials. (374ff.)

Birstein relates these events in extensive detail based on 10 years of research in Russian, American, British, and Swedish archives. *SMERSH* is not easy reading, but it fills an important gap in the literature. Another volume, focusing on Viktor Abakumov, is in the works.

in Russia, their overthrow of the provisional government, their ruthless consolidation of power, and the peace treaty with Germany. Then he covers the reaction of Western governments to prevent Russia from leaving the war, culminating in military intervention—strongly supported by Churchill—and the successful civil war that solidified the Lenin government.

But in one sense, Service is correct. More than earlier histories of the revolution, *Spies and Commissars* includes considerable anecdotal detail on the contributions and reactions of jour-

nalists, spies, politicians, intellectuals, diplomats and émigrés. For example, Russian émigré Maxim Litvinov was so excited after the news of Lenin's success that he "tried to shave with his toothpaste and got into the bath without having turned on the water." (13) More serious topics tell how some Western spies struggled at first to keep Russia in the war and, when they failed, to overthrow the Bolsheviks. British intelligence officer George Hill, fluent in Russian, did both. He worked with the Czarist opposition before the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty and helped Trotsky set up the Soviet Air Force after it. In the meantime, he and a Canadian officer smuggled the Romanian crown jewels out of Russia, at one point holding a gun to a train engineer's head. (221) More familiar to those tracking Soviet intelligence history are the efforts of the British ambassador Robert Bruce Lockhart, "Ace of Spies" Sidney Reilly, and the American agent Xenophon Kalamatiano to overthrow the Bolshevik government, and the successful efforts by the Cheka to prevent it. The espionage exploits of Paul Dukes and journalist Arthur Ransome, among others, are also discussed.

Service describes unsuccessful Bolshevik efforts to spread the revolution to the entire world, starting in Hungary and Germany. At the same time, with astonishing irony, Trotsky attempted to establish diplomatic relations with the very countries the Bolsheviks intended to overthrow. Then there is the mixed reaction from America. Despite military intervention, which Russians hold against the United States to this day, Herbert Hoover, director of the American Relief Administration, negotiated food relief for starving Russians, which the Russians seldom acknowledge. On an individual level, Service tells of the pro-Bolshevik actions of John Reed—whom he correctly describes as being buried beneath, not in, the Kremlin wall—and others like Emma Goldman, who found communism did not live up to its promises.

*Spies and Commissars* is, with a few exceptions, based on secondary sources. Besides being entertaining, it also makes clear, with abundant evidence, that military force, spies, and diplomacy will not deter a government that does not count lost lives as a determining factor in its policies.

