

Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf—September 2019

Compiled and reviewed by Hayden Peake and others

(Note to on-line readers: The titles are hyperlinked to the reviews in PDF versions of this bookshelf.)

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Australia's First Spies: The Remarkable Story of Australia's Intelligence Operations, 1901–1945, by John Fahey

Spies of No Country: Secret Lives at the Birth of Israel, by Matti Friedman

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CURRENT TOPICS

Bytes, Bombs, and Spies: The Strategic Dimensions of Offensive Cyber Operations, edited by Herbert Lin and Amy B. Zegart. (Brookings Institution Press, 2018) 424, end of chapter notes, index.

In the introduction to *Bytes, Bombs, and Spies*, the editors assert academics and analysts have paid much more attention to cyber defense than to cyber offense despite “the increasing prominence of offensive cyber operations as instruments of national policy.” Thus, they conclude, this circumstance warrants “serious research conducted by independent scholars at universities and think tanks.” (4) As precedent for their position they cite the important contributions to nuclear strategy made by Bernard Brodie—the fundamentals of deterrence and the importance of a second-strike capability—and Herman Kahn, who introduced the concept of strategic nuclear escalation, and Thomas Schelling, who contributed to the theory of arms control.

It is too soon to assess the long-range strategic significance of the 16 articles by 23 authors that comprise *Bytes, Bombs, and Spies*. But it is safe to say the authors identify the unique characteristics of cyber weapons and their functions in cyberspace. In addition, they comment on the strategy and doctrine for their offensive use, how they are influenced by deterrence and escalation potential, and the participatory role of the private sector.

For example, in his article “Illuminating a New Domain,” former Deputy Director of NSA Chris Inglis lays out the intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) infrastructure needed to support effective cyber operations, the fifth domain of operations “alongside

land, sea, air, and space.” Other articles assess when and how to respond to cyber attacks—with bombs or from a keyboard—and what the rules of engagement should be in either case. The chapter titled “The Cartwright Conjecture” deals with the proposition that the United States should possess “fearsome cyber capabilities and that our adversaries should know about them,” (173) a concept analogous to our nuclear deterrence theory. The need for intelligence is mentioned frequently, especially in the chapter on the proposing a cyber SIOP (Single Integrated Operational Plan) such as existed to coordinate US and Allied nuclear warfighting strategy against the Soviet Union. (117)

Not all the contributions are written with the clarity found in the excellent introduction written by the editors. For example, the chapter on “Effects, Saliences, and Norms” is semantically dense and cries out for some simple declarative sentences. An equally problematic example is titled “Disintermediation, Counterinsurgency, and Cyber Defense,” where the term disintermediation is never defined and just how it has “altered espionage and warfare” (346) is left to the reader to discover.

With the designation of the US Cyber Command comes the certainty that understanding of the issues raised in *Bytes, Bombs, and Spies* will be required for national security planning in the future. It should be given serious attention and this is a good place to start.

To Catch A Spy: The Art of Counterintelligence, by James M. Olson. (Georgetown University Press, 2019) 232, endnotes, appendix, index.

In 2009, Georgetown University Press republished the late William Johnson’s 1987 book, *Thwarting Enemies At Home and Abroad: How To Be a Counterintelligence Officer*. An endorsement on the rear cover reads “He gets it right. Only a respected pro like [Johnson] could have described so clearly our arcane business of dangles, doubles, defectors, and deception.” It was signed, James M. Olson.

Now teaching intelligence courses at the Bush School of Public Service at Texas A&M University, Olson has written his own book on the subject, and former CIA colleague Henry Crumpton, author of *The Art of Intelligence*,^a has endorsed him as “America’s counterintelligence guru.” Is there a conflict of opinion here? No. In *To Catch A Spy*, Olson has written because “[w]e are losing the espionage wars, and it is time to tighten our

a. Henry A. Crumpton, *The Art of Intelligence: Lessons from a Life in the CIA’s Clandestine Service* (Penguin Press, 2012).

counterintelligence.” (xii) To achieve that goal, Olson builds on Johnson’s fundamentals and applies them to current cases and threats.

To establish the magnitude of the problem, Olson devotes a chapter to each of “the three most aggressive and damaging culprits currently undermining our national security . . . China, Russia, and Cuba.” (xii) He follows this analysis with an updated version of an article he wrote in 2001, “The Ten Commandments of Counterintelligence,” which provides guidelines for dealing with foreign counterintelligence cases.^a Counterintelligence in the workplace gets a chapter of its own.

Like Johnson’s book, this book gives serious attention to the topic of double-agent operations. As Olson puts it, “there is nothing more delectable than a good, juicy double agent operation.” And after clarifying the definition, he reviews what such operations can accomplish and how they should be managed.

The final portion of the book contains 12 case studies that Olson writes “illustrate succinctly some of the most important dos and don’ts of good CI.” (113). After a summary of each case, he highlights one or more of the principles addressed earlier that were not followed or were improperly applied. A few examples will make the point.

The Edward Lee Howard case, besides being the only instance of a former CIA employee defecting to the Soviets, is a mix of CIA mistakes made when he was processed for employment and then assigned to Russia;

had the errors been avoided, none of what followed would have occurred.

The reverse is true in the Earl Edwin Pitts case. Olson concludes his becoming a Soviet agent was probably unavoidable, but when a Russian diplomat he had originally contacted defected and named him as a spy, Pitt’s days were numbered. Eventually he became the ‘victim’ of an FBI false-flag operation.

The case of Chinese spy Chi Mak “violated one of the cardinal sins of espionage: predictability.” Yet, Olson continues, the Chinese use the same techniques over and over because they work. Chi Mak was one of many Chinese who immigrated to the United States, got an education, became a citizen, went to work for a high-tech company in California, and spied for his homeland. Olson urges every US CI specialist to study this case “because it provides a template of how the Chinese intelligence services like to operate against a high technology target.” (132)

To Catch A Spy has an appendix titled the “Counterintelligence Officer’s Bookshelf” that provides and annotated list of 25 very good books on one or more CI cases that if read and studied, will provide a solid historical foundation on counterintelligence. But he has omitted one book that deserves equal consideration: *Fair Play: The Moral Dilemmas of Spying*, by James Olson.^b While not directly about CI, many of the moral principles discussed apply.

Professor Olson has delivered an important contribution to the intelligence literature.

GENERAL

LEADERS: Myth and Reality, by Gen. Stanley McChrystal, US Army (Ret.), Jeff Eggers, and Jason Mangone. (Portfolio Penguin, 2018) 458, endnotes, photos, index.

Gen. Stanley McChrystal is a West Point graduate with 38 years of service in leadership positions. He is now teaching at Yale University. Jeff Eggers is a Naval Academy graduate and a former SEAL officer with combat service in Afghanistan and Iraq. He has a graduate degree from Oxford University, served as

President Obama’s Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, and is currently executive director of McChrystal Group Leadership Institute. Jason Mangone served as a Marine Corps infantry officer before attending graduate school at Yale and then joining the Aspen Institute. In *LEADERS: Myth and Reality* they “attempt to take that

a. “A Never-Ending Necessity: The Ten Commandments of Counterintelligence,” *Studies in Intelligence* 45, No. 3 (September 2001).

b. James M. Olson, *Fair Play: The Moral Dilemmas of Spying* (Potomac Books, 2006).

first step toward a general theory of leadership”—not a simple challenge. (xiv)

To emphasize that there is no one definition of leadership that fits all and how leadership can be swayed by myth rather than reality, the authors follow Plutarch’s precedent and compare 12 famous leaders—not all of them exemplary—in six categories and one stand-alone. The latter is Gen. Robert E. Lee, and General McChrystal’s essay about how he came to change his views on Lee’s reputation is a powerful illustration of how myth can influence judgment.

The six categories and the personalities compared are: *Founders*, Walt Disney and Coco Chanel; *Geniuses*, Albert Einstein and Leonard Bernstein; *Zealots*, Robespierre and Abu Al-Zarqawi; *Heroes*, Zheng He and Harriet Tubman; *Powerbrokers*, Margaret Thatcher and “Boss” Tweed; and *Reformers*, Martin Luther and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Readers who recall WWII from books, movies, or personal experience, may now be asking “where is Churchill?” Not to worry, the authors have not forgotten him. They work in and assess his leadership abilities to show how they differ according to circumstances and serve to exemplify the persistent great-man theory of leadership as proffered by Boris Johnson among others.

Having created a data base of leadership characteristics, the authors discuss the three myths of leadership that, if applied singularly, only complicate any formulation of a general theory. The first follows from the tendency to identify common factors in the comparisons, a task they find impossible. (370) They call this the “formulaic myth.” The second myth is the inclination to credit

a single person—the great-man theory myth—with important achievements that neglect the contributions of others. The third myth, called the “Results Myth,” holds that “the falsehood that the objective results of the leader’s activity are more important than her words or style or appearance.” (378). If these so-called intuitively attractive myths can’t be used to formulate a leadership theory, what can?

The authors found the answer by realizing the limitations of their original research question: “How did he or she lead?” (381) They concluded that that formulation pointed toward the leader not the context of operations. Thus a better construction would be: “Why did they emerge as a leader?” or “What was it about the situation that made this style of leadership effective?” (382).

In the end they do not come up with a general theory of leadership, but they do suggest a new definition: “*leadership is a complex system of relationships between leader and followers, in a particular context that provides meaning to its members.*” (397) Whether, as the authors claim, this definition accounts for the three myths is not immediately obvious, though they do provide extensive commentary on this point. Still one could be excused for responding, “Yes, but what are the elements of leadership? or is one born a leader?; does it come with position or rank, or is it learned?”

LEADERS is not easy reading but it recognizes that “leadership is far more difficult than we realize . . . painful and perplexing even at its best.” Therefore this book is worth the effort to think through its sometimes complex observations. (399)

HISTORICAL

An Impeccable Spy: Richard Sorge, Stalin’s Master Agent, by Owen Matthews. (Bloomsbury, 2019) 448, endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

In 1952, Maj. Gen. Charles A. Willoughby, Gen. Douglas MacArthur’s chief of intelligence in Tokyo, sent Allen Dulles, then deputy director of CIA, a privately printed copy of a report titled, *A Partial Documentation*

of the Sorge Espionage Case, dated 1 May 1950. It had an attachment titled, *An Authentic Translation of Sorge’s Own Story*, dated February 1942.^a Both reports included the original Japanese versions. Copies of these

a. *A Partial Documentation of the Sorge Espionage Case*, dated 1 May 1950. Matthew correctly states that the findings in this document were extensively cited by the House of Representatives Un-American Activities Committee (he ignores its real name; HCUA) but

documents, plus those produced by the official German inquiry, interviews with former members of the Sorge network, Sorge's messages intercepted by the Japanese, and the Japanese interrogation records, were the basis for four excellent accounts of the Sorge case.

The first by F. W. Deakin and G. R. Storry^a in 1966, covers Sorge's early life as well as his espionage in China and Japan. The second, by Gordon W. Prange^b in 1984, and the third by Robert Whyment,^c concentrated on his network in Japan. *An Impeccable Spy*, by Owen Matthews, is the fourth. It is a detailed and thoroughly documented biography of Sorge's entire life from a new Russian perspective. Matthews was the Moscow representative for *Newsweek*, is fluent in Russian, has a Russian-born wife, and had access to Russian publications and archival material—including correspondence between Sorge and his wife—not previously available.

All the authors agree that Sorge was born in 1895 near Baku, the son of a German oil engineer and his Russian wife. The family returned to Germany when Sorge was four. There he attended school. When WWI started, he enlisted and by 1916 had been wounded twice, leaving him with a permanent limp. It was while in hospital that a nurse brought him copies of Marx and other "building blocks of socialism." (16) These started him on a path to communism. It is at this point in the narrative that Matthews makes his claim of originality: Sorge's "turbulent career as an agent for the Communist International . . . [his] recruitment by Soviet military intelligence and the subsequent cycles of distrust and paranoia that led to Sorge's gold-standard intelligence being dismissed as enemy disinformation, is told here for the first time." (5)

Bluntly summarized, Matthew's claim is only partially accurate. These topics are raised by each of the authors

mentioned above, though with less detail. Subjects where Matthews adds entirely new material include Sorge's Comintern service, his academic aspirations expressed in letters to his wife, and some details of his relationship with American communist Agnes Smedley and German Ursula Hamburger (nee: Kuczynski; aka: Ruth Werner, Sonia) during his service in China.

Finally it is worth considering just how impeccable was the *Impeccable Spy*? Dictionary synonyms for this adjective include: faultless, flawless, unimpeachable, perfect, immaculate, spotless, and above reproach. Matthews and others make it very clear that Sorge was none of these in his personal relationships, unless one overlooks his womanizing and drinking to excess. But he gets much higher marks when it comes to his espionage. He maintained his cover, recruited excellent sources, wrote timely accurate reports, and on occasion defied orders to return home for consultations. Ironically, Stalin ignored some his most important submissions, and his radioman declined to transmit some—without telling Sorge—as it became clear the Nazis were on the losing side. That Sorge trusted him too much, was a serious mistake. But Stalin did accept his report that the Japanese would go South rather than attack the Soviet Union, and this, plus his overall record, earned him belated rehabilitation and his picture on a postage stamp.

Matthews argues, as the other authors did before him, that Sorge expected Stalin to bargain for his freedom after his arrest by the Japanese and is perplexed that no attempt to do so appears to have been made.

An Impeccable Spy is the most complete account of the Sorge case to date. A story well documented and well told.

The Lady Is a Spy: Virginia Hall, World War II, Hero of the French Resistance, by Don Mitchell. (Scholastic Inc. Publishers, 2019) 267, endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

incorrectly states it was chaired by Senator Joseph McCarthy. (349)

a. F. W. Deakin and G. R. Storry, *The Case of Richard Sorge* (Chatto & Windus, 1966)

b. Gordon W. Prange with Donald M. Goldstein and Katherine V. Dillon, *Target Tokyo: The Story of the Sorge Spy Ring* (McGraw Hill Book Company, 1984).

c. Robert Whyment, *Stalin's Spy: Richard Sorge and the Tokyo Espionage Ring* (I. B. Tauris, 1996).

Before turning his talents to biography, Don Mitchell was a staffer on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the National Security Council. In *The Lady Is a Spy* he has given us a new biography of Virginia Hall, the only woman to serve in the Special Operations Executive and OSS during WWII and in the CIA during the Cold War as a field intelligence officer. While one recent book about Hall was a mix of fact and fiction,^a and two others were non-fiction biographies amplified with historical background material, one with source notes, one without,^b Mitchell's more compact account follows a middle, "Goldilocks" course: he includes the essential facts, each well sourced and many nicely illustrated.

Mitchell's account of Hall's early life and education in Baltimore includes incidents that hint at her contrary and often independent nature. For example, he tells of her attending high school wearing a live garter snake on her wrist as a bracelet. (6) By 1926, after a year at Radcliff College and another at Barnard (both then for women only), with the encouragement of her father, she went to Paris and then Vienna, where she studied economics, international relations and languages. In 1929 she returned to the United States to further her studies at American and George Washington universities. Her goal was to become a foreign service officer (FSO) in the State Department. Then she hit the glass ceiling for the first time and had to settle for a civil service position as a State Department clerk. (11)

It was while serving in Turkey that Hall shot herself in the foot and ultimately lost her left leg below the knee. After recovery in the States and the fitting of a prosthesis she called "Cuthbert," Hall returned to Europe, only to lose another attempt to become an FSO despite the support of President Roosevelt. While the reader may feel her frustration, she continued with her work until the outbreak of war, when she resigned and became an

ambulance driver in France before escaping via Spain to London after Paris fell.

As unlikely as it may sound, since the United States was not in the war, Hall wanted to return to France to help the resistance. Mitchell tells how she achieved that goal. After building her own journalistic cover and joining the SOE, she returned to France, where she worked with Peter Churchill and Dennis Rake and a few resistance traitors to the Vichy government. Rake would become Douglas Fairbanks Jr.'s butler after the war.

Although Hall had not had much experience handing agents, Hall's instincts were spot-on. As an example, Mitchell includes the case of Abbé Alesch, who aroused her suspicions and who turned out to be a double agent.

After the invasion of North Africa, the Nazis occupied the balance of France, and Hall was forced to escape to Spain again, this time over the Pyrénées with Cuthbert. After some time in a Spanish jail, Hall returned to London and requested once again to be sent back to France. SOE declined, but OSS accepted, and Mitchell goes on to tell of her second return to France and her support of the resistance.

Mitchell goes on to track Hall's often rewarding and yet frustrating post-war career in intelligence. While it was one she chose, she hit a glass ceiling again—advancing to the grade of GS-14—forced to endure working for men who had little or no experience in the field. By the time she reached the mandatory retirement age of 60, she was married to a former member of the resistance and living in Maryland.

The Lady Is A Spy is a fine contribution to the story of a much underrated intelligence officer.

The Last Cambridge Spy: John Cairncross, Bletchley Codebreaker and Soviet Double Agent, by Chris Smith. (The History Press, 2019) 256, endnotes, bibliography, index. Forewords by, Sir Dermot Turing and Professor Richard Aldrich.

Chris Smith's light and able pen has produced a biography of John Cairncross that gets off to a dubious

start. While the assertion that his subject was the "last Cambridge spy" is supported by Sir Dermot Turing in

a. Craig Gralley, *Hall of Mirrors: Virginia Hall: America's Greatest Spy of World War II* (Chrysalis Books, 2019).

b. Sonia Purnell, *A Women of No Importance: The Untold Story of the American Spy Who Helped Win World War II* (Viking, 2019); Judith L. Pearson, *The Wolves at the Door: The True Story of America's Greatest Female Spy* (The Lyons Press, 2004).

his foreword, it is questioned by the author himself, who acknowledges that former KGB officer Oleg Tsarev cited NKVD records in giving that honor to the American at Trinity college, Michael Straight. (14) Then there is the comment in the secondary title that Cairncross was a “Bletchley Park codebreaker.” Once again, Smith himself in an earlier book on Bletchley, quoted Cairncross as saying he was a translator at Bletchley,^a which in fact he was. Finally, Cairncross was not, by definition, a double agent.

What does this inauspicious start imply for the story of Cairncross the Soviet agent? Nothing of substance, since that is not what concerns Smith, who admits at the outset that there is nothing new from the official archives on Cairncross’ spying. And though he cannot avoid the topic in his chronology, when it comes up he readily points out Cairncross’ own doubtful claims, inconsistencies, contradictions, and rationalizations. (152–53) Typical of the latter was Cairncross’ argument that he only spied to help an ally that deserved more than the British were providing. And though he insisted there never was a Ring-of-Five at Cambridge, at least one that involved him, he did not grasp the point that it was the Soviets who saw the Cambridge spies as the Ring, not MI5.

The Spy In Moscow Station: A Counterspy’s Hunt For A Deadly Cold War Threat, by Eric Haseltine. (Thomas Dunne Books, 2019) 264, endnotes, index.

If you are expecting a tale about a KGB agent stealing the secrets of Moscow Station, disappointment follows. Inexplicably, author Eric Haseltine, a former Disney executive brought to NSA by Gen. Michael Hayden to revitalize its research department, tells a different though curiously fascinating story. Its central figure is Charles Gandy, a onetime NSA scientist asked by the CIA to investigate whether recently compromised operations could be explained by Soviet interception of Moscow Embassy communications.

During his first visit to Moscow in 1978, Gandy discovered a moveable antenna in a fake chimney attached to the embassy, a strong indication of nefarious Soviet activity. But this was not enough for station chief Gus Hathaway, who wanted “smoking gun” proof of what

Likewise, Cairncross denied he was the “fifth man,” since he operated alone. But he could not see that for the KGB it was a logical designation; Cambridge knew the others, had worked for Philby, and was the fifth Cambridge man recruited. But this has all been thrashed out in earlier books, for example, *Crown Jewels*^b and *The Mitrokhin Archive*.^c

Thus it is understandable that in Smith’s biography, Cairncross’ espionage is secondary to his “central objective . . . to provide an exploration of John Cairncross’ character, to tell the wider story of his life, and to place him within a broader context of 20th century British society and in history.” (16) But it is already well known that Cairncross was an eccentric, brilliant linguist, scholar, and author, as well as a socially awkward comrade who was not a member of the upper class. In this work, Smith adds little more than details from family letters and unstinting support from Graham Greene.

If the personal life of John Cairncross, as assessed by a lecturer in history from Coventry University is of interest, this is the book to read. But should you be concerned with Cairncross the Soviet agent and one of the Cambridge Five, start with *Crown Jewels*.

the antenna was producing. Haseltine then quotes Gandy as wondering whether the “CIA didn’t really *want* NSA to find the source of the devastating leaks? NSA would look like heroes if they found a leak, while CIA . . . would look like incompetent bumblers.” Failure to find a technical cause of the leaks would support the view held by some CIA officers that they weren’t bugged—human sources were more likely—and save face at the same time. And, said Gandy, “Most folks at the CIA hated, hated, hated relying on outsiders for anything.” (111)

But this explanation was too cynical even for Gandy. He decided Hathaway would not play that sort of bureaucratic game, and he was right. *The Spy In Moscow Station* tells the story of how and where bugs were found and their surprising level of technical sophistication, while at the

a. Chris Smith, *The Hidden History of Bletchley Park: A Social and Organizational History, 1939–1945* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 81.

b. Nigel West and Oleg Tsarev, *The Crown Jewels: The British Secrets at the Heart of the KGB Archives* (Yale University Press 1999).

c. Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive: The KGB in Europe and the West* (Penguin, 2000).

same time revealing a sub-theme of bureaucratic battling among NSA, CIA and State Department.

Between 1978 and his final visit to Moscow in 1981, Gandy explored various complex technical possibilities that could explain how the antenna was part of the electronic penetration of embassy communications. For example, the Soviets had been bombarding the embassy with radiation dubbed by specialists as Technically Unidentified Moscow Signals (TUMS), whose purpose was not understood. Gandy was convinced the Soviets were using the radiation to trigger listening devices implanted in the embassy that could somehow “read text using microwaves,” but he “never produced any proof” (132) and the CIA remained skeptical. Support from State was never strong “because he was going around saying the Moscow Embassy was compromised.” (133) Moreover, his manner irritated other players who were considering the issue but held to a conventional wisdom that the Soviets couldn’t run a country so they couldn’t accomplish such a sophisticated technical penetration operation.

What turned things around was a report from the French in 1983 that the Soviets had bugged French embassy teleprinters with highly sophisticated transmitting equipment. If the Soviets had successfully bugged the French, NSA Deputy Director Walt Deeley reasoned, what Gandy was saying about their penetration of the US embassy was at least as likely. Thus, with the help of President Reagan, Operation GUNMAN was born.

Haseltine describes the crafty sequence of events in Operation GUNMAN in enlightening detail. But the bottom line is that Gandy arranged to inventory all the electronic typewriters and related equipment in the

embassy without the staff’s knowledge. Next he had selected equipment returned to NSA and replaced with new equivalents. Then NSA examined the returned items and discovered the state-of-the-art bugging mechanisms—one in the IBM Selectric typewriter used in the ambassador’s office for years—and the method of battery recharging.

It will not surprise some readers that the ambassador, according to Haseltine, was not upset by these findings. He adopted the view that he wanted the Soviets to hear most of what he told his visitors and correspondents. Haseltine puts it more generally; “the State Department regarded it largely as a nonevent.” (213)

Haseltine might have used the same descriptor for a story Gandy told him about his midnight encounter with a beautiful Russian woman who knocked on the door of his embassy quarters and offered her services. (98–99) Haseltine correctly labels it a would be honeytrap but does not comment on the implausibility of the story or the likelihood that it was a genuine nonevent.

The Spy In Moscow Station concludes with two unsettling observations made during a 2018 meeting the author had with Gandy. First, Gandy speculates that they probably didn’t get all of the bugged equipment in the embassy. Second, Haseltine, who by then had served in the ODNI, opines that the bureaucratic battles within the Intelligence Community that led to operation GUNMAN had not been overcome and were only aggravated by the ODNI that “everyone hates . . . as meddling, micromanaging, incompetent bean counters.” (233) But perhaps the most obvious, yet unstated, conclusion is that there was no spy in Moscow Station.

They Fought Alone: The True Story of the Starr Brothers, British Secret Agents in Nazi Occupied France, by Charles Glass. (Penguin Press, 2018) 322, endnotes, photos, index.

The British entered WWII with functioning foreign and domestic intelligence services. But it was a different matter when the need for special forces operations behind enemy lines arose in early 1940. There was no organization with that mission, so they established one: the Special Operations Executive (SOE). *They Fought Alone* tells the story of two half-American brothers in SOE, George and John Starr, that illustrates how each dealt with the stresses encountered. Of equal value,

the book explains how the organization’s complex and persistent operational growing pains at headquarters complicated operations in the field.

The Starr brothers spent much of their youth on the European continent working for the Barnum and Bailey Circus and Wild Bill Hickock troupe. Later, George went to the Royal School of Mines, paid his dues underground digging coal, and then installed mining equipment for a

Scottish company with clients throughout Europe. John, four years his junior, studied art in London and Paris and drew posters for a living. As war drew near, both brothers volunteered for the Royal Air Force but were rejected because their father was an American citizen. So they joined the Army instead, George in Brussels, John in Paris.

Returned to England after Dunkirk, John was the first to be contacted by SOE. He recommended his brother George, who was then serving with a carrier pigeon unit with David Niven. After training and promotion to 2nd lieutenant, John was sent to France first, dropping blind, with instructions to assess the state of SOE's field operations. George, by now also a 2nd lieutenant, was sent to France by boat in October 1942 to make contact with resistance groups in southwestern France.

From this point on their careers epitomize the positive and negative characteristics of SOE operations in France. George is one of the few contacts with the Resistance who was not captured by the Germans. For more than two years he dealt with morale, security, communication, and supply problems. When the invasion finally came, he executed his mission to delay enemy forces as they tried to reinforce the Wehrmacht in Normandy. And after France was liberated, he was less than courteous to General De Gaulle who refused to acknowledge his contribution and declared him *persona non grata*.

John Starr's resistance war followed a different path. He was betrayed by a French colleague and arrested in

July 1943. While in captivity in Paris, his behavior led some of his British fellow prisoners to conclude he was collaborating with the Gestapo. His characterization of the matter was that his interrogations convinced him that SOE communications with London were under Gestapo control—a so-called *Funkspiel* operation—and he was correct because SOE had not taken seriously the alert signals built into the messages indicating the sender was under enemy control. This explained why many of the supply drops were picked up by the Gestapo and not the resistance. Thus he was just acquiring evidence to present to SOE headquarters when he escaped. Unfortunately, his escape attempt failed and shortly after D-Day, he was sent to Sachsenhausen and then Mauthausen concentration camps in Germany because “he knew everything about the *Funkspiel*.”(223)

John survived the camps but he never overcame official SOE doubts about his behavior. He received no official recognition for his service despite an official French investigation that did not establish disloyalty. SOE officer Vera Atkins summed up the official view: “We felt he let the side down. He was the only one who did.” (253)

George received the Military Cross and the Legion of Honor among other decorations before returning to France where he died in 1980. John died in Switzerland some years later. *They Fought Alone* reflects their personal legacy and the contribution of SOE to the war effort in France.

To Blind the Eyes of Our Enemies: Washington's Grand Deception, by G. L. Lamborn and W. L. Simpson. (White Hart Publications, 2018) 203, footnotes, no index.

In his biography of George Washington, Ron Chernow writes that “the record shows he [Washington] had repeatedly favored a strike against New York” and only reluctantly agreed to Yorktown, the location recommended by his French allies and place in which he won the battle that won the war. Washington's 1788 explanation that the overt indications of an attack on New York were a “mere feint to mislead the British,” was in Chernow's view, a self-justifying attempt “to rewrite history.”^a

These are harsh words and former CIA operations officer G. L. Lamborn and retired Navy Lt. Cmdr. W. L. Simpson Jr. don't accept Chernow's judgment or similar views expressed by other contemporary historians. *To Blind The Eyes of Our Enemies* states their case.

The authors' overall characterization of Washington credits him with exceptional tactical skills as exemplified by the battles of Trenton and Princeton; few historians challenge this claim. Their view that “as a strategist he had no peer on either side” is less widely accepted.

a. Ron Chernow, *Washington: A Life* (Penguin, 2010), 403–404.

Nevertheless, they conclude that the “foundation for his strategic vision and genius for war” was his “mastery of intelligence collection and deception operations,” with Yorktown being the prime example. (11)

To support these views, Lamborn and Simpson turn first to Washington’s knowledge of history. They argue that his approach to Britain’s overwhelming force drew on the example of Roman general Fabius and his strategy of wearing down Hannibal by avoiding major battles until “logistical realities and lack of manpower forced him to leave Italy.” (18) Washington’s variation on this strategy was to avoid direct battles until the help of the French was secured and the right location for battle was determined.

It is true that Washington’s initial thinking focused on capturing New York and cutting off the head of British forces in the colonies especially those of Lord Charles Cornwallis operating in the south. The authors note the many objections to this approach voiced by the French and his own advisors, among them Alexander Hamilton. Then, in a letter dated 22 July 1770, Washington acknowledged they were right but held out hope that things might change in the future. The authors suggest that it was at this juncture that Washington decided “a more suitable target should be sought.” (75)

Thus at a conference in Hartford, Connecticut, in September 1780, Washington and the French generals

agreed that aiming to take a target in the south was the best course. At that point, all that remained was to select a location, secure French naval support, and move Washington’s troops south without alerting Sir Henry Clinton to the changed in plans. The authors treat these issues in detail. Critical to their version of events is a letter written by Washington to Noah Webster dated 31 July 1788, that describes the “trouble . . . taken and finesse used to misguide and bewilder Sir Henry Clinton in regard to the real object, by fictitious communications as well as by making deceptive provisions of Ovens, Forage and Boats. Nor were less pains taken to deceive our own army.” (88)

The authors concede that while historians agree on what Washington did, some challenge him on when he agreed to do it—suggesting that it was in 1781 not a year earlier—thus casting doubt on his strategic wisdom and foresight. Lamborn and Simpson counter these critics by pointing out that these skeptics had no need to know of the deceptive measures and thus were not in a position to draw post facto judgments. (91)

To Blind The Eyes of Our Enemies goes on to tell how Washington’s deception led to the “white flag over Yorktown.” They make a strong case in support of Washington’s explanation of events.

XY&Z: The Real Story of How Enigma Was Broken, by Dermot Turing. (The History Press, 2018) 320, endnotes, bibliography, photos, index. Foreword by Professor Dr. Arkady Rzegocki, Polish ambassador to the UK.

In his 2015 biography of Alan Turing, his nephew Dermot Turing tells of a “major breakthrough” in July 1939, when Polish cryptographers shared their extensive progress on breaking the Enigma codes with the British and the French.^a In *XY&Z*, Dermot Turing, a graduate of both Oxford and Cambridge and a trustee of Bletchley Park, fills in the details.

For reasons of security prior to WWII, the participants referred to themselves as X for the French, Y for the British, and Z for the Poles. Ironically, the French who knew the least about Enigma, were critical to the success of the effort because they had recruited the German

agent, Hans Thilo Schmidt, who had access to Enigma engineering details, which he passed on for money.

Neither the French nor the British knew what to do with the first batches of material, but the Poles did, as French intelligence officer, Gustave Bertrand discovered. Dermot Turing tells how an arrangement was worked out that made it possible for Alan Turing to develop an improved version of the Polish “bombe” used to extract the keys to the Enigma.

The erratic contacts among X,Y, and Z, continued throughout the war, with some Poles operating in France, North Africa, and England, though not at Bletchley. As the

a. Dermot Turing, *PROF: Alan Turing Decoded—A Biography* (The History Press, 2015), 119.

war's centers of gravity shifted, some Polish codebreakers operating outside of England were caught and sent to Sachsenhausen; others were imprisoned in Spain and escaped to make their way to England. At war's end, the British worked to protect their contribution while seeking to assist the Poles, by now refugees, who wanted to remain in Europe or return to communist Poland. All kept their Enigma secrets. If those in Poland became known as codebreakers for the Allies, their post-war lives would have been spent in the Soviet Union.

Gradually the Polish contribution became part of recorded history, and it was officially recognized at Bletchley Park with a permanent exhibit called *The Bombe Breakthrough*. *XY&Z* helps to assure their names won't be forgotten.

HISTORICAL—D-DAY

Bletchley Park and D-Day: The Untold Story of How the Battle for Normandy Was Won, by David Kenyon. (Yale University Press, 2019) 295, endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

Codeword OVERLORD: Axis Espionage and the D-Day Landings, by Nigel West. (The History Press, 2019) 352, endnotes, bibliography, appendices, photos, maps, index.

D-Day Girls: The Spies Who Armed The Resistance, Sabotaged the Nazis, and Helped Win World War II, by Sarah Rose. (Crown, 2019) 384, endnotes, bibliography, index.

Soldier, Sailor, Frogman, Spy, Airman, Gangster, Kill or Die – How the Allies Won on D-Day, by Giles Milton. (Henry Holt and Company, 2019) 486, endnotes, bibliography, photos, maps, index.

VANGUARD: The True Stories of the Reconnaissance and Intelligence Missions Behind D-Day, by David Abrutat. (Naval Institute Press, 2019) 400, endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

It is no coincidence that books about prominent historical events are often published close to the anniversary of the event concerned. This can leave the prospective buyer wondering whether they contain anything new, if there is subject overlap, are they well documented, and the like. The five books listed above do well in each of these factors, allowing for some overlap in the common subject.

In *Bletchley Park and D-Day*, David Kenyon, the research historian at Bletchley Park, answers two basic questions about Bletchley's role in Overlord. First, what role did codebreaking play in its planning, execution, and in the Normandy campaign? Second, how important was the SIGINT produced to the result?

In answering the first question, after some valuable background discussion, Kenyon concentrates on 1944, the year when Bletchley was functioning at its best. He characterizes it as a period of industrial efficiency rather than the more frequent description of Bletchley as the home of intellectual eccentricity and individual genius.

By 1944 the difficult problems had been solved, thanks to the Bombe improved by Turing that provided key settings for Enigma and the Colossus machines that did the same for online teleprinter intercepts. Kenyon reviews how this was done and credits those who did the work and implemented the results.

Thus, Hut 6, responsible for German air force, SS and Army Enigma decryptions, was breaking 44 percent of the traffic, a relatively small amount, but still “a very

significant haul of intelligence.” (51). Hut 8 (naval Enigma) statistics were better at 72 percent. The non-Enigma online teleprinter intercepts, the so-called FISH material used for the traffic of Hitler and high-ranking officers, was more complex than Enigma and only about 4.1 percent of those intercepts were decrypted, but they were often important to D-Day. Traffic analysis greatly aided in selecting the messages most likely to be of value if decrypted, as it also did for Enigma traffic. Once a message was decrypted, it was sent to Hut 3, where it was translated, integrated with collateral allied material, prioritized and disseminated.

As to Bletchley's role in the planning and aftermath of Overlord, Kenyon concludes it was mainly in the very detailed and accurate order-of-battle data provided, and he cites sources for that result. The allies knew what German forces were on the battlefield, where they were, and when they were ordered to move or remain in place. Kenyon's answer to the question of Bletchley's long range contribution concurs with Sir Harry Hinsley: it probably shortened the war in Europe by two years.



Bletchley Park and D-Day tells a fascinating story and is a genuine contribution to the literature.

In *Codeword OVERLORD*, military historian Nigel West considers what German intelligence organizations did to learn the details of the anticipated D-Day and what the Allies did to counter their efforts. He tells how the Nazis got off to a relatively good start when in early 1944 one of

their agents, codenamed CICERO, stole secret documents from his ambassador boss in Ankara, Turkey, that included codeword OVERLORD indicating an upcoming invasion of Europe.

When CICERO failed to produce further details, German intelligence units were tasked with finding the particulars. In addition to traditional aerial reconnaissance operations, West devotes sizable effort to describing the extensive SIGINT and HUMINT capabilities in France and the Iberian Peninsula that failed. He offers three reasons why they were unsuccessful.

The first was the lack of overall command and control of intelligence units; left to decide on their own how to implement orders, results were redundant, unshared and thus uncoordinated. Second, MI5 implemented effective domestic security that dealt with potential security breaches. In one case, the well known military historian Basil Liddell Hart published an article and later gave a talk hinting he had knowledge of Overlord, due to high level leaks, and MI5 double agents. An investigation couldn't establish whether he was speculating or not, so his mail was monitored. (72–74) If the Germans heard of his comments, they apparently paid no heed.

The third reason was, of course, the work of MI5's Double Cross committee. The German's didn't have to rely on their vast SIGINT assets because they believed they had agents in England working the problem. In fact, the agents were controlled by the British and passing intelligence according to a deception plan called FORTITUDE (South) that was designed in part to convince the Germans that OVERLORD was aimed at the Pas-de-Calais. The Double Cross agents were also tasked to provide order-of-battle data and West furnishes examples of how this was done to good effect.

West tells of three other intelligence operations that contributed to the success of OVERLORD. The first was implemented by the BBC through coded messages that alerted the French resistance that D-Day had come. The second concerned the résistance elements whose mission it was to sabotage railroads and bridges to prevent movement of armored divisions to Normandy. West gives some startling statistics concerning how well the Germans penetrated the resistance circuits, and yet the resistance elements still accomplished their missions.

The third was a post invasion operation that neutralized the German stay-behind networks. OSS X-2

(counterintelligence) and British intelligence were the operating units. West describes how a special sub-element of the Double Cross Committee was set up in Paris to handle these controlled enemy agents as they came to be called.

In a postscript, West relates several attempts to lift the veil of secrecy surrounding FORTITUDE. The first was a convoluted and ultimately unsuccessful effort to expose GARBO, the most important of the Double Cross agents, that peripherally involved double agents run by the FBI. Another concerned a less direct challenge from Churchill and Eisenhower, when they wished to mention in their memoirs more about wartime deception operations than MI5 thought appropriate. The accommodation reached lasted until 1972 and the publication of *The ULTRA Secret*.



Codeword OVERLORD gives further evidence, based in large part on German records, of how and why deception was such a successful part of D-Day. An important contribution.

D-Day Girls tells the story of five women and four men of the SOE who served in France behind enemy lines performing sabotage missions. Their stories have been told before, and author Sarah Rose adds nothing new in her description of their exploits except exaggeration. For example, her assessment that Lise de Baissac “had been crucial to the liberation of France” (280) is not supported by her narrative.

It is true that the “Girls” described received decorations for their contributions, two posthumously. But their citations indicate bravery more for enduring torture during interrogation by the Gestapo than for successful operations that had a direct impact on D-Day.

Ms. Rose goes to some length to point out, justifiably, the inequities inherent in the British and French cultures at the time that resulted in women receiving lesser awards than men for equivalent or greater endeavors. But her rationale for calling her subjects D-Day girls remains obscure.



Soldier, Sailor, Frogman, Spy... on D-Day is a good baseline account for readers not already steeped in the

military details of the invasion and dependent only on the Hollywood versions. It provides a chronological perspective of the fighting and combat support contributions, male and female—both sides—from the viewpoint of the generals, soldiers in the ranks, and resistance fighters.

The objective of the invasion was to establish a contiguous 50 mile wide beachhead that extended 15 miles inland at the end of the first day. The battlefield reality was much different. Of the five Normandy assault beaches—SWORD (UK), JUNO (Canadian), GOLD (UK), OMAHA and UTAH (USA), only the Canadians had advanced 6 miles inland. The OMAHA effort extended only 2,000 yards inland, with UTAH somewhat better while the British managed several miles. And there were major gaps in the front; the biggest was the 11 miles between OMAHA and UTAH. But it was enough.

Milton's narrative tells how they did it in numerous vignettes. Operation Tarbrush X was a one-man behind-enemy-lines effort to learn about new German mines before the invasion even began. Then there are the tales of the glider commando experience, the bravery of the Rangers on the cliffs of Pointe de Hoc, and the exploits of the bagpiping commander of the British Special Service Brigade, Lord Lovat. (278) Not to be overlooked, Milton includes the naval guns of the USS McGook that destroyed German concrete shore batteries while nearly running aground. (306)

The Canadian intelligence officer's description of the German prisoners as "unprepossessing examples of the so-called master race" (379) and the help provided by a young French farm girl to a lost GI add human perspective. Finally, Milton relates a real example of the BBC sending coded phrases to alert the resistance that the invasion was at hand that led to sabotage of the rails lines between Caen and Laval to prevent resupply of the Germans at the front.

Soldier, Sailor, Frogman, Spy... on D-Day offers no tactical or strategic surprises but it does give the reader a good appreciation of how and by whom success was achieved.



Author David Abrutat is a lecturer at the University of Buckingham and a former Royal Marine Commando reconnaissance specialist. In *VANGUARD* he discusses 20

contributions to the D-Day intelligence story. Topics range from the organizational structure employed, to the role of midget submarines—called X-craft—in underwater beach reconnaissance, to specific missions of familiar units such as SOE, OSS, and the French resistance. Also included are the familiar functions of signal interceptor companies, POW interrogation techniques, radar variations, and commando deception operations, among others.

For example, the chapter titled "Black Lists" relates the story of the 30 Commando Assault Unit (30AU) allegedly the creation of Ian Fleming. Abrutat first tells of its disastrous contribution to the failure of the Dieppe Raid in 1942 and goes on to explain their later role in missions to obtain codes and administrative papers of value, for example, the Nazi "black lists" of enemies to be arrested.

The little known story of the Martian Reports prepared by the Theater Intelligence Section (TIS) from all-source intelligence excluding ULTRA, was "a vital cog in the Allied intelligence machine." (330). With a staff that grew to some 500, the TIF concentrated on resistance unit contacts and relatively low-level, but important, order of battle data and unit dispositions not reflected in ULTRA because land lines were available to the enemy units.

Abrutat recognizes the role SIGINT played with chapters on Bletchley Park that discuss the hardware developed to deal with the high volume of Enigma and Jellyfish traffic; the latter originating from the German online geheimschreiber machine. Of lesser volume but equal value was the MAGIC traffic that revealed what the Japanese ambassador to Berlin thought about German Western Wall defenses. A third version of SIGINT contribution was the BBC with its coded message traffic to the French resistance elements.

VANGUARD gives the reader a good extensively illustrated overview of the intelligence operations and the men who carried them out in support of D-Day.

INTELLIGENCE ABROAD

Guy Liddell's Cold War MI5 Diaries, Volume 1: May 1945–December 1947, edited by Nigel West. (Independently published amazon.com, 2019) 615, no index.

Guy Liddell's Cold War MI5 Diaries, Volume 2: January 1948–December 1950, edited by Nigel West. (Independently published amazon.com, 2019) 379, no index.

Guy Liddell's Col War MI5 Diaries, Volume 3: January 1951–May 1953, edited by Nigel West. (Independently published amazon.com, 2019) 495, no index.

WALLFLOWERS was its codename. But it did not refer to an intelligence operation or an agent; it was the codeword for the operational diaries kept by Guy Liddell, the director of counter-espionage and later deputy director-general of the British Security Service (MI5) from August 1939 to May 1953. Two volumes, covering 1939 to 1945, were published in 2005.^a Now the remainder of Liddell's diaries have appeared in paperback and digital format. The content and candor expressed in them make it clear Liddell wrote for the benefit of future MI5 officers; he did not expect public viewing.

Editor Nigel West notes in the introduction that the entries in these final three volumes were misfiled for many years and not available to Christopher Andrew or his research associates when they wrote the authorized history of MI5.^b Thus there is much new material in the nearly 2,000 pages in these volumes.

Each volume contains an introduction, a list of personalities included, a list of intelligence establishments mentioned, and a glossary. The topics included vary from parochial turf battles when the organization shifted to civilian status to new operational problems. In volume one, examples of the latter include Liddell's reaction to the Canadian announcement that Igor Gouzenko had defected and incriminated Alan Nunn May in what became the atomic spy scandal. Liddle also commented on post-war contacts with the Double Cross double agents, some seldom mentioned elsewhere. Turning to the Middle East, this was the period in the final days of the British mandate in Palestine with growing security problems.

Liddell also records his views on the first rumblings of those officers who wished to publish accounts of their wartime services. J.C. Masterman, author of *The Double Cross System* eventually succeeded, but Maurice Hankey did not.

Volume II covers the period in which "MI5 found it hard to persuade Whitehall mandarins to take Communist infiltration of the civil service seriously," (14) even while recognizing it had bungled the security investigation of Klaus Fuchs. Simultaneously, other crises included the strained relationship with the FBI after MI5 refused to allow access to Fuchs until after his trial and the discovery from VENONA of an "active spy-ring in Australia that had compromised British documents." (15) In Palestine an MI5 affiliated unit was blown up by the Irgun in the King David Hotel, in Jerusalem. Domestically, staff vacancies were difficult to fill for an organization that didn't officially exist.

The final volume covers some of the most damaging events to British security in M5's history. Included are the what Liddell calls the "Washington leakage" investigation (Vol. 2, p. 200), his term for the molehunt that eventually identified Donald Maclean. His reaction to the disappearance of Burgess and Maclean begins in the 29 May 1951 entry. As Liddell tries to sort it out, he turns to old colleagues like Anthony Blunt whose pseudocooperation is masked with friendly deceit. And here, finally, is proof that MI5 officer Dick White, the man who tried to go to France and track them down and arrived at the port of entry with an expired passport. Comments on the case continue with diminishing frequency into 1953. A short three-line entry on 14 May

a. Nigel West, *The Guy Liddell Diaries: Volume I 1939-1942; Volume II 1942-1945*, (Routledge, 2005)

b. Christopher Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm: The Authorized History of MI5* (Allen Lane, 2009).

1953, is Liddell's only comment when learning that he had been passed over for the D-G position in favor of subordinate Dick White. Then 61, past the age of mandatory retirement, Liddell resigned, and his chronicle of events comes to an end.

The Liddell diaries have two shortcomings worth noting. First, they do not have an index, and readers will have

to use the digital versions to overcome this omission. Second, they are poorly copy-edited and typos abound. Nevertheless, they remain a one-of-a-kind-account of high-level MI5 views on some of the most important cases of the early Cold War era. A most valuable contribution to the literature of intelligence.

Australia's First Spies: The Remarkable Story of Australia's Intelligence Operations, 1901–1945, by John Fahey. (Allen & Irwin, 2018) 434, endnotes, bibliography, photos, glossary, index.

The three volume *Official History of ASIO* (Australian Security Intelligence Organization),^a published between 2014 and 2016, tells the story of how Australia's domestic security service was established after WWII and grew to become a member of the *Five Eyes* group of intelligence services. A similar study of ASIO's sister service, ASIS (Australian Secret Intelligence Service), has yet to reach the public. But now, thanks to Dr. John Fahey, whose 30-year career in military intelligence included service with the British and Australian armies, the story of Australia's formative years in the national intelligence operations has been told in *Australia's First Spies*.

Within a few months of the creation of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901, a successful though ad hoc clandestine operation was initiated by Australia against French and British colonies—and thus their European governments—in the New Hebrides whose behavior had long conflicted with Australian interests. Fahey stresses this point to show that Australia would from then on, with a few exceptions, act in its own rather than depend on the British.

Fahey tells how, between 1901 and the end of WWI, civilian and military intelligence capability gradually came into its own with coast watchers and naval and signals intelligence. In the interwar period Britain recognized Australia's potential as a center of South Asian intelligence operations—with emphasis on SIGINT collection against Japan—and assisted in improving these functions. Training in cryptanalysis, counterintelligence and the Japanese language was begun.

HUMINT did not receive the same level of attention and produced spotty results. In the early 1920s, the Wanetta organization worked well in performing general surveillance and intelligence collection. Headed by civilian Reginald Hockings, who volunteered as a foreign intelligence officer, the organization first served the Navy and later the Australian Commonwealth Naval Board, but it was dissolved shortly after WWI. (55) At the other end of the spectrum lies the badly bungled case of Japanese-speaking Harry Freame and his assignment to the Australian Legation in Tokyo. (128-30)

Fahey describes one other attempt to establish a foreign intelligence program focusing on Japan that began during the war and ended in the early twenties. While initially successful, it ran afoul of politicians who resented its potential power and thus “deprived Australia of an effective foreign intelligence organization until May 1952.” (74)

During WWII, the Australian Special Reconnaissance Department (SRD) was part of the Allied Intelligence Bureau (AIB) established by MacArthur. The SRD mission was to collect HUMINT and conduct sabotage. Fahey explains why things did not always go well.

The situation was better with SIGINT as Australia gained greater operational independence, though troubles surfaced when security involving ULTRA was compromised by the Japanese in 1944. Fahey devotes considerable attention to how these difficulties were sorted out.

a. David Horner, *The Spy Catchers—The Official History of ASIO 1949–1963*, Volume 1 (Allen & Unwin, 2014); John Blaxland, *The Protest Years—The Official History of ASIO 1963–1975*, Volume II (Allen & Unwin, 2015); John Blaxland and Rhys Crawley, *The Secret Cold War—The Official History of ASIO 1975–1989* (Allen & Unwin, 2016).

The story of *Australia's First Spies* echoes the start-up experiences of other Western intelligence organizations. But as Fahey emphasizes, "Australians best protect Australian self-interest," and that theme that "permeates the story of Australia's secret world of intelligence." (339)

Spies of No Country: Secret Lives at the Birth of Israel, by Matti Friedman. (Algonquin Books, 2019) 248, endnotes, photos, no index.

The United Nations voted on 29 December 1947 to partition Palestine, then a British mandate, and create Jewish and Arab sovereign entities. Arab rejection of the resolution precipitated a two-phase war for Israeli independence that began the following day and ended in March 1949. Phase one was largely ad hoc guerilla warfare as each side worked to organize forces. Phase two began in May 1948, when the British abandoned the mandate and the state of Israel was proclaimed. *Spies of No Country* is concerned primarily with phase one, when Israel struggled to learn what was going on in the Arab-controlled territory before there was a Mossad or a Shin Bet.

But the Israelies did have the Arab Section of the Palmach, the elite fighting element of the Haganah, the pre-Israel Jewish paramilitary organization. Canadian journalist Matti Friedman tells how he met 93-year-old Isaac Shoshan, a survivor of the Arab Section, and learned his story of the section's operations, which he later confirmed using material in Israeli archives.

The operational problem facing the Arab Section was how to penetrate the Arabs in Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria. Speaking Arabic wasn't sufficient. Local accents and customs were so distinctive as to make pretense near impossible. The preferred option was to recruit Jews who grew up in Arab cities, spoke the language with genuine

local accents, and could mimic native behavior. Shoshan was such a Jew. Born in Aleppo, Syria, he had run away to Palestine during WWII to live among Jews.

Shoshan told Friedman about his Arab Section experiences in many long interviews. He was one of four section agents who served mainly in Haifa and Beirut. Their tasking varied from reporting on the local military situation, to surveilling and even assassination of political leaders, and to destroying Hitler's yacht. (135) Communication with section headquarters was initially by mail, though a radio was eventually introduced. Training was strictly on-the-job, and when caught in the periodic raids by both Arabs and Israelis, the agents endured the same "humane courtesies" as the genuine Arabs.

Cover was also left up to the agents themselves. In Haifa, Shoshan worked and lived among the Arabs as a laborer. When tasked to drive a getaway car after a sabotage mission, he admitted he could not drive and learned in one day. The Oldsmobile commandeered for the job was converted into a taxi, which they used for both business and private matters. In Beirut, Shoshan and two of his colleagues established "Israel's first intelligence station in the Arab world" in the form of the Three Moons Kiosk, which sold pencils, erasers, candy, and sandwiches to locals. They made some money while maintaining cover.

After defeating the Arabs in 1949, the Palmach was dissolved, but the Arab Section with its unique capabilities was retained as part of the Israeli Defense Forces: "The days when the spies improvised their own cover and lacked money for bus fare were over." (159) Isaac stayed on in "Israeli intelligence," (217) though not all of his colleagues survived to pursue civilian life.

Spies of No Country is an absorbing story of dedicated colorful crafty agents who served a "no country" when needed most.



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