Intelligence in Public Literature

Intelligence Officer’s Bookshelf

Compiled and reviewed by Hayden Peake

Current Topics

*The National Security Enterprise: Navigating the Labyrinth*, by Roger Z. George and Harvey Rishikof (eds.)

*Spying In America in the Post 9/11 World: Domestic Threat and the Need for Change*, by Ronald A. Marks

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*Business Confidential: Lessons for Corporate Success from Inside the CIA*, by Peter Earnest and Maryann Karinch


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*AREA 51: An Uncensored History of America’s Top Secret Military Base*, by Annie Jaccobsen

*How The Cold War Ended: Debating and Doing History*, by John Prados

*Mission Accomplished: SOE and Italy 1943-1945*, by David Stafford

*Scientist Spies: A Memoir of My Three Parents and the Atom Bomb*, by Paul Broda

*Second to None: US Intelligence Activities in Northern Europe 1943–1946*, by Peer Henrik Hansen

*SNOw: The Double Life of a World War II Spy*, by Nigel West and Madoc Roberts

*The Threat on the Horizon: An Inside Account of America’s Search for Security after the Cold War*, by Loch Johnson

*The Tizard Mission: The Top-Secret Operation That Changed the Course of World War II*, by Stephen Phelps

Memoir

*King’s Counsel: A Memoir of War, Espionage, and Diplomacy in the Middle East*, by Jack O’Connell with Vernon Loeb

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*Mumbai 26/11: a day of infamy*, by B. Raman

*Spooks: The Unofficial History of MI5 From Agent ZIGZAG to the D-Day Deception 1939–1945*, by Thomas Hennessey and Claire Thomas

*Spooks: The Unofficial History of MI5 From the First Atom Spy to 7/7, 1945–2009*, by Thomas Hennessey and Claire Thomas

*TREACHERY: Betrayals, Blunders and Cover-ups—Six Decades of Espionage, The True History of MI5*, by Chapman Pincher

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**Current Topics**


The importance of culture—the shared values, goals, and practices that characterize how an institution, organization or group functions—has been emphasized frequently in the media and in congressional hearings since 9/11. It is not, however, a new concept within the IC. In his memoir, Bob Gates commented on cultural dominance of the clandestine service at the CIA.1 Outsiders have also recognized the importance of internal cultures. Professor Loch Johnson commented on the “different analytical cultures” in the IC and the challenges they pose.2 More generally, Dr. Rob Johnston studied the variables in analytic culture within the IC as a whole.3 Former intelligence analyst Roger George and law professor Harvey Rishikof also understand the importance of culture in the IC, but with an innovative difference—they examine it as part of the National Security Enterprise (NSE). Their definition of the NSE is curiously creative: the “formal government institutions found in the executive branch and the Congress.” To varying degrees, the media, think tanks, lobbyists, and the courts also are parts of the NSE. (2-3) They argue persuasively that each of these elements has a distinctive culture that must be understood if the intelligence system is to function properly. And then comes the surprise: there has been no one book that describes the cultures of the enterprise’s components. The National Security Enterprise fills that gap.

In order to accomplish their goal, George and Rishikof—who are also contributors—assembled contributions from experts in the various NSE organizations. The first 10 chapters focus on the principal players in the executive branch—DOD, DNI, State, NSC, CIA, FBI, and DHS. The authors describe the cultures of their organizations while indicating how each affects the mission. The chapters on Congress and the Supreme Court look at how they handle intelligence issues and these institutions’ idiosyncrasies, about which an intelligence officer must be aware. The next three chapters deal with lobbyists, think tanks, and the media. Understanding their cultures is important to appreciating how they deal with intelligence issues. The final chapter summarizes the answers to the question each author addresses: “how can such diverse organizations and cultures successfully adapt” to today’s new conditions, while maintaining their unique cultures and effectiveness? (334)

The National Security Enterprise widens the perspective for those interested in how the IC functions, or should function. While the editors emphasize their work is not comprehensive—not every organization is covered, and more can be said about those that are—it is an important first step. It is also essential reading for students and potential managers. A really valuable addition to the intelligence literature.

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Former CIA intelligence officer Ronald Marks doubts the IC can accomplish its domestic anti-terrorism mission while preserving civil liberties unless it undertakes major reforms. Spying In America defines the problem in detail and suggests a series of remedies.

After supplying background on the constitutional and historical origins of American civil rights, Marks discusses what intelligence is and is not. Then he examines the nature of the domestic and foreign terrorist threats, identifies what needs to be protected in the effectively borderless US environment, and then mentions various plans—coordinated by DHS—to prevent terrorist attacks. Next he discusses the role of intelligence at home and abroad, historically and under current conditions. In a chapter that addresses why it is so difficult for intelligence agencies to "get it right," he focuses on organizations at various levels of government and the often competitive, rather than cooperative, approaches that merely complicate matters. Since some journalists and academics have advocated reforming the domestic security elements of the IC along the lines of Britain's MI5, Marks considers that option. In the end he concurs with the former head of MI5, Stella Rimmington, who said: "Americans would never tolerate the level of intrusiveness into their daily lives that the British do with MI5 and other elements of domestic intelligence gathering." (93)

The penultimate chapter treats balancing civil rights and domestic intelligence. Marks considers the historical record in peace and war, the terrorist threat and the limitations it imposes, the consequences of excessive restrictions imposed on activities both by private sector and government organizations, and the potential for abuse in cyberspace.

Spying In America concludes with a series of recommendations intended to improve domestic security. Most are common sense, but step four, a "New Intelligence Community" is radical reform by any measure. It stresses major organizational and congressional changes that would take decades to implement. While his measures are detailed, Marks doesn't allow for the disruption the reforms he proposes would create in ongoing activity.

In general, Marks has provided a primer on major problems of intelligence in a world faced with global terrorism. It is a worthwhile contribution and deserving of serious attention.

Business Confidential: Lessons for Corporate Success from Inside the CIA, by Peter Earnest and Maryann Karinch. (New York: AMACOM, 2011), 222 pp., bibliography, glossary, index.

At first glance, one might assume this is another book on "competitive intelligence" or methods of corporate espionage. But one would be wrong. It addresses the question: "What can businesses learn from the intelligence discipline, particularly the methods and practices of clandestine operations?" (8) In answering that question, Peter Earnest—a former CIA officer who now is the executive director of the International Spy Museum in Washington, DC—has teamed with Maryann Karinch to produce an account of how the techniques Earnest acquired during his career can be applied to solve problems faced by corporations. His key assumption is that both endeavors require the confidential collection, analysis, and dissemination of information.

The book is divided into three sections. The first identifies CIA and corporate interests and deals with the techniques for hiring the right people. The second discusses the intelligence cy-
de and relates its various methods and techniques to satisfying similar business demands. The third is devoted to organizational improvement—creating and managing a public image, dealing with awkward situations, and handling change and damage assessment. The authors often illustrate these topics with examples from Earnest's CIA experiences. In one case, when describing essential personnel characteristics, he cites as an exemplar the highly respected former chief of station in Athens, Richard Welch. (18–19) When discussing problems of personnel performance and eliciting information, the authors relate the story of CIA agent Polish Colonel Ryszard Kuklinski, with whom Earnest worked after Kuklinski's defection. (85, 100)

To some extent, Business Confidential is both a career memoir and a bold challenge to rethink some of the frequent criticisms leveled at the CIA. Whether the book presents new material and ideas is for business readers to decide. But, at a minimum, it makes a strong argument that the intelligence profession has much in common with the way corporate America does business.


In 1979, CIA officer Antonio Mendez headed the team that, with the help of the Canadian embassy in Tehran, rescued six State Department officers trying to avoid joining other “guests” of the Ayatollah in the just-seized US embassy there. In the foreword to this book, academic Toby Miller refers to Mendez's article—published previously in this journal—about that operation as follows: "the CIA preens in public about using Hollywood expertise, collusion, and cover to undertake its ugly neologism, 'exfiltration,' of people from Iran." (ix) This expression of academic freedom, if not a demonstration of objectivity, assumes a relationship between “the world’s most powerful intelligence agency (the CIA) and its most powerful anti-intelligence agency (Hollywood).” (xi) The authors of Hollywood and the CIA report the results of their investigation into the nature of this presumed relationship, or as they characterize it, the “representations in (mainly) Hollywood film [sic] of the Central Intelligence Agency.” (1)

Chapter one establishes the authors’ view of the CIA as an agency that has “cost, at a conservative estimate... hundreds of thousands of lives.” (2) It goes on to enumerate the CIA’s operational failures, including excessive outsourcing, 9/11, and the Ames case, among others. In this way they create an image for what they acknowledge is “the iconic power of the CIA” (2) that they look for in the films examined in the study. The chapter also includes a lengthy discussion of the considerable literature that comments on espionage in the movies. A final section describes their methodology and the basis for “randomly” selecting the 134 movies used in the study. (23) The films are described in five chapters covering five decades, from the 1960s to the 2000s. Some films selected don’t mention the CIA, but this does not bother the authors, who assert that “the relative absence of the CIA does not exclude the possibility of an unseen, even unspoken, background presence of the agency on the lives of the on-screen characters and situations.” (22)

The criteria for judging a film are specified in the appendix. They are both arbitrary and subjective, for example, “rate the competency of the CIA’s portrayal in the film” and “does the CIA exhibit coercive power on non-US citizens in the film?” (183–85) The discussion of the ratings by the various raters tends to be long, complicated, and very subjective, and hardly profound. When the authors conclude that there is a trend since the 1960s toward representing the CIA as “ambivalent/neutral” or even “black” (182), one is left wondering, so what?

Hollywood and the CIA is an intriguing title, and it discusses some fine films that in most cases mention the CIA. But the only relationship the narrative offers, and that it does implicitly, is the public’s fascination with the genre—a fact any moviegoer knew long before this study appeared.


Sherman Kent was a Yale professor, an OSS veteran, and a senior CIA analyst when he wrote an article in the first issue of this journal, discussing the attributes the intelligence profession possessed and one that it did not. As Kent phrased it, “What we lack is a literature.” Since then, with a single exception, genuine progress toward remedying that deficiency has been made in every category of the profession. The exception are reference works that seek to provide definitions of essential terms and succinct summaries of personalities, events, and cases. There have been many contributions that seek to lay claim to filling this gap. Though their quality varies, all have failed. In general, they all possess a single disqualifying characteristic—failure to check their facts with readily available sources. The present volumes are colossal examples of this failure. More than 600 factual errors of various types appear among the approximately 700 entries.

Numerous examples illustrate the problem. Lona and Morris Cohen were not “couriers for the Rosenberg-Greenglass-Fuchs nuclear spy ring.” In fact, there was no Rosenberg-Greenglass-Fuchs spy ring; Fuchs was handled separately. (1) Philby was never “declared persona non grata.” (19) Herbert Yardley did not create “the American intelligence network during WW I.” (32) Henry Stimson did not form the “Signal Intelligence Service.” (33) The Army did that. The Germans did not rely exclusively “on the Enigma machine” during WW II. (35) “Testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee...” did not lead “to the arrest and conviction of Harry Gold, David Greenglass, Ethel Rosenberg and Julius Rosenberg;” (80) Venona accomplished that feat. Philby was not a “double agent” (80) or a KGB general (614). George Blake was never in the Special Operations Executive, Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force, or the Foreign Office and was not recruited by the KGB in 1950. (93) Anthony Blunt did not recruit Kim Philby, Donald Maclean, John Cairncross, and Guy Burgess. (98) No “Polish mechanic working in a German cipher factory” constructed a mock-up of the Enigma machine in France that was “subsequently smuggled out of Poland by British agents.” (307) The evidence supplied by GRU defector Igor Gouzenko did not lead “MI5 to the espionage activities... of Klaus Fuchs”; Venona did that. (341) Edward Lee Howard defected to the Soviet Union in 1985, not 1986. (378) Oliver North was a lieutenant colonel, not a colonel, and he was never attached to the “NSA staff.” (404) Sadly, many errors could have been avoided had contributors only checked the references cited at the end of each entry; in some cases running a spelling checker would have done the trick.

There are also a number of curiosities. Despite the title, the encyclopedia contains entries for SMERSH, MI5, MI6, Mata Hare, Mossad, and Nigel West, but nothing in the entries links them to American espionage. And then some important cases are omitted. For example, nothing is said of Kendall Myers and his wife, who spied for Cuba. Some terminology is out of date, for example, although the CIA’s Directorate of Operations (DO) became the National Clandestine Service several years ago, only “DO” is used. And the term “conduction of intelligence” suggests the need for a copy editor. Lastly, the reference to Philby as “the hired man” rather than

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6 See for example the Historical Dictionary series published by Scarecrow Press.
the “third man” is typical of the many other careless errors found.

There is no excuse for an encyclopedia—a basic reference work—to be so unhampered by scholarship or quality control. No other profession would tolerate it, nor should ours. For these reasons and its $180 price, caveat lector!

**Historical**


Will Irwin’s first book, *The Jedburghs: The Secret History of the Allied Special Forces, France 1944*, told the story of more than 50 three-man teams dropped behind German lines to aid the French resistance. But nine Jedburgh teams were held in reserve to support Operation Market Garden, the failed allied attempt in 1944 to seize the bridge at Arnhem in the Netherlands—the engagement was depicted in the motion picture, *A Bridge Too Far*. In his most recent book, Irwin tells the story of three of the Market Garden teams—Clarence, Claude and Dudley—as typical of the experiences encountered by all.

“Never volunteer” is a military maxim that has saved many a soldier considerable aggravation. But in order to serve in the OSS one not only had to volunteer; one wasn’t even told what one was volunteering for—“exciting duty” was as close a description as one could get. The technique produced some fine officers. Irwin describes the recruitment of several members of the Jedburgh teams and in the process reveals the kind of personnel needed for special operations. He follows them through additional training in England, the formation of the teams, and their eventual parachute drop into Holland. The risks associated with operations behind enemy lines were heightened in this case because the Germans had captured the previous 50 Special Operations Executive personnel dropped into Holland to aid the resistance—this despite repeated attempts by those dropped to warn headquarters the Abwehr was controlling their transmissions. Fortunately, this funkspiel (radio game), or das Englandspiel, as the Germans called it, was terminated by the time of Market Garden, although the Jedburgh planners did not know it. (6ff) The captured radiomen were not as fortunate; only four survived. (11)

The mission of the Jedburgh teams dropped in support of Market Garden was first to contact and supply resistance elements. Then, when given the signal, they were to destroy bridges and otherwise impede German movement. Through no fault of their own, as Irwin describes in detail, their results were mixed and the Jedburghs were either captured or killed.

The balance of this well documented book gives a sometimes exciting, often poignant, account of how the captured Jedburghs endured imprisonment in a series of POW camps. When an allied rescue mission failed, their problems only worsened. Although they made multiple attempts to escape, only two succeeded. They all displayed an abundance of valor.

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Investigative reporter Annie Jacobson begins her story by asserting that “Area 51 is a riddle. Very few people comprehend what goes on there, and millions want to know.” Then she bookends the problem: “To many, Area 51 represents the Shangri-La of advanced espionage and war fighting systems. To others it is the underworld of aliens and captured UFOs.” (3) Area 51 attempts to justify both views. For those who want to know about the CIA U-2 and A-12 (OXCART) programs tested at the Nevada Test and Training Range and at Groom Lake—the correct names for what Jacobsen persists in calling Area 51—this account will be informative. Though based primarily on interviews with former employees at the site, it adds little to the more than 300,000 entries produced by a Google search on “Area 51 declassified.” Alternatively, independent studies by aviation historian Chris Pocock and CIA chief historian David Robarge are more concise and more solidly documented. 8

For those concerned with aliens and UFOs, however, Jacobsen offers new data. A few open sources aside, Jacobsen relies on a single unidentified man who, she insists, is telling the truth. His truth concerns a super secret “black” project that involved a “crashed craft …” that contained “child-size aviators … two of [whom] were comatose but still alive … attached to a life support system.” Contractors were engaged, he continues, to examine the aviators, who had been created by “Joseph Mengele” at Joseph Stalin’s behest. As to why this had been done, Jacobsen’s source explains that “Stalin sent the biologically and/or surgically modified, reengineered children in a craft over New Mexico, hoping it would land there … Stalin’s plan was for the children to climb out and be mistaken for visitors from Mars.” This would demonstrate that “when it came to manipulating people’s perceptions, Stalin was the leader with the upper hand.” (370–73)

Although Area 51 has 84 pages of endnotes, most are explanatory or refer to a personal recollection. None add credibility to the story told by the unnamed source. There are many facts not sourced at all. Although Jacobsen writes that the book is nonfiction, the juxtaposition of fact with science fiction is so strong, it casts doubt on the entire book. As a contribution to intelligence literature, it falls rather short.


During the many years Professor Hollis Todd taught optics, statistics, and photographic theory at the Rochester Institute of Technology in New York, he argued with force that there was no summary measure, no single factor, that could explain or account for a complex phenomenon—be it technical or historical. Author John Prados, the director of the National Security Archive and author of several books on the Vietnam War, applies this principle in his discussion of how the Cold War ended. The revolt by the peoples of the Soviet Bloc nations, he suggests, may have been a deciding cause, but it also immediately raises the question: why did they revolt when they did? Were economic, political, diplomatic, or intelligence forces involved, and, if so, how did they interact to influence the outcome?

In How The Cold War Ended, Prados concentrates on the period from 1979 to 1991 in examining the key events of the time with a view to identifying their roles in the outcome. He considers Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev.

and the forces they tried to control, and the explanations offered by other historians on their contributions. Throughout the study, Prados implies that questions remain to be answered in order to understand what really took place so that the present can be managed without making the same mistakes.

After a review of just what the Cold War was, Prados devotes the succeeding five chapters “to one or a few threads of multiple causality and [he] layers that new understanding onto the basic story.” (xvii) These threads include the players, programs and plots, institutions and operators, popular movements, national pride, culture and economics, and what he terms the “shadow Cold War”—the role of intelligence. A short section at the end of each chapter discusses what he calls “doing” history. In these, he analyzes the events presented in the chapter, using various criteria to show how the questions asked and the analytical techniques applied can influence the conclusions reached.

The chapter on the shadow Cold War considers the contributions and impact of Soviet intelligence, US Defense Department intelligence, and CIA analysis and operations—i.e., espionage and covert action. Prados acknowledges that CIA analysts “managed to track the broad outlines of Soviet decline pretty well.” But when it came to “predicting revolutionary change…in the final analysis the CIA did not quite manage to do it.” (178) As to the effect of KGB activity, Prados concludes it “was not capable of turning the course of the Cold War.” (167) CIA espionage, Prados concedes, made some positive contributions, but “did not win the Cold War.” (168) Perhaps the most controversial judgment he renders concerns covert action: “In Afghanistan, the Soviet decision to change direction preceded the advent of the CIA’s newly rearmed Afghan rebels.” (161) Just how Prados knows this is unclear.

A summary chapter at the end of How The Cold War Ended makes clear how difficult it is to attach significance to individual parts of complex historical events. This is a very thoughtful and provocative book that does not pretend to be the last word on the topic. The final question he asks and answers is “Who won the Cold War?” “In the last analysis, no one won the Cold War, or perhaps everyone did.” (190)


The preparation of official histories became standard British practice as a consequence of the humiliation administered to them by the Boers during 1899–1902. Thus in 1945, the British Cabinet Office commissioned Oxford historian William Mackenzie to write a one volume official history of the recently disbanded Special Operations Executive (SOE). Since SOE operations involved cooperation with many other secret organizations that did not wish details made public, the history was not declassified until 2000. This did not, however, prevent former SOE officers from publishing memoirs of their wartime experiences, some a mix of fact and colorful exaggeration. Thus, in 1966, to set the record straight, the government revised its policy and authorized publication of a series of WW II SOE country-specific histories with sensitive detail excluded. M.R.D. Foot’s SOE in France was the first; Mission Accomplished is the last.

At the outset, author David Stafford emphasizes that the book includes SOE operations performed in Italy in conjunction with various anti-fascist organizations in that country. Operational support to other countries from bases in Italy is omitted. Stafford begins his account with the allied invasion of Italy at Salerno in September 1943. From then until the liberation of Italy in April 1943, SOE teams worked with and supported the resistance. He soon makes clear that the resistance was not just one group of patriotic

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Italians. There were anti-fascists who had fought the Germans and opposed the king. There were others who supported the monarchy. Then there were elements of the Mussolini-led military who turned their allegiance to the allies. One group that irritated all the resistance groups was the expatriates who had lived abroad and returned just in time to share the spoils of victory. The SOE teams also liaised with the Servizio Informazione Militari (SIM), the Italian military intelligence organization that switched sides after Italy surrendered. And then there were the communists who fought well and demanded logistical support but marched to their own political drummer. Finally, the SOE teams had to coordinate with elements of MI6 and MI9—the group that helped escaped prisoners—and the OSS, whose stubborn insistence on independence sometimes created difficulties. Stafford tells how the SOE teams dealt with them all—often at the same time—while trying to follow the often conflicting orders from their masters based in Cairo, Morocco, and London.

Stafford's event-filled account follows the SOE teams from their arrival in Salerno to their work behind enemy lines in Northern Italy, as they coordinated supply drops, dealt with double agents, and provided critical radio communications. Toward the end of the war they also worked with SOE and OSS elements in Switzerland. One of the many colorful anecdotes Stafford includes concerns Major Malcolm Munthe, who wore his kilts into battle. At one point, an American destroyer pulled up to the dock at which Munthe was helping to unload supplies and a lieutenant commander asked that he look after 32 of Mussolini's political prisoners, who were on board. Munthe was surprised for two reasons. First, it was not part of his mission—but he did it—and second, the officer was Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., who dropped off his passengers and promptly sailed away. (22)

In his concluding comments on the SOE legacy in the Italian campaign, Stafford quotes a report that noted that “the partisan movement would have existed even without [SOE] assistance, and the allies would have won the military campaign if they had not been in the field.” (335) But the support the SOE provided saved lives and helped create a reliable postwar ally. Mission Accomplished is a fine history that finally documents the SOE contribution in that part of Europe.


The Venona decrypts made public in 1995 contained the cryptonym ERIC, which neither the Americans nor the British had been able to identify—the KGB wasn't talking. ERIC's true name, Engelbert Broda, and his role as a physicist in the British atomic bomb was eventually revealed in the book Spies. It was only then that Paul Broda knew for sure that his father had been a Soviet agent.

Adjusting to the fact his father had been an atomic spy for the Soviets was not exactly a new experience for Paul. When he was 14, in 1953, his divorced mother, Hilde Broda, married British physicist Alan Nunn May after he completed his sentence for passing atomic secrets to the Soviets. When death parted the couple 49 years later, Paul decided to write the story of his mother and the two spies she married.

Scientist Spies is based in part on discussions with Nunn May, his unpublished memoirs, and his deathbed statement. Paul also used MI5 documents, letters from his birth father, and interviews with family and friends. The story examines why his fathers spied for the Russians, whether they had any regrets (they didn't), why one was caught while the other escaped, and the impact those events had on members of the family.

11 John Earl Haynes, Harvey Klehr and Alexander Vassiliev, Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 65. For Hayden Peake's review, see “The Intelligence Officer’s Bookshelf, Studies in Intelligence 54, No. 3 (September 2010).
The MI5 documents revealed that Austrian physicist Engelbert Broda, or Berti as he was called, was a communist when he arrived in Britain in 1938 with his wife Hilda. Berti was active in the Austrian Centre, a social club for communists that had been penetrated by MI5. As a result, he was interned for two periods at the beginning of the war. In late 1941, at the request of fellow physicists, he was cleared by MI5 to accept a position in the Cavendish Laboratories at Cambridge University to work on the atomic bomb project. He was joined a few months later by his friend and fellow communist, Nunn May. In 1942 Berti contacted another communist friend, Edith Tudor Hart—the KGB spotter that introduced Kim Philby to his recruiter—and offered his services. They were promptly accepted. (150–51) Berti met with his handler every two or three weeks until 1946, when he returned to Austria. Though suspected of spying and subjected to periodic surveillance, he was never caught.

Nunn May was less fortunate and his case is well known. He was caught because the GRU defector, Igor Gouzenko, produced documents that incriminated him. Paul reveals that Nunn May was frequently asked whether he regretted his spying and his response was that the only thing he regretted was getting involved with atomic research.

Paul Broda presents a sympathetic account of life in the 1930s when communism was popular. He makes clear that his fathers never changed their political views but does not explain how they rationalized their beliefs while remaining in the West. Scientist Spies fills another niche in the story of the atomic spies so captivated by communism that they betrayed their country and never came to regret it.


In his official history, SOE in Scandinavia, British historian Charles Cruickshank wrote that the “OSS...wanted to establish itself in Denmark, where another factor in the equation would have caused problems. Happily [they] were persuaded...to drop the idea.”12 Danish historian Dr. Peer Hansen tells a different story in Second To None, a translation of his doctoral dissertation, Da Yankeerne Kom Til Danmark (When the Yanks Came To Denmark).

Denmark was a special case in the German occupations in WW II. In return for passive collaboration, the Copenhagen government was left in place and functioned throughout the war. But that is not to say Denmark failed to resist, as Hansen documents. The British established contacts with the Danish Intelligence Service (DIS) and resistance elements through its mission in Sweden, beginning in 1940. By 1943 the Brits were passing selected portions of Danish intelligence reports to their OSS allies. But the OSS wanted the complete originals. Furthermore, the OSS wanted “to use Denmark as a base for intelligence activities inside Germany—a task that wasn’t being performed by the British.” (40) Thus, the OSS, operating from Sweden—the unit was named Westfield—gradually developed its own sources in Denmark. Second to None tells how this was done.

Part I of the book is devoted to the details of organization, lines of communication, personnel assignments, and relations among the OSS, the British, the DIS, and other Scandinavian intelligence services. Hansen describes how the DIS provided agents to penetrate Germany and collect information useful to the OSS during the coming Allied occupation. Looking ahead and seeking to avoid any taint of collaboration with Nazi intelligence, the DIS worked to create a relationship with the Americans that would last after the war and permit it to conduct valuable operations against the Soviet Union and Poland.

Hansen describes several operations intended to achieve these ends. One, Operation Tissue, illustrates the problems that the OSS encountered. While it did place Danish agents in Berlin, their preparation took months, and they didn’t arrive until 14 March 1945. Thus the reports they sent back had little impact on the war. Then, the principal agent, “Birch,” was arrested by the Soviets, only to be released two weeks later. The British suspected he had become a Soviet agent, and the Soviets said he was a German agent. The question was never resolved.13

Part II of Second To None deals with several overlapping postwar topics. These include the specifics of Danish-American intelligence cooperation, the intelligence links among other Scandinavian countries, and the emerging Soviet threat. Hansen shows how dealing with these issues in the era of demobilization was further complicated in September 1945 by abolition of the OSS and the creation of the Strategic Services Unit (SSU), followed by the Central Intelligence Group (CIG). He describes how, despite losses in personnel, Danish-American intelligence conducted operations into occupied East Germany and eventually Poland where Danish SIGINT capability was significant. Counterintelligence operations were also conducted to identify Danes who collaborated with German intelligence or were suspected of being communists. In each of these areas Hansen identifies the personnel involved and reviews many of the operations, implemented and planned, to develop the required intelligence.

The title of the book is a quote from Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery’s assessment of the Danish intelligence contribution to the war. (107) Hansen’s research in US and Danish archives has produced a unique book on a topic not treated in any depth elsewhere. It, too, is second to none.


Arthur Owens was an electrical engineer with a patent on an innovative storage battery that extended the amount of time submarines could remain submerged. In the early 1930s he formed a business and soon had clients in Britain and Germany. The British Admiralty was interested in the details of his contacts with the Reichsmarine and, in collaboration with MI6, requested his cooperation. He readily agreed. Then, seeking to enhance his profits, Owens disclosed his role with the Admiralty to the Germans and offered to provide them details of his interactions with it. They, too, readily agreed and furnished him a code and a cover address in Germany. But unbeknownst to the German security service—the Abwehr—the address Owens was given had been compromised, and he quickly came under suspicion as a German agent by MI5.

From that point on, Owens’s activities were closely monitored. In December 1936, during a meeting in Germany, the Abwehr moved to formalize what had become a productive relationship by offering regular payments, providing a transmitter, and requesting specific military data that would require Owens to acquire sub-agents in Britain. After agreeing to the recruitment, Owens returned and promptly informed MI5. Then he offered to continue working for the Abwehr under MI5 control. Code named SNOW, Owens thus became the first agent in the WW II Double Cross System.

This much of SNOW’s story has been told before.14 Authors Nigel West and Madoc Roberts have added details obtained from material released by the British National Archives and from interviews with surviving members of the Owens family. The authors describe the complex

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double agent handling techniques MI5 developed using SNOW as a test case. While his true allegiance was at times suspect, West and Roberts document some major contributions. For example, his controlled radio transmissions allowed the Bletchley Park codebreakers to begin reading the Abwehr traffic that identified other agents in Britain. Other messages established a detailed order of battle of the German army. At the same time, his deceptive responses to Abwehr tasking protected the reality of the circumstances in Britain. These accomplishments were, of course, unknown to him.

It was not all smooth sailing for SNOW. When his wife, Jessie, learned he had a mistress, she took the children—Robert and Patricia—and left, but not before denouncing him as a Nazi spy and for recruiting Robert to spy for the Germans as well—the boy would later go to jail for doing just that. Jessie went on to charge that Owens only told MI5 of his work for the Abwehr because he thought he was under police surveillance. Thus when the war started he was arrested and for a while transmitted to his German masters from prison. When the Germans demanded face-to-face meetings, MI5 was forced to allow Owens to travel to Hamburg and then Portugal. When his performance in Portugal raised doubts about his loyalty to Britain in 1941, he was imprisoned again, this time for the balance of the war.

Owens' MI5 handler, Tar Robertson, gave him £500 after the war but that was the only recognition he received. After unsuccessful attempts to start a business with his son Robert (now out of jail), Arthur Owens found a new mistress, changed his surname to White and disappeared. The authors managed to learn that he started a new family and lived quietly in Ireland working as a self-employed chemist and frequenting the local pub, the Keyhole, until his death in 1957. Owens left behind three children; two (Robert & Patricia) by his first and only marriage, and one (Graham White) by his last mistress. Patricia and Graham only learned of his life as a spy after his death. By that time Patricia had become an actress and starred in the science fiction cult film, The Fly. Graham, found it hard to accept that the quiet man he knew as father had been a major double agent.

West and Roberts have answered many of the questions that surrounded the career of double agent SNOW. But as to “which side was Arthur Owens really on” they conclude that only he knew for sure. (206)


The US intelligence has been the subject of 40 commissions since 1946. Professor Loch Johnson was on the staff of two of them. He wrote an award-winning book about his experiences on the first, the Church Committee, and now he has written one about the second, the Aspin-Brown Commission.

The Threat on the Horizon is not just another lethally dull, detailed account of a commission's investigative activities. Johnson has included many personal observations and anecdotes about himself and those with whom he worked. The result is an unusual view of why the Aspin-Brown Commission was created, what it sought to accomplish, how it functioned, and the impact it had, as seen from Johnson’s perspective.

Johnson's role, he tells us with comforting candor, began when he was a congressional fellow.

15 A list of most of them may be found on page 412 of The Threat on the Horizon.
17 Johnson wrote about the Aspin-Brown Commission for this journal. See “The Aspin-Brown Intelligence Inquiry: Behind the Closed Doors of a Blue Ribbon Commission” in Studies in Intelligence 48, No. 3 (September 2004). The formal name of the commission was: Commission on the Roles and Capabilities of the US Intelligence Community. It was formally established on 14 October 1994.
on Senator Church’s staff. Five years later, he returned to serve as the senator’s personal assistant on the Church Committee. When interviewed for the job, Johnson “reminded him that [he] knew virtually nothing about the CIA or any intelligence agency.” The senator replied, “I don’t either...but we’ll learn together.” (x)

After the 1976 presidential election, Johnson joined the newly formed House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI) as its first staff director, and that is where he met Les Aspin. After three years, Johnson left the committee and returned to academia. With the end of the Cold War, some members of Congress and the media began openly questioning the need for the CIA, which, according to some, seemed to lack a mission. The president and Congress decided to quiet the talk by resorting to a wearily familiar solution—they created a commission. Aspin was its first chairman; Johnson was his special assistant. Its objective, writes Johnson, “was to explore how well the CIA and its companion spy organizations managed the transition from the Cold War to a new world of terrorists, rogue nations, civil wars, and failed states.” (xvi)

Johnson describes in great detail how the membership was negotiated; the initial concerns of the members; the development of an expanding agenda; the meetings they held, including who attended and who did not; and funding issues. Other topics covered include the members’ extensive travel, the many interviews, and the assessments of national intelligence estimates. It will surprise no one that the staff did most of the work. Progress was uneven, mainly due to unanticipated events. For example, the appointment of a new DCI, John Deutch, was somewhat unsettling. Then there was a debate about the desirability of giving the CIA an environmental intelligence mission—not a popular idea in the CIA Directorate of Operations. (104) The most disruptive event, however, was the sudden death of Aspin. Johnson tells how the commission regrouped under a new chairman, former Secretary of Defense Harold Brown.

By the time the commission had written its final report, there were several other congressional committees looking into intelligence reform and competing with each other. None of them achieved much. The president essentially ignored the Aspin-Brown reform proposals. (361) And to no one’s great surprise, as Johnson readily acknowledges, “the intelligence community was unaffected in any large way by the Aspin-Brown inquiry.” (366)

The Threat on the Horizon ends with some conclusions and recommendations. Of particular significance is that “The Aspin-Brown Commission did have some influence on policy, but certainly nothing major.” (369) As for the IC agencies, they “deserve more credit for warning policymakers about a terrorist attack against the United States than is usually accorded them.” (372) The recommendations deal with reform in light of the commission’s work as it might be applied to efforts in the post 9/11 environment.

Professor Johnson has given us a richly documented and powerful study of what presidential commissions can and cannot accomplish. Future commission members would do well to study this book.


In 1939, while on vacation in Aberystwyth, Wales, British scientist John Randall, behaving as any sensible tourist would, visited an out-of-print book shop. There he found a translation of Electric Waves, a seminal treatise by Heinrich Hertz.18 When he read Hertz’s account of a simple device that generated high frequency radio waves, Randall realized the concept was the so-
Solution to the Radio Detection and Finding (RDF) problem that was perplexing British scientists. The idea was to use radio waves that could reach incoming German bombers and then be reflected back to a receiver so the aircraft could be detected long before their arrival over England. (The US Navy would later call it RADAR.) To that point in the war, the British had been unable to design a transmitter that could generate short wavelengths (microwaves) with sufficient power to travel to a target and back to a receiver. Hertz’s device, with some modifications solved the problem. Called a cavity magnetron, it made airborne and shipboard radar possible and today powers all microwave ovens. The Tizard Mission is the story of how the British traded that discovery, along with their research on jet propulsion and their experiments on nuclear fission—“Britain’s most precious secrets”—for financial and manufacturing support from America. (122)

Author Stephen Phelps takes a broad historical view in telling his story. He traces the origins of the Tizard Mission and British-American scientific cooperation from the bumpy days during WW I and the interwar period to the early days of WW II. He provides biographical sketches of the major players and describes the incessant bureaucratic maneuvering for funds, position, and recognition. Throughout, Sir Henry Tizard is the center of attention. Tizard had studied chemistry and mathematics at Oxford, but after learning to fly during WW I devoted himself to aeronautical research. As WW II approached, he headed a scientific committee that studied RDF and other techniques that could aid the military in time of war. But in the mid-1930s, Tizard’s approach to weapons research conflicted with another scientist, Frederick Lindemann, a confidant of Winston Churchill. When Churchill became prime minister, Tizard was taken off the committee and the table was set for his mission to America.

Phelps reviews the turbulent political battles that preceded the mission on both sides of the Atlantic. In Britain, the intelligence services and the military ministries competed for influence. In the United States the initial difficulties centered on opposition to cooperation by the isolationists in Congress. Phelps also assesses the impact of Churchill’s unofficial correspondence with Roosevelt before the former assumed power and the difficulties created by the State Department code clerk, Tyler Kent, who stole copies of the Churchill-Roosevelt exchanges. In the end, when the Americans were told of the cavity magnetron in 1940, cooperation followed promptly. Radars using the device detected the incoming Japanese planes on 7 December, though the operator’s warnings were ignored. The Tizard Mission also shared the results of British atomic research. That led to cooperation in the Manhattan Project and formed the foundation of the “special relationship” of the two countries.

The Tizard Mission is fascinating history; well documented, well told.

Memoir

King’s Counsel: A Memoir of War, Espionage, and Diplomacy in the Middle East, by Jack O’Connell with Vernon Loeb. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011), 266 pp., index.

After high school, Jack O’Connell worked to save the $750 tuition needed to attend Notre Dame and play football. When an automobile accident ended that dream, he attended the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. His studies were soon interrupted by WW II and Naval service on a minesweeper in the Pacific. He returned to complete his studies at George-town University in 1946 and then simultaneously pursued a PhD and a law degree. Then, with the help of a former MI6 officer and friend of Kim Philby—who O’Connell met in Washington, and later in his career in Beirut—he obtained a two-year Fulbright Scholarship to Punjab University in Lahore, Pakistan. While there, he studied Islamic law, learned Arabic,
travelled throughout the region, and was select-
ed for the 1952 Pakistani Olympic basketball
team. His master’s thesis was on “whether it
was possible for an Islamic country to be a dem-
ocratic state.” (xii) With these credentials, his
recruitment by the CIA was a no-brainer.

In 1958, O’Connell was sent to Jordan to in-
form the 22-year-old king about an impending
coup attempt. Although initially a resented out-
sider, O’Connell gradually developed a relation-
ship with the young King Hussein. O’Connell
subsequently served in Amman, where he solid-
ified the relationship. O’Connell left the Agency
in 1972 and joined a Washington law firm,
where he was Jordan’s lawyer in the United
States. In this capacity he was a participant in
negotiating the Camp David Accords, the king’s
1984 peace initiative, and, later, Jordan’s recogni-
tion of Israel. In 1990 he was asked to find an
American to write the king’s biography. After
several unsuccessful attempts, including one
with Dick Helms, O’Connell decided to under-
take the task himself. King’s Counsel is the re-
sult.

O’Connell has written a candid book that dis-
cusses the major events of King Hussein’s rule
and—although the two men remained friends
until the king’s death—does not pull punches.
When necessary, he is critical of the late king,
but he also writes that “Henry Kissinger insti-
gated the 1973 war against Israel.” (xix) Other
topics include the development of a liaison rela-
tionship with the Jordanian intelligence service,
the events of the Six Day War—from both the
CIA and Jordanian perspectives (51ff)—and the
difficulties encountered by a chief of station in
dealing with a temperamental ambassador. Per-
haps the most controversial event in the US-Jor-
danian relationship had to do with a financial
subsidy provided to the king. When it was ex-
posed in an article by Bob Woodward, it “left the
readers with an erroneous sense that the king
was on the take, a CIA lackey.” (137) O’Connell
sets the record straight. At the initiative of the
king’s son and successor, O’Connell has main-
tained his links to Jordan after Hussein’s death,
and he devotes some space to the consequences.

King’s Counsel concludes with O’Connell’s
views of the contemporary problems of the Mid-
dle East. He is particularly sensitive to the po-
tential impact of Iran’s nuclear program and the
need for a negotiated settlement between Iran
and Israel. As to the CIA, he is not sanguine: “It
hurts me to say it, CIA has made far more [mis-
takes] than it should have in recent years.” (243)
O’Connell has written more than a biography of
a king, it is a valuable memoir with an unusual
perspective on events in the Arab world.

Intelligence Abroad

**Mumbai 26/11: a day of infamy**, by B. Raman. (New Delhi: Lancer Publishers, 2009), 272 pp.,
annexures, photos, index.

B. Raman retired in 1994 as head of the Coun-
ter-Terrorism Division of the Research & Anal-
ysis Wing (R&W), India’s foreign intelligence
agency. He was then appointed to the Indian Na-
tional Security Advisory Board and served in a
number of other high-level intelligence posi-
tions. He has testified on terrorism before two
committees of the US House of Representatives
and is the author of four previous books on inteli-
gence. In Mumbai 26/11, Raman first reviews
the evolution of Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), the ter-
rorist organization with links to al-Qaeda that
conducted the attack on Mumbai during
26–29 November 2008. He then describes how
LeT grew “from a sub-continenal to a global ji-
hadi terrorist organization,” with links in many
Asian and Western nations, including the United
States. (24) Next he reviews the many at-
tacks LeT committed on the way to Mumbai; the
empty claims by Pakistan to have banned the
organization; LeT’s funding mechanisms; and
the complex infrastructure that sustains LeT’s
operations. He goes on to cite various US and In-
dian government and press accounts prior to
2008 that designated LeT as “a dangerous al-Qaeda affiliate that has demonstrated its willingness to murder innocent civilians.” (45) Still, the Mumbai attack was a surprise.

After an account of the attack itself, Raman examines several likely explanations for the surprise. The first is “the totally disjointed manner in which the entire [Indian] counter-terrorism machinery” functioned, “without any synergy in thinking or action.” (93) Then he looks at Pakistan’s failure to take any effective action against LeT and the inadequacies of the US policies that have allowed Pakistan to continue its support of terrorism against India. Raman concludes by calling for a comprehensive inquiry to identify necessary preventive measures and toward this end offers 22 “points of action” that he asserts would help prevent future Mumbai-like attacks.

Mumbai 26/11 is a thoughtful treatment of a persistent problem that threatens not only India, but most Western nations as well.


With two exceptions, the two volumes of Spooks follow the approach the authors established with their previous book: narrow margins, small, densely packed type, without comments that explain purpose, method, or concept, and known cases omitted without explanation. (93) The first exception is the endnotes: these two volumes have far fewer cites and none are given for many of the quotes. The second exception is the index: the first volume’s was grossly inadequate, but these don’t even have one. Are the volumes worth consulting? Perhaps, but within limits.

The chapters in the 1939–45 volume are mostly about the major WW II Double Cross System cases, about which books have already appeared. But the summaries in this volume are more thorough than those found in any of the so-called intelligence encyclopedias and are mostly based on primary sources in the British National Archives. There are also several chapters on MI5 organization, changes of leadership, and bureaucratic conflicts with various agencies that provide interesting background.

The limits on the value of the 1945–2009 volume are even more severe. Many important cases are not even mentioned; those that are receive less-than-comprehensive treatment—just a lengthy case outline. The Cambridge Five and the MI5 molehunt are two examples. This volume relies on fewer primary sources and more secondary ones, some of which have problems with accuracy—Peter Wright’s _Spycatcher_ is an example. These limitations may be a function of the limited amount of material available in the Archives, but if that were the case, the authors should have said so up front. While these volumes may be a place to start when studying MI5 history, Wikipedia is probably an equally good alternative.

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19 Thomas Hennessey and Claire Thomas, _Spooks: The Unofficial History of MI5_ (Gloucestershire, UK: Amberley Publishing, 2010). For Hayden Peake’s review, see “Intelligence Officer’s Bookshelf,” _Studies in Intelligence_ 53, No. 4 (December 2010).

The first edition of Treachery (2009) was published in the United States before the appearance of Christopher Andrew’s authorized history of MI5, Defend the Realm. Both dealt with the molehunt that plagued MI5 from the late 1960s well into the 1980s, but they came to vastly different conclusions. In this revised edition, Chapman Pincher has added his analysis of Professor Andrew’s book, stressing the latter’s key omissions and contradictions. In the former category, Pincher points out that Defend the Realm fails to mention the role played by Ruth Kuczynski (SONIA) and the other members of her family who were important GRU agents for the Soviet Union. This is particularly important from Pincher’s point of view since he concludes SONIA was the Soviet agent who handled alleged GRU agent Sir Roger Hollis before and after Hollis became director general of MI5. Other Andrew omissions include a lack of comments on acknowledged Soviet agents, as for example, Tom Driberg (414), Claud Cockburn (508), James MacGibbon (114), Bruno Pontecorvo (349), Yuri Rastvorov (404) and Ernest Weiss, cases that Pincher treats and documents in some detail. Another important omission from Andrew’s book is the failure to include the allegations concerning Hollis contained in a book by Einar Sanden. While unproved, Sanden’s allegations are certainly worth of critical scholarly attention. The principal contradiction that Pincher identifies has to do with the identification of ELLI, a Soviet agent mentioned to Pincher by the GRU defector Igor Gouzenko. Pincher concludes ELLI was a GRU agent with links to Hollis, while Defend the Realm maintains ELLI was Leo Long, a KGB agent not involved with Hollis.

The revised edition of Treachery does not resolve the Hollis dilemma, but it does refine the arguments while providing considerable material for counterintelligence scholars. The many questions it raises and the interpretation Pincher provides need to be resolved. This is the stuff of dissertations and should not be ignored.

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