

In Their Own Words

INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS REMEMBER

February 2015

Good News IS News: Mark Mansfield on CIA and the Media



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GOOD NEWS IS NEWS: MARK MANSFIELD ON CIA AND THE MEDIA

February 2015



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Preface

CIA public affairs specialist Mark Mansfield, who served 31 years until his retirement in July 2013, died on 21 January 2015. Early in his career, he served in the Foreign Broadcast Information Service and the Directorate of Intelligence. Mansfield was, however, best known for his service as a public affairs officer, working in one such capacity or another for every director from William Casey to Leon Panetta. His last assignment was as a CIA officer in residence at Miami University in Florida.

When he wasn't teaching, Mansfield was writing and doing research with the aim of furthering knowledge and understanding of the intelligence profession throughout the Intelligence Community (IC) and academia. For the CSI-produced journal *Studies in Intelligence*, Mansfield interviewed former Director of CIA (DCIA) Michael Hayden and published an important review of *Spinning Intelligence*, a collection of essays about the interrelationship of intelligence and journalism. In it, Mansfield demonstrated his sensitivity to the sometimes conflicting, sometimes overlapping, goals of the two professions.

Following the announcement of Mansfield's death, a number of newspaper articles appeared—some written by intelligence professionals with whom he served, including former DCIA Hayden, who in his *Washington Times* remembrance of 29 January observed that Mansfield's "passing is being mourned as much by the Fourth Estate as it is by the National Clandestine Service."

"Therein lies a lesson," Hayden continued. "There are unarguable structural tensions between an enterprise, espionage, that relies on secrecy for its success and another, journalism, that succeeds only by ferreting out the unknown. Despite that,

Mark never saw this as a battle between the forces of light and the forces of darkness." Hayden added that Mansfield "was a happy warrior...but, happy or not, he was indeed a warrior... [who] was fierce in defending the agency when he felt it was being unfairly attacked."

In a time when CIA and IC professionals are thinking so fondly of his achievements and rare set of skills, CSI has decided to publish the following work, which Mansfield prepared in late 2013 as part of the CIA Career Transition Program's "knowledge capture" effort, in which retiring officers extend their transition periods to record, orally or in writing, career experiences and perspectives that might be valuable for historical or operational reasons. One product of the program is CSI's "In Their Own Words" series, first-person accounts of the experiences of Agency officers.

The following, virtually unedited, manuscript will demonstrate that Mansfield had given to intelligence officers and our profession the kind of love, affection, and respect that his family is now receiving from the many who worked with him over those 31 years. Though Mansfield could not know his essay would serve this purpose, in a sense it can be seen as a fond farewell to a beloved profession. Beyond that, and in keeping with the knowledge-capture effort, it also makes an important contribution to the understanding of the kinds of issues public affairs specialists and leaders of intelligence organizations will inevitably face in dealing with the Fourth Estate.

—Peter Usowski

Director, Center for the Study of Intelligence

Central Intelligence Agency

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GOOD NEWS IS NEWS: MARK MANSFIELD ON CIA AND THE MEDIA

“You [CIA officers] are often the first ones to get the blame when things go wrong, and you’re always the last ones to get the credit when things go right. So when things do go right—and they do more often than the world will ever know—we ought to celebrate your success. . . . That’s why I came here.”

These were the words of President Barack Obama, who made his third visit to CIA Headquarters on 20 May 2011, less than three weeks after the successful raid in Abbottabad, Pakistan, that led to the death of Usama Bin Ladin.

The news coverage of the CIA’s role in the raid was, arguably, the most positive in the Agency’s more than 60 years of existence. Among the laudatory media reports on the president’s Langley visit was a *Washington Post* web article headlined, “Obama Praises CIA Workers’ Role in Bin Laden Killing” and a *Wall Street Journal* story headlined, “Obama to CIA: ‘I Put My Bet on You.’”

Regarding that wager, of sorts, numerous news organizations reported President Obama’s subsequent comment: “Now the whole world realizes that that faith in you was justified.” The Bin Ladin operation, he said (and the *Post* reported), was “one of the greatest intelligence successes in American history.” He added that intelligence professionals would “study and be inspired by” this achievement for “generations to come.”

Concluding his remarks that day by reminding the workforce that they “won’t get ticker-tape parades,”

The president added, “I hope you understand how important [your work] is, how grateful I am, and that you have the thanks of a grateful nation.”

President Obama had expressed this sentiment before, both publicly and privately, including when he visited the Agency for the first time in April 2009. In a comment that wasn’t replayed extensively in the press, he said, “When you succeed, as you so often do, that success usually has to stay secret. So you don’t get credit when things go good, but you sure get some blame when things don’t.”

“Amen,” an employee shouted.

“I got an ‘amen’ corner out there,” the president replied, provoking laughter and applause.

There have been many instances over the years when the CIA has been criticized publicly, and justifiably, for its performance, including involvement in the Iran-contra affair in the 1980s, the flawed estimate regarding weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, counterintelligence failures and major espionage cases, and the lack of actionable intelligence that conceivably could have prevented the 9/11 attacks.

There also have been withering criticisms of the Agency for the terrorist detention and interrogation program, particularly the use of enhanced interrogation techniques that have been branded by some as torture. And questions continue to be raised about the appropriateness of the Intelligence Community's technical collection programs aimed at thwarting terrorist attacks. Much of the reporting in these stories—which frequently appear on the front pages of newspapers or at the top of newscasts—has been shallow, misguided, exaggerated, or flat out wrong.

Far too often, the press tends to focus on what are labeled intelligence failures and what is wrong with CIA, equating negativity and controversy with newsworthiness. Former CIA Director Michael Hayden, for whom I served as director of public affairs from mid-2006 to early 2009, has described it as an “impulse to drag anything CIA does to the darkest corner of the room,” making it very difficult for the Agency to do its vital work.

An unnamed retired case officer was quoted in a 2009 *Daily Beast* article as saying, “We’ve gone from chasing the bad guys to being portrayed as the bad guys ourselves.” (Actually, that had been the case for decades, with movies, TV sitcoms, and spy novels often depicting CIA “agents” as crazed assassins or buffoons.)

In a January 2010 op-ed piece after the suicide bombing in Khowst, Afghanistan, that killed seven CIA employees the previous December, former case officer Art Keller wrote, “Although the CIA’s work is instrumental to keeping America safe... it has evolved into the perennial whipping boy of US popular culture and mass media. Even when we celebrate another al-Qa’ida or Taliban operative killed or captured, so often thanks to the CIA, those successes are taken for granted.

“Meanwhile, when something goes wrong at the Agency, the public response is never, ‘Maybe we should cut them a little slack.’ Instead, the tone of coverage is a relentless, shrill harping: ‘How has the agency screwed up this time, and when will the newest round of investigations to “fix” the Agency begin?’”

Less than 18 months after the attack in Khowst, the Agency received the unprecedented public recognition—and credit—for its role in taking down Bin Ladin. It was, as the president said, a result of perseverance, relentless focus, and determination over many years. And it spoke volumes about the

quality of the people who work at CIA.

During my CIA career—most of it in the Office of Public Affairs—I have seen many things go right, and

it is a tribute to the outstanding people throughout the Agency who have served with such distinction, courage, devotion, and integrity. Moreover, they have served with passion and compassion.

Since the print and broadcast media tend to focus on “bad news”—including real and perceived intelligence failures—it is easy to lose sight of the many positive, uplifting stories that have been written or aired about the Agency and its people over the years. The successful Bin Ladin raid is probably the first one that comes to mind for the well over 60 percent of the workforce that joined the Agency after 9/11, but there have been many other successes, and they merit discussion here. In addition, there have been many examples of thoughtful media commentary on intelligence issues, particularly when the Agency was the subject of severe criticism. And there have been several instances in which the CIA or Agency officers have been vindicated after the mainstream media rushed to judgment.

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A Little History

Since its inception in the fall of 1947, CIA has had a capability to deal with the press. But for the first 30 years of the Agency's existence, that capability was decidedly low-key. It was basically a one-man show, and occasionally a director of central intelligence (DCI) would also engage the press on a specific issue—usually for damage control reasons. A formal public affairs office was not created at the Agency until 1977, when Admiral Stansfield Turner, President Carter's selection as DCI, brought Herbert Hetu, a career Navy public affairs officer, over to the Agency.^a

Hetu, a savvy public affairs pro, arrived at CIA with ideas that many Agency veterans viewed as heretical,

including allowing a network camera crew to film in the CIA Operations Center for the first time ever. Truth be told, the prevailing view throughout the Agency, and particularly in the clandestine service, was that the best way to deal with the press was not to deal with them and the best comment was a “no comment.” Indeed, Hetu, who passed away in 2003, believed that some CIA officers “looked upon him as something approaching a traitor,” according to Ronald Kessler's book, *Inside the CIA*.

Hetu did not claim to know a lot about the intelligence business, wrote Kessler, but “he simply had a gut feeling that the CIA could be doing a better job in the press area.”

a. According to the author of a forthcoming history of CIA's media relations efforts, CIA has had a designated press relations officer, and sometimes two, since May 1951, though the person's title was usually “assistant to the director.” Before the formation of a formal office to handle press relations in 1977, individual DCIs, from Hoyt Vandenberg through William Colby, dealt directly on dozens of occasions with individual reporters and their bosses to control damage, promote positive stories, swap gossip, and collect information. More often than not, the CIA press officer was not involved. [redacted] Center for the Study of Intelligence.

There is a misperception that former Director William Casey (1981–87) totally dismantled the public affairs apparatus after he was chosen by President Reagan to succeed Turner in 1981. It is true that he did some restructuring and scaled some things back a bit, and he appointed a career clandestine service officer, George Lauder, to be the director of public affairs.

But CIA spokespersons dealt with the press regularly during the Casey era. The Agency frequently gave unclassified background briefings to reporters,

particularly those heading to, or returning from, assignments overseas as correspondents. Moreover, Casey gave public speeches and, on

occasion, conversed with reporters he respected. Communicating with the public wasn't his top priority or his strongest attribute, for sure, but he understood the need to do it.

Judge William Webster (1987–91), who had been FBI director and was nominated by President Reagan to become DCI in 1987, was the first director with whom I worked fairly closely, as one of his speechwriters from 1987 to 1989 and then as an Agency spokesman.

Webster, who brought with him William Baker from the Bureau to head up public affairs at CIA, believed one of his most important responsibilities was to help restore public trust and confidence in the Agency in the wake of Iran-contra. In an interview, Webster told author Kessler that besides the president, he saw the press and Congress as his two most important constituencies. “As Webster would state, it was all part of keeping the Agency accountable and remembering that it was there to serve the American people,” Kessler wrote.

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And Baker, Kessler wrote, worked to establish credibility with a skeptical clandestine service.

“There is a lot you do that we can talk about,” Baker told operations officers. “The image that many Americans have of you, particularly after Iran-contra, is not very positive. There are ways we can work on that and improve public opinion and still be credible.”

According to Kessler, Baker was at CIA to help “market” the Agency, and to let the public know that it does do good things. Baker, who was well respected by reporters and had earned the respect of Agency insiders, returned to the FBI in 1989 to become assistant director for criminal investigations. After retiring from the Bureau, he joined the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), and eventually became the MPAA’s president and chief operating officer before stepping down in 2000.

During his confirmation hearings in 1991, DCI-designate Robert Gates expressed his desire to continue Webster’s policies of making more material about CIA available to the general public and promoting openness “to the extent possible.” Shortly after taking office, he asked Director of Public Affairs Joseph DeTrani (who also had served in the clandestine service), to appoint a task force on greater openness. The task force had a tight deadline, reporting back to Gates in a month.

Among the task force’s more than 20 recommendations was the suggestion to pitch more stories to the news media that highlighted the contributions of individual CIA employees.

The press had a field day when they learned that the openness task force report was originally classified “secret,” but, as comical as it might

have appeared, there were reasons: it was a deliberative document and, more important, it contained the names of journalists who agreed to sit down with the task force and offer their views on how the Agency could be more open. They had been promised confidentiality. The report was declassified in 1992 (with the names of the journalists redacted).

Among the task force’s more than 20 recommendations was the suggestion to pitch more stories to the news media that highlighted the contributions of individual CIA employees. The goal was to “personalize” and “humanize” the Agency—to let Americans know that CIA officers were ordinary people doing extraordinary things on their behalf and to tell these stories without revealing state secrets, of course.

This recommendation, and others approved by Gates, resulted in numerous stories over the years that have given the American public a better appreciation for intelligence and a better understanding of the people who make intelligence work happen. So in the section that follows, I will recount a few of these stories with the hope they will be inspiring to future generations of CIA officers.



Heroes

Bob Barron

On 16 December 2009, Charlie Gibson's last night as the anchor of ABC's *World News Tonight*, he singled out two people he met during a more than 40-year career in journalism, calling them "extraordinary heroes."

The first was Bob Barron, a former CIA disguise specialist who, after retiring from the Agency 1993, started a second career, using his extraordinary skills to help burn victims or others who had been disfigured in accidents or by illnesses.

During a 2002 interview on ABC's *Primetime*, Gibson asked Barron, "In simple terms, you build them new faces?"

"I build them new faces," Barron replied. "Ears....hands. I can rebuild hands."

In another interview, Barron said the idea of going from designing disguises to designing prosthetic devices occurred to him in 1983, while attending a biomedical sculptors' conference in New York. He was there to find out if the private sector had any new materials to offer for disguise creation.

Instead, he discovered what he wanted to do after he retired from the Agency. "I thought to myself, 'Bob, if you can change someone's identity, you could certainly give back a disfigured person's identity by designing prosthetics.'"

So a decade later, when he retired, Barron began designing prosthetic ears, eyes, noses, and full-face

masks for burn patients, as well as people who had birth defects or had suffered debilitating illnesses. He was profiled in newspapers and magazines across the country, and interviewed on *Oprah*, *Montel*, *The O'Reilly Factor*, and documentaries for the Discovery Channel and National Geographic.

I recently caught up with Barron, 71, who is still at it, running Custom Prosthetic Designs Inc. out of a small office in Ashburn, Virginia. While many of his patients are young children, he recently made an ear for a 93-year-old cancer survivor. And while he can't help every patient who comes his way because of the nature and extent of disfigurement, he says he can and does help 95 percent of them.

"God gave me this gift," Barron said, noting that he has designed prosthetic devices for over 1,000 patients since he began his second career. "I don't make a fortune off of someone's misfortune, but I get a great satisfaction in changing that person's life and making that person whole again. There is no better feeling. I mean, who are we if we're not helping someone?"

In several interviews, he cited as one of his most memorable cases helping a beautiful Pakistani woman, Zahidi Parveen, who had been horrifically mutilated by her husband in an unfounded, jealous rage. After brutally beating her, the husband cut off most of her ears and sliced off her nose with a

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straight razor, and then gouged out her eyes with a metal rod. He left her for dead.

Although she survived the devastating injuries, Zahidi was greatly distressed by her little children screaming when they saw her disfigured face.

According to an article in a medical journal, Zahidi was flown from Pakistan to the United States in 2001 for treatment. Barron worked closely with two

surgeons who fabricated the eyes and the skeletal foundation of the nose, and he then fabricated her nose and ears. Though she was still blind, she returned to Pakistan content that her children wanted to hug her again.

Barron says each of his patients has their own story, and many tell him they don't know how to begin to thank him. "You already have," he tells them. "Just look at that smile. Your smile is thanks enough."

Tony Mendez

In 1997, to help commemorate CIA's 50th anniversary, an Agency steering committee selected 50 "Trailblazers," CIA officers from the Agency's inception to the present who had taken the organization in important new directions and helped shape its history.

Bill Harlow, who several months before had been selected public affairs director by DCI George Tenet after holding key communications posts in the Navy and at the White House, thought it would be a wonderful idea to tell some of their stories publicly and let the American people know these men and women who had done terrific things for America.

"Can we declassify some of these stories?" Harlow asked. "You must be new here," was the response he got from the recalcitrant bureaucracy.

Eventually, after seeking and receiving Tenet's strong endorsement, Harlow was authorized to tell the story of a "Trailblazer" named Antonio "Tony" Mendez. Seventeen years earlier, Mendez, a disguise specialist, had exfiltrated six US diplomats, posing as a production crew for a phony sci-fi movie, out of Iran during the hostage crisis.

Mendez, at the Agency's urging, did numerous press interviews in connection with the CIA anniversary and in 2000 wrote *Master of Disguise: My Secret Life in the CIA*.

But he became known to millions of Americans when *Argo*, a movie based on the rescue, was

released in 2012 and in February 2013 received the Academy Award for Best Picture.

Ben Affleck, who directed the movie and played Mendez, has praised the CIA at every opportunity in media interviews, noting that the Agency allowed him to film several scenes at Headquarters. (This was one of the latest of the Agency's efforts—began in earnest in the mid-1990s with the hiring of a liaison with the entertainment industry—to assist moviemakers interested in portraying the Agency accurately.)^a

Although Mendez, now 73, received the Intelligence Star, "he never got [public] credit," Affleck said in one press interview. "Nobody ever knew about it. And one of the things I wanted to do with this movie is hold him up and say, 'This is an American hero.'"

When Affleck appeared on *The O'Reilly Factor*, the provocative Bill O'Reilly said facetiously, "This is a valentine from Ben Affleck to the Intelligence Community....the same people who waterboarded, the same people who renditioned."

Without missing a beat, Affleck responded, "I have been to the CIA.... These are extraordinary, honorable people at the CIA. Make no mistake about it."

Mendez, asked by ABC's George Stephanopoulos what he would like audiences to glean from *Argo*,

a. For the CIA Chief Historian's reviews of the book and movie, see David Robarge, "Operation Argo in Book and Film," *Studies in Intelligence* 57, No. 1 (March 2013).

said he hopes the takeaway is a movie in which CIA officers are not portrayed as “deranged assassins.”

“The fact is we are human beings, and we have families, and we go out to a job every day like most people,” he said. “And we prevail.”

Asked how well Affleck portrayed him, Mendez deadpanned, “He was OK. He’s not good looking enough.”

Jeanne Vertefeuille

In a tribute to Jeanne Vertefeuille, who died in December 2012 after a valiant battle with cancer, journalist Rupert Cornwell wrote that when it comes to espionage, life has a habit of imitating art. He likened Vertefeuille, who knew as much about the KGB as anyone in the building, to Connie Sachs, the unsung researcher who helped catch a Soviet mole in John le Carre’s 1974 novel *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*.

Long after she retired from the Agency, Vertefeuille could be seen around the building in her trademark turtlenecks and tennis shoes, still working

on counterintelligence issues as a contractor and imparting wisdom to succeeding generations of CIA officers.

She was, says her close friend and colleague Sandy Grimes, “one of the most private people you can ever, ever imagine.” And Vertefeuille would “faint” if she knew *The New York Times* had written an obituary on her, Grimes said in a poignant *Washington Post* interview that appeared later and chronicled their long friendship and professional relationship.

Those articles, and others, highlighted Vertefeuille’s legacy—starting at the CIA as a typist in 1954, developing expertise on counterintelligence and Soviet/East Bloc affairs, serving as a chief of

station in Africa, and then leading a task force whose tenacity led to the 1994 arrest of Aldrich Ames. Ames’ espionage for Soviet (and later Russian) intelligence over a nine-year period led to the deaths of numerous CIA assets and compromised a myriad of sensitive of Agency operations.

Grimes and Vertefeuille co-authored a book published in 2012, shortly before Vertefeuille died, entitled, *Circle of Treason: A CIA Account of Traitor Aldrich Ames and the Men He Betrayed*.

In the preface, they discussed not only what motivated them

After Ames pled guilty and was sentenced to life in prison, it was decided in 1995 by Agency management that Vertefeuille, Grimes, and other members of the team could do select press interviews.

to write the book but also what prompted them to participate in numerous media interviews, beginning in 1995, on the case. “All of our contacts with the media stem from a project conceived by the Agency to tell its side of the Ames story,” they wrote. “After Ames was arrested in February 1994, the FBI, as is customary for that organization, launched a campaign to let the public know of their success. In the Agency’s view, the decisive CIA contribution to this roll-up was getting lost.” (The FBI didn’t join the mole hunt until 1991, when the Agency enlisted the Bureau’s help.)

In a 1994 interview with CIA’s *What’s News*, Kent Harrington, the Agency’s director of public affairs when Ames was arrested, said there were strict constraints on what the Agency could say publicly so

that the prosecution could be pursued successfully. “The director [R. James Woolsey] took this seriously, senior officers in the Agency took this seriously, and so did we in public affairs.”

Harrington, in an interview for a book that came out in 2012 entitled *The CIA in Hollywood*, said the Ames story was “devastating” to public perceptions of the Agency. He added that the case was an “especially significant blow” because it coincided with the growing public perception that CIA was no longer needed in a post-Cold War world.

After Ames pled guilty and was sentenced to life in prison, it was decided in 1995 by Agency management that Vertefeuille, Grimes, and other members of the team could do select press interviews on: CIA operations against the Soviet target; the damage caused by Ames’ espionage; and the investigative efforts that led to his identification as a Soviet mole.

“Initially this project made us quite uneasy because we are of the old school and had been indoctrinated that one was to avoid the media at all costs,” they wrote. “Later we became more comfortable with the idea.”

In *Circle of Treason*, Vertefeuille wrote that in a debriefing after Ames’ arrest, Ames said that when

KGB officials asked him in 1985 for the name of a CIA officer whom they might plausibly frame for the assets who were being rolled up (and it became clear there was a mole), he gave them her name.

“At first I wanted to jump across the table and strangle him,” she wrote. “But then I started laughing. It really was funny, because he was the one in shackles, not me.”

“At first I wanted to jump across the table and strangle him [Ames],” she wrote. “But then I started laughing. It really was funny, because he was the one in shackles, not me.”

As devastating as the Ames case was, the fact of the matter is that he was caught

and justice was done. After the damage assessment was completed, then DCI John Deutch (1995–96) said the assessment, in all of its detail, “does nothing to shake my conviction that we need a clandestine service.”

“Of all the intelligence disciplines, human intelligence is, indeed, the most subject to human frailty, but it also brings human intuition, ingenuity, and courage into play against the enemies of our country,” Deutch said in a statement issued publicly. “Often there is no other way to penetrate a terrorist cell or a chemical weapons factory or the inner circle of a tyrant. At critical times human intelligence has allowed our leaders to deal with the plans and intentions—rather than the weapons—of our enemies.”

John Guilsher

According to a “Washington Whispers” piece in *US News and World Report*, receiving a “Trailblazer” award at CIA is akin to “getting into the Spook Hall of Fame.”

A posthumous recipient of the award in the fall of 2009 was John Guilsher, a legendary CIA case officer who had died the previous year. According to a

Washington Post obituary by Matt Schudel, Guilsher’s exploits in Moscow were “among the most remarkable episodes in the history of the Cold War.”

Five times from January 1977 to February 1998, the obituary stated, a Soviet engineer named Adolf Tolkachev had tried to make contact with the CIA, offering information on Soviet aircraft and weap-

ons systems. Initially, the Agency thought he was a dangle and didn't respond to his entreaties, which included pounding on the chief of station's car.

Tolkachev made one more desperate effort, writing in an 11-page letter that if he were spurned this time, he would give up.

At that point, the station chief assigned Guilsher to make contact with him. Guilsher and his wife, Catherine, had been posted in Moscow for only a few months and were "living in the fishbowl that was life for a [case officer] during the Cold War," according to a lengthy "Lives to Remember" piece by Michael Ruane that appeared in *The Post* in January 2009. Their apartment was bugged with microphones and cameras, they were under almost constant surveillance, and even their dog had been drugged so the KGB could search the apartment.

The first telephone contact with Tolkachev was made in March 1978, when Guilsher called him from a public telephone during the intermission of a ballet performance at the Bolshoi Theater. Guilsher's wife played an indispensable role, distracting a female KGB "minder" so he could vanish and place the call. Within minutes, having accomplished the mission, he was back in his seat.

Indicative of the incredibly difficult operating environment, Guilsher's and Tolkachev's first face-to-face meeting did not occur until New Year's Day, 1979.

The engineer proved to be one of the CIA's most valuable assets inside the Soviet Union. Guilsher handled the relationship with great skill and extraordinary tradecraft. Described as smart, cool, dependable, and good on the street, Guilsher also happened to be a master of disguise, *The Post* reported.

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In an unclassified account in *Studies in Intelligence* of Guilsher's activities in Moscow, former CIA operations officer Barry Royden wrote that Guilsher might drive to the US Embassy for a dinner engagement and then leave through a back door and climb into another car. "While still in the car," Royden wrote, Guilsher "changed out of his western clothes

and made himself look as much as possible like a typical, working-class Russian by putting on a Russian hat and working-class clothes, taking a

heavy dose of garlic, and splashing some vodka on himself." He then would ride subways and buses to his secret meetings—returning to the embassy and exiting the front door in a suit and tie.^a

Guilsher and Tolkachev met more than a dozen times before the case officer left Moscow for another assignment in mid-1980. *The Post* quoted Royden's assertion in his official account that the information Tolkachev provided on Soviet weapons "could have meant the difference between victory and defeat, should a military confrontation with the USSR have occurred."

This remarkable story did not have a happy ending for Tolkachev. Although he continued to meet with CIA case officers until early 1985, he was identified to Soviet authorities by disgruntled CIA officer Edward Lee Howard and was executed by the Soviets in 1986.

Like Vertefeuille, Guilsher continued to work at CIA as a contractor long after he retired, consulting on Russian affairs and inspiring young officers. At the 2009 Trailblazer ceremony for Guilsher, which was attended by his widow and children, then CIA Director Leon Panetta (2009–2011) said Guilsher was "a rare combination of careful planner and audacious operator."

a. See Barry Royden, "An Exceptional Espionage Operation Tolkachev, A Worthy Successor to Penkovsky," *Studies in Intelligence* 47 No. 3 (September 2003). (The article is unclassified.)

Eloise Page

Eloise Page, a case officer and the Agency's first female supergrade, was at one point in her career selected by CIA officials to head a new division on technology, to be called the "Scientific Operations Branch," according to an account of her life in *The Los Angeles Times*.

According to James Pavitt, the former deputy director for operations who spoke at her funeral service in Georgetown in

2002, Page declined, saying, "I'll be damned if I'll be the chief SOB." So, *The Times* reported, Agency officials changed the name, and Page "broke yet another barrier in the CIA's glass ceiling."

She was, Pavitt said, the "perfect southern lady whose proper exterior allowed her to serve her country in the not always nice world of espionage."

Even after retiring from the Agency in 1987, Page provided counterterrorism training to analysts and operations officers at the Defense Intelligence College.

Page, who like Mendez was one of the original 50 "Trailblazers," started her career as Major General William "Wild Bill" Donovan's secretary in the OSS and went on to become the CIA's first female chief of station in 1978. It was in Greece, three years after terrorists had assassinated Richard Welch, the chief

of station there. "It was a rough assignment," *The Times* reported. "She thrived."

The assignment in Athens heightened her interest

in counterterrorism, and she became a top expert on the issue. Even after retiring from the Agency in 1987, she provided counterterrorism training to analysts and operations officers at the Defense Intelligence College.

When Page died at the age of 82, Director George Tenet said, "From her earliest days of service with OSS, she was a source of inspiration to others. She will be forever."

The Kasi Arrest

For several years, [redacted] head of the DCI's CounterTerrorist Center, kept Aimal Kasi's "Wanted" poster on his office door.

"It was a reminder we would not stop looking for him," said [redacted]

On 17 June 1997, then Acting DCI Tenet and FBI Deputy Director William Esposito announced the arrest of Kasi, who four and a half years earlier had murdered two CIA employees and wounded three others in a morning rush hour attack outside CIA Headquarters.

In a horrific shooting spree that stunned the American public and was front-page news through-

out the nation, Kasi stepped out of his vehicle with an AK-47 and shot the employees point-blank in their cars as they waited at a red light to make a left turn from Route 123 onto the Headquarters compound.

Those of us headed to work at Headquarters that morning, and countless others, will never forget that day.

President Bill Clinton, who visited CIA in January 1994, noted in his remarks that stars had been carved into the memorial wall for Dr. Lansing Bennett and Frank Darling, the two Agency officers slain in the attack. "I want to say again personally how much I admire the service that they gave, the

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sorrow and anger we all felt and continue to feel about this outrageous act,” he told the workforce—and the nation.

Clinton added, “These [memorial] stars remind us that the battle lines of freedom need not be thousands of miles away, but can be right here in the midst of our communities with our families and friends.”

The tragic events of 25 January 2003 produced heroic actions, including those of CIA analyst [redacted]

[redacted] who was in the lead car at the stoplight when Kasi began his shooting spree. Despite being shot twice in the shoulder, he sped to the main gate in an effort to warn security personnel of the attack, before passing out. According to then DCI Woolsey, [redacted] quick action helped prevent further bloodshed and hastened the arrival of first responders to the scene. In November 1993, he was awarded the Intelligence Star.

When Kasi was finally apprehended in Pakistan—after a long and often frustrating hunt—FBI Deputy Director Esposito said the success of the investigation was primarily due to the dedication of the men and women of the CIA and FBI.

In remarks that were reported widely, Tenet said, “We have always kept the faith and never wavered in our commitment to find the individual charged with this attack.”

“Today marks a clear triumph of good over evil.”

CIA marked Kasi’s capture with an emotional, standing-room only event in the “Bubble” that day, featuring remarks by Tenet and other jubilant Agency officials. Tenet asked staffers to play a recording of Bruce Springsteen’s “Born in the USA”

as the crowd filed out of the auditorium. “Wanted” posters of Kasi with the word “Captured” stamped on them in red bold letters could be seen throughout the building.

The arrest also marked a turning point in relations between the CIA and FBI, which had deteriorated in the wake of the Ames case, according to Kessler

in another book, *The CIA at War*. He said some at CIA had chafed at post-Ames reforms giving the FBI an increased role in counterintelligence activities at the Agency.

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“Now, the FBI had arrested a man who had killed two CIA employees,” Kessler wrote. In the Bubble, the FBI agents who captured Kasi in Pakistan got hugs and a standing ovation.

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Tenet and Esposito said in a joint written statement that Kasi’s apprehension “demonstrates that terrorists have no refuge among civilized nations and that we will mount a relentless pursuit to find US fugitives and bring them to justice no matter where they may hide.”

At the end of the statement, Esposito thanked the families of the victims “for their patience and faith” in the investigators and the investigation. “You never lost hope and we never gave up,” he said.

Kasi was found guilty of capital murder in November 1997 and sentenced to death. He was executed by lethal injection at Greensville Correctional Center in Jarratt, Virginia, in November 2002.^a

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a. The story of the hunt for and capture of Kasi is told in [redacted] CSI, History Staff: 2012) (Classified S//NF). A classified documentary film with the same title is available in video-on-demand, dated 18 March 2013.

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Defying Stereotypes

As was the case with the Route 123 shootings, there were some heartbreaking stories over the years that “humanized” the Agency. These stories not only shed some light on courageous Agency officers who died in the line of duty, but they also inspired many Americans and reminded them of the sacrifices and risks involved in intelligence work.

There also were news pieces which showed that CIA employees, and their spouses, did much more

than skulk around, communicate covertly, and operate in back alleys. Defying stereotypes and countering misperceptions, CIA officers enjoyed their families, contributed to their communities, kept their perspective, and didn’t take themselves too seriously. And, on occasion, they could be as creative and resourceful in their kitchens as on the streets of a foreign capital.

Cases in point

The publication of a 1997 cookbook, *Spies, Black Ties, and Mango Pies*, which included recipes amassed by Stephanie Glakas-Tenet and other members of the CIA’s Family Advisory Board at the time. The “spook cookbook,” which was published privately and sold out at more than 60,000 copies, complemented each recipe with a funny (or harrowing) anecdote concerning the dish or some slice of Agency life.

The cookbook received national publicity and was so popular that a sequel, *More Spies, Black Ties, and Mango Pies*, was published in 2009 with more than 200 recipes. *The Washington Post* reported that the latest edition contained “entertaining yarns,” including “scrounging for potatoes while being tailed” or “what to do if the flambé sets a top [dinner] guest’s napkin on fire.”

Then there were the dozens of stories on James Sanborn’s 1990 encrypted sculpture “Kryptos” (meaning *hidden* in Greek), including a live shot on *The Today Show*. For years, reporters were intrigued by efforts to break the code on the three-part piece, the bulk of which was in the northwest corner of the New Headquarters Building courtyard.

And it’s hard to forget the groundbreaking, so to speak, robotic solar powered lawnmowers that were purchased and used by the Agency back in 1996

(very few had been sold in the United States at the time). A *Washington Post* story noted that they were acquired as part of CIA’s “Innovation Activities Program,” and the robotic devices could conceivably save the expense of lugging heavy lawn-mowing equipment around and having security guards supervise contracted groundskeepers.

Those of us in public affairs sometimes found it puzzling, and amusing, that the media wanted to focus on sculptures or then state-of-the-art gardening devices, even though we knew they provided great visuals for the broadcast media. But if it kept the press from fixating on the latest Agency miscue or transgression (actual or imagined), we weren’t going to complain.

There have been many other fun stories—even ones that piqued the interest of newspaper readers who first turn to the sports pages. One of my all-time favorites was a November 2008 piece by *Washington Post* columnist Mike Wise, profiling one of the Pittsburgh Steelers’ most loyal fans, General Michael Hayden.

The Steelers were in town for a game that Monday evening, and the piece chronicled Hayden’s affinity for the team, noting that he had served as an equipment manager in the early 1960s. Hayden wasn’t paid a salary, but each Christmas he would receive

a check from the Rooney family, who owned the Steelers, and that helped pay for his second semesters at Duquesne University.

Similarly, I'll always remember the "local boy makes good" stories that ran in the New York City tabloids when Tenet, who as a teenager had worked as a busboy in a Little Neck, Queens, diner along with his twin brother Bill, was nominated by Clinton to be DCI.

People enjoy reading feature stories like that because they can relate to them. Stories like that can and do change perceptions.

Less than a year ago, I read a story in *The Miami Herald* concerning CIA that certainly defied stereotypes. It previewed an event that never would have taken place when I started my Agency career in 1982. The CIA would be holding its very first recruiting and networking session for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) men and women

in South Beach. It's well known that CIA has had an active LGBT organization since 1996, but the fact that the Agency was cosponsoring a public event with the Miami-Dade Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce got my attention. It proved that we have come a long way, and made me even prouder of the Agency.

In *The Herald* piece, Steve Adkins, the Miami Chamber's president, said CIA had proposed the event. "They want to make sure we know their stories and, in addition, make people aware that they're an open and inclusive employer," he said. "Who knew?"^a

About 50 potential applicants from the Miami area attended the event.

a. On this subject, see also [redacted] "From the OSS to Today: The Evolving Status of LGBT Employees at CIA," *Studies in Intelligence* 58, No. 1 (March 2014) (The article is classified S//NF).

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Informed Commentary

During the nearly two decades I served as an Agency spokesman, I would sometimes characterize dealing with reporters as "the sport of the long season." If public affairs officers were to scream every time an unflattering or unfair story were written, they would lose their voices in short order.

And during the course of one flap or another, if employees were to comb the "Media High-lights" searching for a positive story, they would soon be pulling their hair out.

I had the opportunity to deal with many fine, principled journalists in my career—people who worked hard to get a story right and strived for balance. They also performed a great public service

I also knew a few reporters and editors who put a premium on getting a story first rather than necessarily getting it right, and who rarely let national security concerns get in the way of a scoop.

and, in some cases, put their lives on the line to do their jobs.

I also knew a few reporters and editors who put a premium on getting a story first rather than necessarily getting it right, and who rarely let national security concerns get in the way of a scoop.

In an interview with me that appeared in *Studies in Intelligence* in 2010, former Director Hayden said he thought *The New York Times'* decision in December 2005 to publish a story on the terrorist surveillance program—after holding it for more than a year—was "irresponsible." He also thought *The Times'* June 2006 story on the SWIFT program [for accessing international financial data]

was irresponsible. I think Hayden is right, because both stories impaired our ability as a nation to counter terrorism.

It was during the hubbub surrounding the publication of the SWIFT story that *Washington Post* columnist David Ignatius made an astute observation, mentioning that as a reporter and editor, he had been “wrestling with different versions of the national security conundrum” for nearly 30 years.

“We journalists usually try to argue that we have carefully weighed the pros and cons and believe that the public benefit of disclosure outweighs any potential harm,” he wrote. “The problem is that we aren’t fully qualified to make those judgments.”

Ignatius, in my view, has been and continues to be the most thoughtful and well informed commentator on CIA and intelligence matters. He also happens to be one of the most gifted and prolific spy novelists of his generation (he has written eight, including *Agents of Innocence* and *Body of Lies*.)

While some bloggers claim he is soft on the Agency, a careful look at his body of work over the years suggests the opposite. In a 2004 column, for instance, he wrote that the Agency could certainly improve its performance, noting that it was “too risk averse, too prone to groupthink, too mired in mediocrity.”

He then added, “But the cure for these problems is hardly to send in a team of ideologues from Capitol Hill and drive out the Agency’s most experienced intelligence officers.”

Commenting in August 2009 on the CIA’s “foray” into the use of enhanced interrogation techniques, Ignatius wrote, “CIA officers aren’t idiots. They knew they were heading into deep water—legally and morally—when they signed up for the [terrorist] interrogation program. That’s part of the Agency’s ethos—doing the hard jobs that other departments prudently avoid.

He continued, “Looking back, it’s easy to say the CIA officers should have refused the assignments they suspected would come back to haunt them.

But questioning presidential orders really isn’t their job, especially when those orders are backed by Justice Department legal opinions.”

In the midst of a 2009 furor over Congress not being briefed until that time about a CIA program, never fully operational, aimed at taking al-Qa’ida terrorists off the street, Ignatius opined, “As other countries watch the United States lacerate its intelligence service—for activities already investigated or never undertaken—perhaps they admire America’s commitment to democracy and the rule of law. More likely, I fear, they conclude that we are just plain nuts.”

Indeed, no one would accuse him of waffling on the issue of what should, and shouldn’t, merit congressional notification. Soon after former Director David Petraeus’ affair became public in November 2012, as well as revelations concerning e-mails between a Tampa socialite and General John Allen (for which Allen was ultimately exonerated), Ignatius wrote, “Amazingly, many members of Congress talk as if the real outrage here was that they weren’t informed earlier about the investigations of Petraeus and Allen. ‘We should have been told,’ said Dianne Feinstein, chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, last Sunday. To which an observer might respond vernacularly: Give me a break.”

Congress appropriates funds and has a legitimate role in overseeing how it is spent, Ignatius wrote, “but the idea that these scandals demonstrate the need for greater congressional involvement in sensitive investigations is preposterous.”

Writing recently about Edward Snowden’s disclosures of NSA programs aimed at thwarting terrorism, Ignatius said, “Intelligence collection relies on the human fact that even smart [terrorists] do stupid things; they forget how powerful and pervasive the US systems are. That’s why these surveillance programs remain valuable.”

The leaks about NSA programs also were eloquently addressed by *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman, who wrote, “I do wonder if some of those who unequivocally defend this

disclosure are behaving as if 9/11 never happened—that the only thing we have to fear is government intrusion in our lives, not the intrusion of those who gather in secret cells in Yemen, Afghanistan and Pakistan and plot how to topple our tallest buildings or bring down US airliners with bombs planted inside underwear, tennis shoes, or computer printers.”

Friedman, one of the most insightful commentators around, added, “Yes, I worry about potential government abuse of privacy from a program designed to prevent another 9/11—abuse that, so far, does not appear to have happened. But I worry even more about another 9/11.”

Not surprisingly, some of the most insightful commentary on intelligence comes from former CIA officers, because they speak from experience. In a October 2012 *Daily Beast* column headlined, “Stop the Libya Blame Game,” former CIA analyst Bruce Riedel wrote, “Policy and intelligence officials routinely have to brief the public, the media, and Congress on fast-breaking events about which they typically have incomplete and often inaccurate early accounts. Believe me, I’ve been there. Trying to discern who carried out a terrorist attack is especially difficult.”

Former CIA officer Paul Pillar wrote in a *Foreign Policy* column entitled “Don’t Blame the Spies,” after US intelligence was criticized following the Arab uprisings in 2011: “The public too often assumes that the Intelligence Community is some sort of

Department of Avoiding Surprises and consequently blames it for every unexpected event.”

“How could anyone, for example, have expected that a Tunisian street-cart vendor’s self-immolation would set the region ablaze?” he wrote. “It is utterly impossible for the White House, intelligence services, or anyone else to predict the timing of future unrest.

He continued, “The events in question are not the result of someone’s secret plan, discoverable through assiduous and skillful intelligence work.”

Those who either criticize or endorse US foreign policy decisions need to keep in mind what is knowable and what is not, said Pillar. Much about events unfolding in the Middle East is still unknowable, largely because it is unplanned, he wrote.

Pillar also put events in perspective—for the general public and for CIA’s workforce—after Petraeus resigned in November 2012. In a *Foreign Policy* piece that made its way into the “Media Highlights,” Pillar wrote that the CIA “will shake off this latest turbulence and go about performing its mission.”

Scandals and controversies are, for the vast majority of employees, “outside noise that has little or no impact on their jobs,” he wrote.

“The latest scandal briefly provides a topic for water-cooler conversation. And then people go back to work.”

Vindication

A bad story about CIA—or any other organization or event, for that matter—gets demonstrably worse when it has “legs,” meaning that it captivates the media’s attention for weeks, months, or even longer.

The “Dark Alliance” Series

The Agency’s public affairs office grappled with quite a few stories with “legs” during my career. One of the most harmful and corrosive was the *San Jose Mercury News*’ “Dark Alliance” three-part series in August 1996. The series, authored by Gary Webb, suggested that CIA supported efforts by the Nicaraguan contras to bring cocaine into the United States to finance their operations, leading to a crack cocaine epidemic in south central Los Angeles and inner cities across the nation.

The explosive allegations were fueled by the then new Internet, guaranteeing a huge audience even though the largest, most influential newspapers did not pay a lot of attention to the story initially.

Despite strong Agency denials of the key allegations, “Dark Alliance” created a furor, prompting investigations by Congress, the Justice Department, and the CIA’s Office of the Inspector General (IG).

Within weeks, though, the mainstream media began poking holes in the story, first in a September 1996 article by Tucker Carlson in *The Weekly Standard* and then lengthy October pieces by *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The New York Times*.

Carlson’s piece said “after a year of research, Webb came up with no evidence to support his claim,” while *The Post* “found that the available information does not support the conclusion that the CIA-backed contras—or Nicaraguans—played a major

role in the emergence of crack as a narcotic in widespread use across the United States.”

While the tide was beginning to turn, there still was great anger and consternation—particularly in some predominantly African-American communities—about Webb’s charges. Deutch, who was DCI at the time, was so troubled by the allegations—and their implications—that he accepted an invitation from Rep. Juanita Millender-McDonald to appear at a town hall meeting in the Watts neighborhood of south Los Angeles in November 1996. Some of us in public affairs didn’t think it was a very good idea to accept the invitation, but Deutch was determined to do it.

In what *The Los Angeles Times* described as “a dramatic break with tradition for America’s most secretive government agency,” Deutch told a “skeptical and irate” audience of more than 800 local residents that there would be a complete investigation into the CIA–crack cocaine controversy.

According to CNN, which covered the event along with other broadcast media, Deutch “had a hard time keeping order and getting his points across.” He was shouted down several times as he tried to encourage anyone with evidence of a crack conspiracy to report it to the LAPD, the CIA IG, or Congress.

“It is an appalling charge,” Deutch said. “It goes to the heart of this country. It cannot go unanswered,

that the CIA, an agency of U.S. government founded to protect Americans, helped introduce drugs and poison into our children and helped kill their future. No one who heads a government agency can let such an allegation stand.”

By early 1997, Jerry Ceppos, the *San Jose Mercury News*' executive editor who up until then had

strongly defended “Dark Alliance,” changed his tune. In March, he told Webb that a team of reporters and editors from the newspaper found serious flaws in his reporting, and that the paper would shortly publish a letter to readers acknowledging the shortcomings.

On 11 May 1997, Ceppos published the front-page column in the newspaper, saying the series “fell short of my standards.” He criticized the stories because they “strongly implied CIA knowledge” of contra connections to US drug dealers who were manufacturing crack cocaine. “We did not have proof that top CIA officials knew of the relationship,” Ceppos said.

Ceppos concluded, “I believe we fell short at every stage of our process—in the writing, editing, and production of our work.... We have learned from the experience and even are changing the way we handle major investigations.”

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Having lost confidence in Webb, Ceppos reassigned him from *The Mercury News*' Sacramento bureau to a very small bureau in Cupertino, California, far from his family. Webb eventually resigned.

In January 1998, as CIA's IG neared completion of a 17-month investigation that de-

bunked the central findings in the series, DCI Tenet issued a public statement which received considerable press play. “I must admit that my colleagues and I are very concerned that the allegations made have left an indelible impression in many Americans' minds that the CIA was somehow responsible for the scourge of drugs in our inner cities,” he said.

“Unfortunately,” he continued, “no investigation—no matter how exhaustive—will completely erase that false impression or undo the damage that has been done.... That is one of the most unfortunate aspects of all of this.”

Webb's life ended tragically in December 2004; the Sacramento County Coroner's Office determined the cause of death to be self-inflicted gunshot wounds to the head. His ex-wife said he had been distraught for some time over his inability to get a job at another major newspaper, according to *The Sacramento Bee*.

Jose Rodriguez

In a 31-year Agency career—virtually all of it under cover—Jose Rodriguez made some life-and-death decisions and dealt with more than his share of thorny situations. But nothing compared with what he faced in December 2007, when news broke that he had in November 2005 ordered the destruction of CIA videotapes of terrorist interrogations.

In his 2012 book *Hard Measures*, which was written with Bill Harlow, Rodriguez gave his side of the story.

The former head of the CounterTerrorist Center and National Clandestine Service talked about why enhanced interrogation techniques were employed on hardened terrorists, the intelligence gleaned from the program, why he ordered the videotapes' destruction, the firestorm that resulted when it became public, and the impact it had on his life.

In *Hard Measures*, Rodriguez laid out his reasoning for giving the tape destruction order in 2005:

He wanted to protect the identities of CIA officers involved in the interrogations, and he had grown weary of bureaucratic hand-wringing.

He made the decision, though, at great personal cost. In the first 24 hours after the story appeared in the national press, the late Senator Edward Kennedy declared, “We haven’t seen anything like this since the 18-and-½-minute gap in the tapes of President Richard Nixon. What would cause the CIA to take this action?” he asked on the Senate floor. “The answer is obvious—cover up.”

Within weeks, the attorney general announced a full-blown criminal investigation into the tapes’ destruction, and John Durham was appointed special prosecutor.

The media commentary about the matter was uniformly condemnatory. “I never saw a single [editorial] that was in any way supportive of the action I had ordered,” Rodriguez wrote. “Of course, the editorial writers had precious little information on which to base their views, but it seemed information was not a requirement before rushing to judgment.”

Suddenly, he found himself retired, under criminal investigation, and, except for his family, “feeling pretty much alone.”

“Don’t get me wrong,” he wrote. “I got a lot of calls of support from friends and former colleagues, but I likened it to a funeral. Lots of people show up for the service and express their sympathies, but then they go home or back to work and get on with their lives. Only the next of kin are left to deal with their sense of enormous loss.”

Potential employers, he said, became “vague, distant, or noncommittal.”

On 9 November 2010—five years to the day after the videotapes were destroyed and nearly three years after the special prosecutor’s investigation

began—the Department of Justice issued a succinct public statement saying, “Mr. Durham has concluded that he will not pursue criminal charges for the destruction of the interrogation videotapes.”

Upon hearing the good news, Rodriguez wrote that a large part of him wanted simply to forget the ordeal, given all the time, effort, and angst spent on it. But after he told his wife Patti that the cloud had been lifted, “we both began to cry tears of relief.”

Coinciding with publication of *Hard Measures*, which sold briskly, Rodriguez did interviews on CBS *60 Minutes*, Fox’s *Hannity*, and a host of other news programs.

Nationally syndicated radio host Rush Limbaugh reflected the views of many when he proclaimed, “I know people who know this man. He is a patriot, a hero, a great guy...I love Jose Rodriguez.”

In his book, Rodriguez said he will “forever be thankful” to Hayden for supporting him during the tapes investigation. “My decision to destroy the tapes was made before he became [CIA] director, and he could have punted,” he said. Instead, [Hayden] not only supported my actions, he became a lonely but articulate and vocal defender of the Agency’s interrogation programs.”

After years of investigation and scrutiny, Rodriguez, who now works in the private sector and occasionally comments on counterterrorism issues, believes his actions were vindicated. “I have no regrets,” he wrote. “I would do it all again, because it was the right thing to do—vindicated or not. I know our actions helped save American lives—and I can live with that.”

Brian Kelley

In a March 2011 interview with *The Fairfax Times*, former CIA counterintelligence officer Brian Kelley was described as “the wrong man” in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Kelley, a long-time CIA counterintelligence officer whose groundbreaking work in 1989 led to the discovery of suspected spy Felix Bloch, was the Agency officer suspected by the FBI of being the spy who turned out to be FBI special agent Robert Hanssen. The FBI’s Hanssen—who had been spying for the Russians, off and on, for more than 20 years—was arrested near his Vienna, Virginia, home in February 2001 and is serving a life sentence.

Kelley died in November 2011 at the age of 68—only months after *The Times* interview—but he had lived not only to see himself totally vindicated, but to resume his CIA career and retire in 2006 and then continue to work as a consultant and teacher.

While the media did not report at the time that Kelley was under suspicion, numerous FBI agents were convinced he was the mole, Kelley said.

For several years, the FBI invested a “staggering” amount of technical and human resources to try to obtain evidence to corroborate its suspicions, Kelley wrote in a *Studies in Intelligence* review of *Breach*, the 2007 movie about Hanssen’s espionage. Kelley was placed under 24-hour surveillance, his home and work spaces were searched, and computers and telephones in both his home and office were put under technical surveillance. Moreover, the Bureau

launched a false-flag recruitment operation against him (he promptly reported the unsolicited contact).^a

Kelley said he and his family “lived with the real horror that I would be arrested and charged with a capital crime about which I was innocent.”

“My children, my sisters, along with many friends, were told repeatedly that, with 99.9 percent certainty, I was a traitor who was living a double life and that I caused the death of several Russians who had

secretly worked for CIA and the FBI,” he said.

Ultimately, Hanssen was fingered, and the FBI proceeded to

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build the case against him.

After he was cleared, Kelley was interviewed for several books and also discussed his story on *60 Minutes* and other news programs. He also told his story in a long, classified, and frank oral history interview that was published in two parts in *Studies in Intelligence* issues of March and June 2012. In the first part, Kelley spoke of his career in counterintelligence; in the second he spoke of the ordeal he experienced living under the FBI’s microscope.

And while Kelley faulted senior officials at the FBI for bungling the case, he also singled out and praised the Bureau agents who “stood up and repeatedly told the supervising agents that I was innocent.”

“They were real heroes to me and my family,” he said.

In a 2010 magazine profile, Kelley said another hero was former CIA Deputy Director Steve

a. Brian Kelley, “The Movie *Breach*: A Personal Perspective,” *Studies in Intelligence* 52, No. 1 (March 2008).

Kappes, who, at an Agency ceremony in 2007 attended by over 250 people, took to the podium, apologized to Kelley and his family, and presented him with the Distinguished Career Intelligence Medal. The room, said Kelley, erupted in applause.

“For my family and my friends who suffered greatly as a result of what the FBI did, Steve’s remarks were very cathartic,” he said. “It helped put an end to a very painful time in all of our lives. So many innocent people suffered, and it was only after Steve and the others spoke that the real healing process started....Steve is a revered figure for my family.”

Leaning Forward

Television journalist Ted Koppel once referred to the public affairs office at CIA as “the ultimate oxymoron,” and rarely a day passed when I didn’t have a good laugh about the incongruity of doing outreach for an espionage organization. That said, it’s a necessary and important function, both for the institution and for our democracy.

During the years he headed the CIA, General Hayden frequently said he believed the Agency had a “social contract” with the American people—that nothing was more critical than earning the public’s trust and confidence.

In a statement to the workforce shortly after he took office, he said, “I want the American people to understand the contributions that CIA makes to national security and the Agency’s critical role in keeping Americans safe. Moreover, I want them to understand that you are dedicated public servants who act with integrity and reflect the core values of our nation.”

Increasing public understanding of the Agency’s contributions—and the quality and character of its workforce—will always require effort, commitment, and even more transparency. It is a challenge we must meet and embrace.

While it is critical for our government to protect legitimate secrets, I believe that unwarranted and excessive secrecy undermines the Agency. When the pendulum swings to the “tell them nothing about everything” side, it breeds mistrust and only increases the likelihood and toxicity of the next

leaked story. It also largely cedes public discourse to self-styled “experts” who either have an agenda or don’t know what they are talking about.

So I fall squarely into the “tell them what you can” camp. Toward that end, CIA’s public website and the Internet have been enormously beneficial. Speeches by senior officials, news releases, and even some statements to the workforce are posted in their entirety, reaching a wide audience and no longer just being subject to reportorial interpretation. All sorts of unclassified documents and publications are quickly and routinely made available to the general public.

Technology is a facilitator, but CIA’s most precious resource has been, and always will be, its people. People who are not afraid to take risks. People who make tough and gutsy decisions. People who invent and deploy gadgets and disguises. People who go, willingly, to faraway places and put their lives on the line. Patriotic Americans who, day in and day out, do extraordinary things and make the world a better place.

During my career, I have had the privilege to serve with all of the heroes I’ve written about here, and many more. Continuing to tell their stories, to the extent we can, is very much in CIA’s interest and will help build further public support for it. In my experience, a forthcoming approach with the media and the public—while at the same time protecting sources and methods assiduously—benefits the Agency over the long run and enhances its credibility. And it certainly serves the public interest.



