David Rockefeller in War

Epistemology for Analysis

In Memoriam: William Webster

Intelligence in Public Media

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Cover design: Doris Serrano. The Trophèe d'Armes at entrance to Fort Jay on Governor's Island, New York. Wikimedia-Mike-Peel.

STUDIES IN INTELLIGENCE

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In memory of
William H. Webster
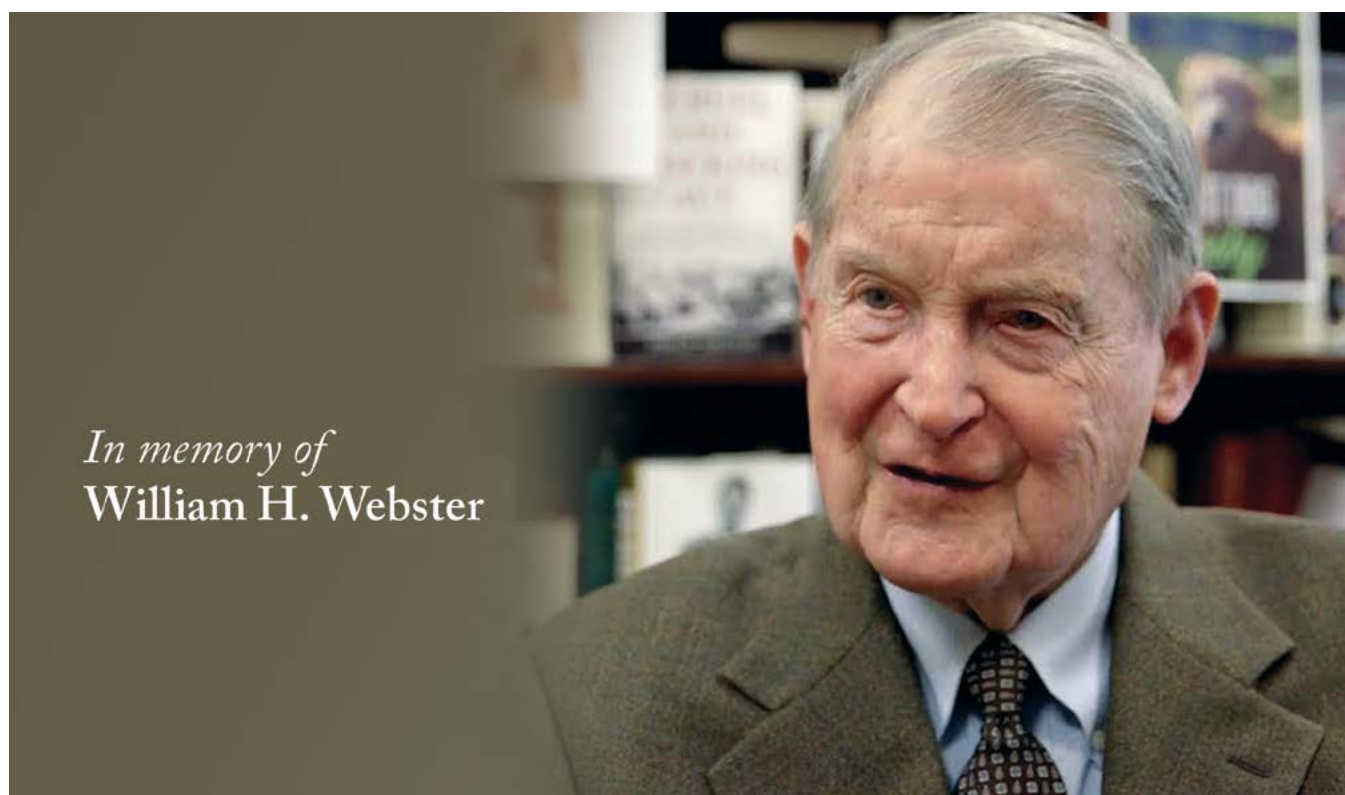
Remembering Director of Central Intelligence William H. Webster (1924–2025)

On Friday, August 8, 2025, our Nation lost a great American with the passing of former Director of Central Intelligence William H. Webster. A former federal prosecutor and federal judge, Judge Webster would become the only person to lead the FBI and CIA.

A World War II and Korean War veteran, Judge Webster served for nearly a decade as Director of the FBI, where he was known for rebuilding morale, restoring relationships, and upholding the law in service to the public. A line from his first speech as FBI Director is memorialized in bronze at FBI Headquarters: "Together, we will do the work the American people expect of us, in the way the Constitution demands of us."

As his tenure at FBI was ending, President Reagan sought a leader known for integrity and appointed Judge Webster DCI at a pivotal moment in CIA history. Judge Webster guided CIA through a difficult period in the wake of the Iran-Contra affair, helping the Agency regain the trust of Congress and the American people. He launched CIA's first specialized units focused on counterintelligence and counternarcotics. Most notably, his steady leadership unified the broader Intelligence Community through

landmark moments, including the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War.

Judge Webster was a devoted and faithful servant to the Nation, living a remarkable life of public service during his 101 years, and we extend our deepest condolences to his wife, Lynda, and the entire Webster family.

—John Ratcliffe, D/CIA, August 14, 2025

William H. Webster, Director of Central Intelligence, May 26, 1987–August 31, 1991.

When William Webster took office as 14th DCI on May 26, 1987, it was evident that his predecessor's efforts to revitalize the CIA had succeeded.[a] Webster inherited an Agency with greatly expanded covert operational capabilities and an analytical apparatus of notably enhanced prestige and credibility. It was also in trouble, beset by charges of illegal activity arising out of the Iran-Contra scandal.

Webster's brief was to bring the CIA's credibility with Congress and the public to the same high level it now enjoyed in the national security community. A former Federal judge, Webster had successfully played a similar role as director of the FBI, and his appointment promised a lower profile for the DCI in the future. His task was made easier by the Tower Commission Report which, while not uncritical of the CIA, made it clear that the Iran-Contra affair was a National Security Council initiative and that the Agency as an institution—as opposed to the actions of specific individuals—was not involved.

In his first 100 days, Webster worked hard to emphasize CIA's accountability before the public and the Congress. Where Casey had looked for a free hand in his management of the Agency, Webster pursued a policy that clearly recognized the CIA's subordination to national policy. Apart from strengthening ties to Congress, Webster tightened up the internal review process, defining rigorous standards by which covert action would be judged for competence, practicality, and consistency with American foreign policy and values.

Webster's tenure began in a period of great uncertainty in establishing overall intelligence objectives. By 1987 it was clear that the decline of the Soviet Union as a world power was irreversible, and its continuation as a single entity was beginning to come into question. The twin problems of terrorism and international drug enforcement already posed problems that transcended the normal lines of Intelligence Community organization. Moreover, in Webster's first 100 days the Iran-Iraq war demanded an intelligence collection and evaluation effort that drew expertise from virtually every office in the Directorates of Intelligence and Operations.

These three sets of intelligence problems—the USSR, terrorism and counternarcotics, and the Iran-Iraq war—provided models for the interdisciplinary task forces or centers that were to proliferate under Webster and, later, Gates. At the same time, the advent of a new era of arms control raised questions of treaty verification that had not been dealt with seriously for nearly a decade.

Webster's first 100 days set the tenor of the remainder of his term as DCI. Navigating cautiously in a complex world dominated by long-service professionals, his style of management was detached and his role in government a conciliatory one ∎

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a. This passage originally appeared in CIA History Staff, "Fifteen DCIs' First 100 Days, Taking Stock" in *Studies in Intelligence* 38, No. 1 (Spring 1994), *57–58*.

With Fidelity to the Constitution
—A Speech to the Institute of Judicial Administration, in San Francisco, CA, on August 8, 1987

This speech was published in *Studies in Intelligence* 31 No. 2 (Summer, 1987), a special issue commemorating the Bicentennial of the US Constitution. Director Webster delivered a nearly identical speech in November to a Federalist Society symposium.

To Put Truth into Action: **WITH FIDELITY TO THE CONSTITUTION**

William H. Webster

Not long ago somebody gave me a lapel button which reads, "My job is so secret that even I don't know what I'm doing." There may be some correlation between that statement and how we feel about secrecy. It conjures up images of Orwellian intrusion by government, of clandestine activities that put at risk our most cherished institutions and our individual liberties, of mistakes and blunders concealed within documents classified "Secret"or"Eyes Only."

There is, of course, a historical basis for all of these concerns, including some recent history which has been unfolding daily on our television screens. But that is not my real purpose in speaking to you today. Rather, I propose to talk about the collection of intelligence at home and abroad and how our Constitution, without a single reference to intelligence, has accommodated this function so vital to our national security, and has inspired a system of oversight through the separation of powers.

Taking a leaf or two from my experiences on the federal bench and as Director of the FBI, I start my new responsibilities with two deeply held cardinal theses: first, that the intelligence activities vital to the protection and preservation of our national security must be conducted objectively, professionally, and lawfully, with absolute fidelity to our Constitution and to our laws; and, second, there must be a trustworthy system of oversight and accountability which builds, rather than erodes, trust between those who have the intelligence collection responsibility and those who act as surrogates for the American people.

In the past 10 weeks, I have come to know and to meet in this country and in various places around the world some extraordinarily gifted, dedicated, bright, able Americans assigned to our clandestine responsibilities. And I have watched the President in the privacy of a room in my office decorate four silent soldiers of democracy for exceptional bravery on behalf of our country.

The Major Role of Intelligence

Intelligence collection has always played a major role in our history and is at least as old as our Constitution. A couple of years ago, Malcolm Forbes presented Bill Casey and me with facsimilies of a letter by George Washington written to Major Tallmadge on September 24, 1779, in which he outlined some of his thoughts about the need for, and the requirements of, good intelligence work.[a] And I am also reminded that in 1777 Washington wrote to Colonel Elias Dayton discussing the need

a. *Writings of George Washington*, GPO 1933, Washington, DC, Volume 8, 478F.

for intelligence in these words:" The necessity of procuring good intelligence is apparent and need not be further urged. All that remains for me to add is that you keep the whole matter as secret as possible. For upon secrecy, success depends in most enterprises of this kind, and for want of it they are generally defeated."[a] In 1790, secret funding for foreign intelligence activities was formalized by Congress in the form of a secret contingency fund for use by the President.[b]

Today our government depends heavily upon accurate intelligence: intelligence to formulate and conduct our foreign policy, intelligence to verify the arms agreements that we have signed and to judge whether or not we could verify the arms agreements that may be signed in the future, and intelligence to understand both the military capabilities and the intentions of our adversaries. Our primary consumers are the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretaryof the Treasury, the National Security Council, and of course, the intelligence oversight committees of the House and Senate.

Intelligence—political, economic, and military—must be gathered early and accurately. Recently I spent a day at NORAD, in Colorado Springs, which is one of the principal early warning systems for our country's national defense. And a day there can't help but make one aware of the critical importance of gathering early and accurate intelligence for our national defense. Much time has passed since our Constitution was formed, and now in terms of survival warnings, we think in terms of minutes rather than in months and years.

The forms of intelligence collection vary from the human intelligence that we are all aware of—clandestine intelligence and the gathering of public source information around the world—to signals and communications intelligence and imagery intelligence, the latter of which involves satellites with almost near-real-time capability, where a substantial amount of our budget is spent.

It is important that information that is collected be developed in an objective way—that the Director of Central Intelligence and the people who analyze the information be seen as giving our best estimates, not to "cook the books" or to shape or influence policy, but to provide policymakers with the kind of information upon which they can make the best decisions in the interest of our national security.

Implementing Foreign Policy

In addition to collection and analytical activities, the CIA plays a role in the implementation of foreign policy and this is done through its covert activities. These may include political work through communications—getting our message out—training, supplying important materials for those whom we support, and giving advice. Although covert action is not defined by law, the term has come to be understood as referring to activities conducted in support of national foreign policy objectives in such a way that the role of the United States Government is not apparent.[c]

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a. Ibid., Volume 16, 330–32.
b. *Annals of Congress*, I., Cong., Volume II, 2292; Statutes at Large, I., 128. See also *Annals of Congress*, 2 Cong., 1412, Statutes at Large, I., 299, The Act of February 9,1793.
c. Executive Order 12333, United States Intelligence Activities, December 4, 1981, General Provision 3.4 (H); See Also Glossary of Intelligence Terms and Definitions, Intelligence Community Staff, NFIB NO.24.1/18, June 15, 1978, 3.

Just as intelligence activities were conducted at the beginning of our nation's history, covert actions also played a role in the founding of our country. Covert actions were employed to obtain arms in exchange for food in Bermuda at the outset of the Revolution.a And covert actions were used to gain the support of the Frenchb and to influence the Canadians at the time the Revolution broke out.c

In subsequent years, and in my lifetime from President Roosevelt forward, every President has endorsed and used covert action to support the foreign policy of this country. Although covert actions traditionally claim only a very small portion of the CIA's budget, they are the focus of the greatest congressional and public attention. And having seen some of the responsibilities for covert action move outside the CIA into the National Security Council and, fortunately, removed from there, hopefully never to go back again, we have only added to the confusion, suspicion, and the ill ease of the American people. I have heard the Iran-Contra situation described as a government without rules inside a government that did not know. I hope that I can convince you that we have rules that, if followed by men of integrity and dedication,will meet the constitutional requirements and sustain our national security needs.

We have, of course, secrecy. Both Congress and the judiciary have recognized the need for secrecy in matters of national security. Those of you on the bench and those of you who argue cases know that in the Freedom of Information Act there are express provisions protecting from disclosure those matters of foreign counterintelligence and information supplied to us by foreign intelligence agencies.d The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, for example, provides for a special court to review, in secret, the applications filed to conduct electronic surveillance for foreign intelligence purposes.e This statute has been found to be within the confines of the Constitution.

The main purpose of secrecy in these efforts is to preserve and protect sources and methods. These are two terms that were relatively unknown to me when I came to Washington nine years ago but which I have come to respect as real and not persiflage. If we cannot protect our sources, whether they are FBI informants or foreign assets developed around the world,we will not get the information that we need.If we cannot protect the sensitive methods by which we collect that information, both in terms of individuals on the ground and satellites in space, we will cease to have the means of collecting information.

Covert capability is essential in our foreign policy in providing needed support for liberation movements and often in providing support to governments, and working in collaboration with other governments who do not wish, for legitimate political reasons of their own, to have the US role and involvement publicly known.

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a. Writings of George Washington, GPO 1933, Volume3, 385–88, 420–22, and 476–78; also Volume 4, 53. (The Story of the "Bermuda Gun Plot" at St. George's was retold graphically on four postage stamps issued by Bermuda on October 27,1976, the 200th anniversaryof the raid).
b. Marcel Villanueva, The French Contribution to the Founding of the United States (Vantage,1975); and Helen Auguer, The Secret War of Independence (Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1955).
c. Justin H. Smith, Our Struggle for the Fourteenth Colony, Canada and the American Revolution (Putnam, 1907), 2 Volumes.
d. Freedom of Information Act, P.L.93-502, November 21,1974, S552, B(l) and (3).
e. Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978, P.L.95-511, October 25,1978.

The Oversight Committees

While secrecy is necessary in these circumstances, there are, nevertheless, official surrogates watching out after your interests in the form of congressional oversight. Intelligence collection and the use of in telligence is a shared responsibility just as Congress has a role in the formulation of foreign policy and Congress has a specific role in the funding of our activities. That separation of power, that sharing of power, operates to protect our citizens.

In 1976 and 1977, both houses of Congress established intelligence oversight committees to monitor all significant intelligence activities and expenditures. We find many of the rules that I referred to embodied in the National Security Act, the Hughes-Ryan Amendment, and the Intelligence Oversight Act. The oversight committees, operating under those acts, have formalized the reporting of intelligence and covert actions to Congress. The intelligence community is now required by law to keep the intelligence committees fully and currently informed of all intelligence activities. Under the Hughes-Ryan Amendment, the President must find that each covert action is important to the national security before the operation can be initiated. And these are the findings that you have heard about in the television portrayal of the Iran-Contra issue.

Under law it is our duty to notify the committees of any significant intelligence activities which include any activities requiring a finding under the Hughes-Ryan Amendment. Now under the statute, to meet extraordinary circumstances affecting vital interests of the UnitedStates, the President can limit that notification to the Chairman an dranking minority member of the intelligence committees, to the Speaker and the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, and to the Majority Leader and Minority Leader of the Senate—referred to, in trade parlance, as the "gang of eight." And there is another statutory requirement that the intelligence committees be fully informed "in a timely fashion" of intelligence activities in foreign countries other than those solely for the purpose of collecting intelligence for which prior notice was not given—and the President must state the reasons for not giving prior notice in those instances.

Therein lies some of the debate that is going on today. As you know, in the Iran-Contra matter, Congress was not notified for well over a year of the existence of the covert action finding. Partly as a result of the hearings, partly as a result of the investigations, and partly out of an effort to develop again that relationship of trust and confidence between the surrogate committees and the administration, we are now going through a series of negotiations which will require inside the law specific commitments by the administration for what it means by "in a timely fashion." These negotiations are substantially completed. Those of you coming to the breakfast this morning who had time to glance at your papers will see on the frontpage a report of a presidential letter issued Friday to the Congress reassuring them of the President's commitment to develop these rules inside the administration. But internally, just as we did in the FBI for undercover operations, we are watching closely and improving the management capability to deal with covert activity. It is not enough just for the President to make a finding authorizing and directing us to take some covert activity. We have to know before the President makes that finding that it is doable, and doable in a lawful way. And we have to be sure that the individuals who are out on the firing line, outside the protection of our Constitution and our laws, in many instances, can do their work in accordance with the flexibility that they need, with the clearest possible training and understanding of their responsibilities to the CIA and to the country.

The National Security Planning Group of the National Security Council has an obligation before it goes to the National Security Council to look carefully at all the aspects of a covert finding and ask

itself these kinds of questions: Will it work? Is it consistent with overt United States policy? What are the consequences going to be if the activity is publicly exposed? Is it consistent with American values? Not all covert activities will succeed, but I believe that if subjected to these kinds of tests, and this kind of management, we have the best chance of getting the maximum and most effective and productive use from our covert capability.

In our relationship with the Congress, I believe it is important for us to recognize that it must be one of truth and not of deception. There is so much confusion about deniability and deception coming over the television tubes that I think it's important to make one legitimate distinction. In covert activity there is often deception to conceal the source of the activity in order to influence through means that we believe to be appropriate but which must necessarily be covert. But in dealing with the Congress there is absolutely no excuse for deception. There may be occasions—and I told the Congress this in my testimony—when I did not believe that I was in a position to respond to a particular question, particularly if it were one in open session. But I believe it is possible to tell the Members of Congress—and I have done so on occasion that I am not at liberty to answer the question, that I have an answer but I cannot give it. That, in my view, is a lot different from trying to answer the question narrowly when I know what the Congress wants to hear from me, and pretending that they have failed to ask the question accurately enough, giving them an answer only to the narrow question that they have asked. I think we have an obligation to speak to each other as individuals doing business with each other, knowing what each other wants to know and being honest about whether we are going to tell them or not tell them. If I decline to tell, for reasons that seem legitimate to me, or under the particular circumstances in which the question is asked, there are always opportunities to elevate that issue—for Congress to appeal over my head—or they might make it rough enough on me that I may conclude that I should. But at least a level of honesty that nothing is being withheld by deception is vitally important in the relationship of the balance and sharing of powers.

I think this is best expressed by Sir William Stephenson in the introduction to the book written about him some years ago, *A Man Called Intrepid.* Sir William is now in his nineties. We continue to communicate regularly. He wrote this: "Perhaps a day will dawn when tyrants can no longer threaten the liberty of any people. When the function of all nations, however varied their ideologies, will be to enhance life not to control it. If such a condition is possible, it is in a future too far distant to foresee. Until that safer, better day, the democracies will avoid disaster and possible total destruction only by maintaining their defenses. Among the increasingly intricate arsenals across the world, intelligence is an essential weapon. Perhaps the most important. But it is, being secret, the most dangerous. Safeguards to prevent its abuse must be devised, revised, and rigidly applied. But as in all enterprise the character and wisdom of those to whom it is entrusted will be decisive. In the integrity of that guardianship lies the hope of free people to endure and prevail."[a]

I believe that in the shared responsibility of intelligence collection and analysis as well as in the use of special activities in support of foreign policy implementation, integrity is vitally important both on the executive and on the congressional side. We in the intelligence community must work closely with those who must make the policy recommendations that define our present and shape our future, providing our assessments objectively, professionally, helping to put truth into action. We must work with the congressional committees which act in secret matters as surrogates for the Congress and the American people, and we must be worthy of their trust. We must diligently carry out our assignments

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a. William Stevenson, *A Man Called Intrepid* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), XVI.

around the world, however difficult, with fidelity to the Constitution and the laws of our beloved country. A nation dedicated to the rule of law can protect itself and its heritage in no otherway.

> "The preservation of the Constitution from infraction is the President's highest duty.... The President's power is negative merely, and not affirmative. He can enact no law… Any attempt to coerce the President to yield his sanction to measures which he cannot approve would be a violation of the spirit of the Constitution, palpable and flagrant, and if successful would break down the independence of the executive department, and make the President, elected by the people and clothed by the Constitution with power to defend their rights, the mere instrument of a majority of Congress."

> —James Knox Polk 5 December 1848

> "If the Federal Government will confine itself to the exercise of powers clearly granted by the Constitution, it can hardly happen that its action upon any question should endanger the institutions of the States or interfere with their right to manage matters strictly domestic according to the will of their own people."

> —Franklin Pierce 4 March 1853

> "Public officers are the servants and agents of the people, to execute the laws which the people have made and within the limits of a Constitution which they have established."

> —Grover Cleveland 7 October 1882

A view of Manhattan from above Fort Jay, Governors Island, New York (September 2014). David Rockefeller enlisted in the US Army at Fort Jay in 1942. (Nestor Rivera Jr., Wikimedia)

Banker, Philanthropist, Soldier, Spy

David Rockefeller's Experience in Army Intelligence, 1942–54

Dr. David Robarge

David Robarge is CIA's chief historian.

David Rockefeller, known worldwide as the longtime head of Chase Manhattan Bank and grandson of John D. Rockefeller, had a much less well-known but personally and professionally influential involvement with US Army intelligence during World War II and beyond. After enlisting in 1942 and later becoming an officer, he served in North Africa, southern France, and Paris.

Mining the archives sheds new light on Rockefeller's wartime career, his post-war intersections with the nascent Central Intelligence Agency, and the impact on his subsequent career as a banker and philanthropist. We are also left wondering, what if Rockefeller had stuck with intelligence rather than returning to the family business?

David Rockefeller, the long-time head of Chase Manhattan Bank and munificent benefactor of numerous charitable causes died in 2017 at age 101. In his long life, he had a much lesser known but personally and professionally influential involvement with US Army intelligence (G-2) during World War II and after. He served in important theaters of the conflict at crucial times: North Africa in the months after the TORCH operation in November 1942, when the Anglo-American-French alliance was beset with factionalism, much of it emanating from Algiers, where he was stationed; southern France following the ANVIL/DRAGOON invasion in August 1944 at a time of high-level concern over the trustworthiness of the French Resistance and the course France would take after the war; and Paris in the twilight of the Third Reich amid continued infighting within France and portents of postwar conflict with the Soviet Union.[1]

In these settings, Rockefeller became privy to a great deal of secret information about political, economic, and social conditions and, as an intelligence officer, helped synthesize and analyze it for military and civilian consumers. He traveled thousands of miles throughout the Maghreb, the Levant, and continental Europe and met important figures from the worlds of espionage, business, and government. Many of those connections would prove valuable in his later career at Chase and in his involvement with various international affairs organizations and issues. Reflecting on his overall experience in US Army intelligence, Rockefeller observed:

I look back at the war years as an invaluable training ground and testing place for much that I would do later in my life. Among other things, I discovered the value of building contacts with well-placed individuals as a means of achieving concrete objectives. This would be the beginning of a networking process that I would follow throughout my life.[2]

Enlistment, Basic Training, and Early Assignments

On May 1, 1942, Rockefeller enlisted in the army as a private at Fort Jay on Governors Island, New York.[a] He accepted the advice of the local corps commander not to seek an officer's commission through special recommendation to avoid the appearance of favoritism. "At first the Army was something of a shock. It was at once threatening because it was all so new and, at the same time, boring and arduous," he recalled.[3] After he finished boot camp, Rockefeller got his corporal's stripes and was assigned to the Counterintelligence Corps of the Military Intelligence Division (MID) on Governors Island. In August he was sent to Washington to train for assignment to the Middle East.

The next month, however, a colonel in the American Intelligence Command (AIC) asked for Rockefeller to be transferred to his unit, which was about to move to Miami Beach. "I confess this came as a welcome surprise. Somehow I could not see myself as an 'undercover agent' in the bars of Cairo."[4] The AIC was the MID's main field collection component in the Western Hemisphere, and the Miami Beach office was opened because of fears for the security of the Caribbean, South America, and the Panama Canal. During the next two years it expanded significantly in geographic scope and substantive responsibility, but Rockefeller's duties at the time "were not very impressive or important—serving as a messenger and standing guard duty."[5]

a. Rockefeller's four brothers served in military or civilian capacities during the war. Winthrop enlisted in the Army and barely survived a kamikaze attack on his troopship near Okinawa. Laurence parlayed his knowledge of the aircraft industry into a commission in the Navy and spent much of the war touring contractors' plants around the country, leaving the service as a lieutenant commander. John 3rd initially was a personnel official with the Red Cross and the Naval Reserve and then worked with the Office of Occupied Areas, achieving the rank of lieutenant commander. Nelson was the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs at the Department of State.

Later, in 1942, Rockefeller applied for Officers Candidate School (OCS) and was accepted into the January 1943 class at the Engineers OCS School at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. The school had a reputation as one of the system's toughest, and he found it much more demanding than basic training. He wrote to his father, John D. Rockefeller Jr., shortly after classes began (spelling as in the original):

Life here continues to be rather rigorous. Our hours are long and our schedule is crowded. Discipline is rigid and enforced to the letter. This is all different from the life to which I have been accustomed ever since I have been in the army. On the other hand, the instruction is exceedingly well organized and the instructors are competent. The subjects, which are largely new to me, are for the most part interesting. The following are a few examples of the subject matter we are studying: Military Organisation, Explosives and Demolitions, Rigging, Camouflage etc. We ordinarily have about 10 hours of classes a day plus exercises that are always coming up.[6]

At the end of the course, the students had to complete a 20-mile march carrying an M-1 rifle and an 80-pound field pack. "That night we pitched, and then immediately dismantled, pup tents in the deep snow and straggled back to camp at 5 a.m. only to

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David Rockefeller at a Glance

Early Life and Education

Born June 12, 1915, in New York City

Harvard, B.S. in economics, 1936; post-graduate study there and London School of Economics; University of Chicago, Ph.D. in economics, 1940

Public Service

Secretary to New York Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia, 1940–41

Assistant regional director of US Office of Defense, Health and Welfare Service, 1941–42

US Army intelligence, active duty, 1942–45; reserves, 1946–54

Business

Chase National and Chase Manhattan Bank: assistant manager, assistant cashier, second vice president, vice president, 1946-49; supervisor of Latin American operations, 1950–52; senior vice president for New York area, 1952–55; executive vice president, 1955–57; vice chairman of Board of Directors, 1957–61; president, 1961–69; chairman of the board and chief executive officer, 1969–81; retired, 1981

Business Group for Latin America: co-founder, 1963 (later called Council of the Americas)

International Executive Service Corps: chairman, 1964–68

Member of numerous international business advisory councils

International Affairs

Center for Inter-American Relations: chairman, 1965 (later called Americas Society)

Council on Foreign Relations: chairman, 1970–85

Trilateral Commission: cofounder, 1973

Civic Activities

Morningside Heights, Inc.: president, 1947–57; chairman, 1957–65

Downtown-Lower Manhattan Association: chairman, 1958–75

New York City Partnership: chairman, 1979–88

Philanthropy

Rockefeller Brothers Fund: co-founder, 1940

Rockefeller Family Fund: co-founder, 1967

Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research: trustee, 1940–50; chairman of Board of Trustees, 1950–75

Museum of Modern Art: chairman of the board, 1958, 1962–72, 1987–93∎

be awakened two hours later for calisthenics."[7] After two months of this regimen, Rockefeller received a commission as a second lieutenant, was discharged from the Engineers OCS, took some leave, and in April 1943 headed for his next post, the Military Intelligence Training Center (MITC) at Camp Ritchie, Maryland.

Learning the Tradecraft

Army intelligence, or G-2, that Rockefeller was now part of had not been a premier component of the service before the war and had improved only marginally by 1943. Generals Dwight Eisenhower and Omar Bradley both remarked in their memoirs about G-2's serious shortcomings when the war began. In his first years as chief of staff, George Marshall recognized those problems but was too preoccupied with other military affairs to devote much time to them. His shakeup of what he considered the army's antiquated and inefficient staff system in March 1942 did not help the intelligence process. The new arrangement delineated the specific responsibilities of G-2's components—the administrative, intelligence, counterintelligence, operations, and plans branches— but did not benefit intelligence in the larger bureaucratic scheme. G-2 was further split into the MID and the Military Intelligence Service (MIS). The MID formulated policies and plans and coordinated army intelligence

activities with other US and Allied intelligence services but had no direct role in field operations. The MIS collected, analyzed, and disseminated military intelligence; screened mail, press releases, and other material for sensitive information; and, in conjunction with British analysts, exploited captured German documents and assessed enemy strength and capabilities. This separation soon proved unworkable, as designating MID's responsibilities as "policy" and MIS's as "operations" was artificial. The head of G-2, Gen. George Strong, effectively ignored the separation for two years.[8]

Consistent with G-2's overall dysfunctionality was the fact that before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the US military had no central facility for training personnel in intelligence collection and evaluation, and the sudden US entry into the war found it with few military intelligence specialists and no formal way to train new ones. After some internecine bureaucratic back-and-forth, the MITC was established. Camp Ritchie, originally intended as a tent camp for the National Guard, had several permanent buildings that could be quickly converted into a year-round facility. Secretary of War Henry Stimson officially activated the post in June 1942, and the first experimental classes began in late July. At first they were limited to interrogation techniques, language skills, and some aerial photo interpretation. They

soon expanded to include terrain study, signal communications, counterintelligence, enemy order of battle, and use of Allied and Axis small arms.[9]

Rockefeller described the curriculum this way:

The two-month course at Ritchie trained officers for intelligence work with combat infantry units. The focus of our training was the battlefield: we studied the order of battle and combat tactics of both Allied and enemy forces, learned map-reading skills and reconnaissance procedures, and mastered techniques for the interrogation of prisoners of war. Each of us chosen for the course had been selected because we had special talents, such as language skills and familiarity with foreign cultures, that would be useful in the European Theater of Operations, our groups' ultimate destination.[10]

For four months, Rockefeller lived comfortably off-post with his family in a house in the Appalachian foothills of Pennsylvania. He thought some of the instruction repetitious and the quality not as good as at Fort Belvoir, but "[it was] certainly a relief to be an officer … free of many of the little restrictions and rules which used to be a source of annoyance as an enlisted man." In early June, he and some classmates went on an eight-day field exercise designed to make them use their

classroom knowledge in simulated battlefield conditions. "Aside from lack of sleep, it was quite pleasant," he told his father.[11] After graduating in June and going on furlough, Rockefeller returned to the MITC for three months as an instructor in the French section, teaching classes about French army organization using his language skill.

Assignment: North Africa

In late August 1943, Rockefeller opened sealed orders assigning him to the Joint Intelligence Collection Agency (JICA) of the War Department and directing him to report immediately to Washington. While at the just-dedicated Pentagon for the next month, he learned that he would be attached to JICA's element at General Dwight Eisenhower's Allied Force Headquarters in Algiers. "My fluency in French, knowledge of the prewar European situation, and time as an instructor at Camp Ritchie seemed to qualify me as a French 'expert'—or so the War Department believed."[12]

Rockefeller was now serving in a new intelligence element created to address another deficiency in G-2. In North Africa, the need for a joint intelligence collection entity arose quickly after the TORCH invasion in November 1942[a] because battlefield commanders did not pass along information or pursue leads that they could not readily apply to combat. To the consternation of US military attachés, unit commanders rarely tried to learn anything about political and economic conditions in the theater and focused on enemy troop and ship movements, orders of battle, logistics, and related tactical concerns. Hardly any intelligence useful for training or strategic planning left the area.

A tentative solution to this inadequacy was reached in January 1943, only two months after TORCH, when the MID and Eisenhower decided to form a separate intelligence collection service under joint MID and Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) control. Known as the JICA (Algiers), it was responsible for acquiring and evaluating information other than that immediately pertinent to combat. JICA (Algiers) expanded in May 1943 to include all of North Africa and was renamed JICANA.[13, b]

Rockefeller spent a month at the Pentagon taking courses given by the MID's Orientation and Instruction Branch. In theory, all MID personnel scheduled for overseas tours had to receive at least 30 days of intensive instruction before their departures. The prescribed course usually included these subjects:

- War Department organization

- Detailed familiarization with the provisions of the "Standing Instructions for Military Attachés," the "standing Instructions for the Military Intelligence Service," (MIS) and the "Basic Intelligence Directives"

- Review of all intelligence field manuals such as "Combat Intelligence," "Observation," "Examination of Enemy Personnel, Expatriates, Documents, and Material," "Military Maps," "Role of Aerial Photography," and "Counterintelligence"

- The history of military intelligence activities since World War I

- A geographic survey of the country or region of assignment

- Safeguarding military information

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a. TORCH began on November 8, 1942, when the United States and Britain launched the largest amphibious invasion in history up to then: 120 ships carried 107,000 soldiers who landed at three sites along the coasts of Algeria and Morocco. Within nine days, the Allies swept the German and French collaborator forces from most of North Africa while suffering fewer than 1,800 killed in action.

b. A second similar unit, JICAME, was established in April 1943 to cover the Middle East. A third element for China, India, and Burma, known as JICACIB, started operations the following August. A separate one for China was spun off from it in April 1945, when that country was designated its own theater.

- Technique and practice in codes and ciphers

- Finance regulations

- Functions of the ONI

- Principles of economic and psychological warfare

- Special instruction, with a regional emphasis, on enemy ground and air forces

- Basic photography

- Language instruction suited to individual needs

- Health precautions, clothing and equipment

- German order of battle[14]

Rockefeller also received booklets from the Army Information and Education division that gave tips about how to get along in strange lands. North Africa would be the first place where the United States would be on exhibit as a liberating force, so the Army was anxious that soldiers be on their best behavior. The booklet on North Africa offered GIs helpful advice, such as never smoke or spit in front of a mosque.[15]

The JICANA office where Rockefeller worked for 16 months had about 10 officers and 30 enlisted men drawn from all the US military intelligence services. Its primary job was to serve as a clearing house and dissemination point for information those services collected for dispatch to Washington and London. Rockefeller found the work frustrating, as he had envisioned being involved in a much more active collection operation that would utilize his specialized training.

After a few weeks of tedium, he got permission from his commanding officer (CO) to try creating a source network to provide intelligence on political activities and economic conditions in the region. Using his fluent French and letters of introduction to some influential people known through family connections—notably Standard Oil of New Jersey's general manager in North Africa, Henri Chevalier, and the senior Canadian representative in North Africa, General George Vanier—within a few months he developed a large and well-placed set of informants among the community of *colons* (Algerians of French descent) and members of the Allied diplomatic community and the French Committee on National Liberation (FCNL), jointly headed by two rival generals, Henri Giraud and Charles de Gaulle. Rockefeller's CO was impressed enough that he was allowed to make numerous forays totaling 10,000 miles through Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia as well as a two-week trip to Cairo and Istanbul to broaden his contacts with French intelligence officials.

While in Algiers, Rockefeller functioned essentially as a one-man collector and analyst of mostly political, but occasionally economic, intelligence. He wrote many reports about the power struggle between Giraud and de Gaulle, unrest among the Arabs and Berbers in the Maghreb, purges of Vichyites, conflicts among French intelligence services, activities of the local government, North African and French press coverage, French armed forces organization, and plans for the liberation of France.

He used a variety of official and private materials, OSS and British intelligence research, contacts with French officers and administrators, and interviews with local businessmen to compile his reports. He later said the most valuable sources he developed were in the FCNL command itself: the aides-de-camp of the two feuding generals. Their information and his own observations enabled him to watch de Gaulle gradually outmaneuver his opponent. By April 1944 their struggle ended, and Giraud was sent into internal exile.

Behind the Lines in Southwestern France

After a trip to Washington, DC, as a courier in July 1944, Rockefeller returned to Algiers just before the Allied invasion of southern France in August.[a]

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a. Codenamed first ANVIL and then DRAGOON, the operation—intended as a complement to the Normandy invasion just over two months earlier—involved US and French forces landing in the Rhone River delta area on the morning of August 15, 1944.

He was by then a first lieutenant and would soon be promoted to captain. Algiers was now a backwater, as JICANA had moved some of its operations to Naples to be closer to the battle lines, so he put in for a transfer. In early October, he received orders attaching him temporarily to the Seventh Army's T Force. T Force—T for target—was the name given to one of the special units in every European-based army group or large army that accompanied the advance columns and were responsible for seizing and holding sites where valuable political, economic, and technical information might be found, such as factories, laboratories, government and military offices, and residences, until specialists could analyze the documents, equipment, and other captured materials.

Rockefeller's assignment with T Force was very different. His CO, who had been the deputy commander of JICA Algiers when he first arrived, had been impressed with his work there and wanted him to go off on another solo collection mission, this time behind Allied lines in the large area west of the Rhone and south of the Loire Rivers. The invasion forces had bypassed those areas in their rapid pursuit of the Germans, and little reliable intelligence about the area was available. Rockefeller recalled the key requirements this way:

There were reports of German SS units operating in this area, and other accounts that the French Communist resistance controlled vast portions of the countryside and would launch an insurrection when the time was right. Along the border with Spain, units of the Spanish Republican Army were known to be still active. As resistance groups evened old scores by purging collaborators with drumhead courts-martial and summary executions, there was a danger that the situation might degenerate into civil war. Colonel Pumpelly [his CO] ordered me to assess the political situation, the state of the economy, and the degree to which foreign forces or indigenous radical groups posed a threat to Allied forces or the authority of the new French government in extreme southwestern France. Although Pumpelly gave me a general idea of my mission, he left it to me to make my own way.[16]

As on his travels around North Africa, Rockefeller had the assistance of an enlisted man—in this case, a Navy yeoman—as they set off, in uniform, from Luneville on a six-week-long reconnaissance of Lyon, Marseilles, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Montpellier, Bairritz, Limoges, Nimes, and other cities and surrounding areas during November-December 1944. He met the new commissioners of the Republic whom de Gaulle had

appointed and had no difficulty getting them to talk about the political and economic situation in their jurisdictions. "It was a glorious trip through some of the most beautiful country in Europe…. In many of the places we visited, we were the first Americans anyone had seen since 1940." In mid-December, Rockefeller and his Navy aide returned to T Force headquarters in Luneville and then to Paris, where he dictated reports that were sent to Allied Forces Headquarters (AFHQ) and Washington.

I found nothing to substantiate the reports of subversive elements roaming the countryside, but there was great political and economic uncertainty, as well an anxiety about the progress of the war. With winter fast approaching and food and fuel supplies low, I suggested the situation could deteriorate quickly if supplies were not sent in from the outside.[17]

In retrospect, Rockefeller's mission might raise some questions: Why was it necessary? Why did the army not know more about conditions in southern France, given the extensive contacts it and the OSS had with the Resistance, either through their own efforts or by working with the British military and intelligence? Could the army have wanted to finally establish an independent intelligence presence in the region after relying for so

By nightfall, 880 vessels had put ashore 94,000 soldiers and 11,000 vehicles. German defenses broke quickly, and the Allied force suffered fewer than 200 casualties.

long on other organizations? An officer, a sailor, and two vehicles were not much of a presence, but a low-key, unobtrusive deployment might have been what the situation called for. Direct American dealings with the French in the southern region up to October 1944 had mostly been with either covert OSS operatives engaged in espionage and paramilitary actions or with the ANVIL/DRAGOON invasion force. The Army had little opportunity to develop a discreet yet overt presence in the south that would glean information and open contacts unrelated to organizing the underground. Given his experience in building an intelligence network in North Africa, Rockefeller would appear to have been a good choice for that sort of mission.

Reassignment to Paris

In mid-December 1944, Rockefeller received orders to return to Algiers with no long-term assignment. He had requested a transfer from AFHQ to Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force in France but had not gotten approval yet. While between postings, he had to run an international errand: his JICANA CO, now in Naples, wanted the Navy yeoman, vehicles, and equipment that Rockefeller had left with T Force in France returned to him in Italy. Along the way, Rockefeller visited the Rhine front and then made the delivery in Naples. The day before he arrived, JICA received

orders that he had been appointed assistant military attaché in Paris. On March 6, 1945, he arrived in the French capital to begin his last assignment in the army.

Rockefeller had expressed interest in an attaché posting, even though they were considered unappealing and had low prestige in US military intelligence circles. Eisenhower in his memoir described the attachés as mostly "estimable, socially acceptable gentlemen; [but] few knew the essentials of intelligence work." The underlying problem, according to a former CIA historian, was that "Attachés were on temporary detail from their branch or service and returned when their tour ended. Most talented and ambitious officers sought combat command positions, promising greater chances of promotion, and considered noncombat assignments, like intelligence, obstacles to advancement." As in other aspects of G-2's work, Chief of Staff Marshall at no time addressed the poor condition of the Military Attaché Section.[18]

In keeping with that pattern of assignment, the incoming military attaché was Gen. Ralph Smith, a combat officer who had served in France during World War I and recently in the Pacific Theater but who had little intelligence experience. "[M]y responsibilities as an AMA were not clearly defined," Rockefeller recalled. "When I told him what I had done in North Africa and southwestern France,

he suggested that I set up a similar political and economic intelligence unit, reporting directly to him…. I built the intelligence operation around my contacts with members of de Gaulle's government."[19] In addition, he did work similar to that at JICANA: reviewing intelligence data, interviewing people in the Allied armies and French government and business, scanning telegrams, correspondence, official publications, and the press, and synthesizing this material into reports.

The facts and conclusions in Rockefeller's reports are consistent with later scholarly sources and help outline the contours of life in post-liberation France. For example:

• Resistance groups tried with little success to influence the post-liberation political parties. The Communists were especially disgruntled and began moving toward declared opposition to de Gaulle's government.

• French soldiers increasingly bemoaned their declining stature and loss of purchasing power and were very critical of the Provisional Government, although de Gaulle's prestige remained high.

• The main reception and screening centers in Paris for returning French prisoners and deportees were overcrowded and had inadequate security. Enemy

agents could easily enter the country through the disorderly centers. The returnees generally were in good shape. Those liberated from Russia complained of mistreatment; those in Hungarian, Belgian, British, and American hands said they were well cared for. Political deportees were full of hate and vengeance. Nearly all lauded de Gaulle and hoped for substantial change in France.

France's competing intelligence services received extra scrutiny from Army intelligence throughout the war, including while Rockefeller was stationed in Paris. He wrote more reports about the French Army's Deuxième Bureau (analogous to the US Army G-2), the Gaullist Direction Générale des Etudes et Recherches (General Directorate of Studies and Research, or DGER), and the remnants of Giraud's intelligence apparatus from North Africa than any other topic.

The services' diverse ideologies, agendas, and allegiances continually provided fodder for his reports. They provide on-the-scene accounts, drawn largely from interviews with French participants and supplemented with information from US and British sources. "While we developed most of

our information through our own network of informants, a good part of it came as a result of the dinners that we hosted for high-ranking French officials in General Smith's residence. A well-stocked wine cellar and a fine table proved to be a wonderful inducement to revealing conversation."[20]

Rockefeller later lamented an embarrassing "rookie mistake" he made when collecting information on the French services:

Somewhat naively I sent out a questionnaire to US military commands asking for all material on French intelligence. Not surprisingly, Colonel Passy [the nom de guerre of André De-Wavrin, head of the DGER] *learned about my inquiries. Although everyone did it, it wasn't comme il faut* [proper] *to be caught spying on one's allies. Within days, Colonel Passy summoned me to his office. He seemed in a good mood and ushered me to a seat with a friendly wave of his hand. We chatted amiably, then he said, "Captain Rockefeller, we have come to understand that there is information you would like to have about our services." He looked at me and raised his eyebrows as if to say, "Isn't that so?" I nodded. I could tell he was*

clearly enjoying my agony. "But my dear captain," he continued, "really, all this is readily available to you if you will just ask us for it. Please tell me what you would like, and we will be glad to provide the information." I thanked him for his offer and left as quickly as possible.[21a]

One of Rockefeller's major accomplishments while serving in Paris was developing a coding and filing system to organize the scores of documents that came into the attaché's office each week. He described the system in great detail in a paper titled "The Intelligence Library at the Paris Military Attaché Office" that he prepared for the Command and General Staff School after the war. By using several codes and cross-reference annotations written on cards along with a very brief summary of each report, the system enabled analysts to quickly locate all the material on any subject, which would otherwise have been difficult because reports often covered several topics. Analysts also could familiarize themselves with all intelligence traffic that came through the office without having to look at every document. Rockefeller developed the system after consulting with other intelligence agencies in Paris. He compared it most closely to

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a. Rockefeller also reported on developments in Southeast Asia. France's colonies were a growing source of tension with the United States, which since 1943 had taken a special interest in decolonizing the region. "Unquestionably the question of Indo-China is one of the sorest points in the minds of French officials in Paris at the present time," he wrote. The purpose of his report was to inform military personnel in the European Theater about events half a world away that they probably would have been unfamiliar with. (See Endnote 1.)

the one the OSS's Research and Analysis Branch used.[a]

As he did when in North Africa, Rockefeller traveled frequently while stationed in France. Various trips took him to regions around Paris, Munich, Dachau, Marseilles, Brussels, and Prague (where he helped the military attaché establish his office). In September 1945, at the behest of General Smith, he visited some of the G-2 units in Germany and Austria. Documentation about the trip does not spell out what its purpose was, but most likely he was sent to help sort out the confused state of US intelligence there during the early days of the occupation. The United States had no organized effort to collect and analyze intelligence for its representatives to the Allied Control Council that oversaw the occupation. Instead, teams from a dozen military and civilian agencies worked at cross purposes chasing the same information. The reports Rockefeller presumably prepared are not available, and the confusion in US intelligence operations in Germany and Austria had not been resolved when he left the army.

Mustering Out and Reserve Duty

By October 1945, Rockefeller had reached the requisite point

quota for being discharged, and he was relieved of his assignment on the 6th. Before he left the country, the French Government awarded him the Legion of Honor. He got to Washington on the 16th, spent a few days of duty with G-2 at the Pentagon, and then was processed at a separation center at Fort Dix, New Jersey. His formal separation from the Army came on December 18, ending 44 months and two weeks on active duty. On December 31, a letter of commendation arrived from General Smith. He praised Rockefeller's "loyalty and efficient services … enthusiasm, initiative, tact, and creative intelligence."[22]

Rockefeller joined the Army Reserves in 1946 and during the next three years was affiliated with different units that would be mobilized in a state of emergency to quickly train newly commissioned and enlisted G-2 personnel in all important aspects of military intelligence. After the Korean War started in June 1950, he asked to be placed on active reserve status and arranged to have his tour in that capacity with CIA. He had already had some dealings with the agency by then. In January 1950 he attended a conference with CIA about intelligence in Latin America. The record does not indicate what that involved; possibly he reported on events and personalities connected with his

work and travels in the region for the Chase Bank, which he had joined in 1946. In September and October of that year, his former boss at the Office of Defense Health and Welfare Services in 1940–42, Anna Rosenberg, had a few conversations with Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) Walter Bedell Smith about personnel needs at the CIA.

These talks resulted in Smith making a "flattering and tempting proposal" to Rockefeller that entailed a "generous recognition of my situation": the DCI wanted Rockefeller to be his executive assistant. Rockefeller wrote back that he was not sure he had the administrative experience the job required, but he did not turn down the offer outright and went to Washington in November 1950 to discuss it with Smith. It would not have been unreasonable at this point in his professional life for him to consider leaving banking and getting back into intelligence work. Although he had done well so far at Chase—he was a vice president overseeing Chase's Latin American operations—the prospect of being the aide-de-camp to the head of all US intelligence services had obvious appeal. Nothing came of it, however.[b] Instead, Rockefeller arranged to have himself detailed to CIA if he were called up on active duty. On paper he would remain with G-2.

a. While in Paris, Rockefeller maintained a small file of contacts and acquaintances that he made. The huge card files that Rockefeller had at Chase Manhattan Bank and at his personal office at Rockefeller Center can be traced to this relatively tiny compilation.
b. No available materials discuss why Rockefeller did not accept the DCI's offer. It might have been withdrawn; others might have persuaded Rockefeller to stay at Chase; or, most likely, he decided on his own that he wanted to remain in banking.

The intensifying military situation in Korea prompted another shuffling in the Reserve ranks, and Rockefeller was assigned to another New York-based unit, where he served as its plans and policy officer. Because a major usually filled that position, he applied for a promotion when the opportunity arose in summer 1951 and received the higher rank that October.

Throughout this period, Rockefeller attended training classes on military and political subjects, with emphasis on the Soviet Union and its satellites, and had some unidentified involvement with "a government agency in Washington which works closely with the Department of the Army"—presumably CIA, though in what capacity is not known. He twice went on active duty with the CIA for training in 1952 and 1953. In January 1954, Rockefeller resigned from the Reserves, citing his duties as a senior vice president at Chase and growing associational and civic responsibilities that made it hard to attend training and go on required activity duty each summer. He could have transferred to the Retired Reserves, but he chose to leave the military completely and received an honorable discharge in February 1954.

Impact and a Path Not Taken

The work of a military intelligence officer and the opportunities that Rockefeller's specific positions afforded him seemed ideal for someone of his education, intellect, personality, and outlook. Not many World War II veterans could claim to have found duties so well suited to them. He had achieved a substantial amount academically and professionally by virtue of his status as a Rockefeller and through his own initiative even before he entered the US Army, but his service with G-2 enabled him to move well beyond his prior level of accomplishment.

Other than growing substantially larger, G-2 did not change much during Rockefeller's time in it, but he had. Although he had already visited many countries and possessed an internationalist perspective, Rockefeller gained the kind of intense, direct exposure to foreign cultures and institutions that perhaps only war can give. The knowledge and intellectual skills he acquired in college and graduate school were sharpened to a fine edge as he researched and analyzed the complex political dynamics of North Africa and Western Europe. He had many chances to develop the interpersonal skills that would become one of his trademarks as a financial statesman at Chase.

Contrary to the popular notion that he had long been groomed to take over the "family" bank, Rockefeller left the army without having committed himself to a life in finance. He wrote in his memoir that accepting the offer from his uncle Winthrop Aldrich, Chase's chairman of the board, to work there "was not an easy decision because I still had a strong interest in working for government or in the not-for-profit sector."[23] And, as noted, DCI Smith in 1950 had put a good job prospect before him.

It is interesting to speculate how different Rockefeller and the world would be if he had said yes. Would Chase have emerged as the global money power it became under his leadership? Would it have followed the same lending practices toward the Global South that contributed to the persistent debt crisis? At CIA, would Rockefeller have supported the use of the agency as a Cold War paramilitary weapon or instead advocated concentration on its core missions of collection and analysis, with which he had experience? Might he have moved from CIA into a second-tier policymaking position and become one of the "Wise Men" of US diplomacy like John McCloy, Averell Harriman, and Dean Acheson? Or might have he risen higher and become secretary of state or treasury (Richard Nixon twice offered him the latter), or a high-profile ambassador?

The life of someone of Rockefeller's prominence is fraught with such unrealized alternatives. Suffice it to say that his service with US Army intelligence during World War II positioned him well to choose among them and gave him some foundational experiences that benefited him in the career he chose.■

Endnotes

1. This study draws heavily on four sources of information: David Rockefeller Military File in David Rockefeller Personal Papers, Memoirs Project Files, Room 5600, Rockefeller Center, NY; David Rockefeller-John D. Rockefeller Jr. Correspondence File, in David Rockefeller Personal Papers, same location; David Rockefeller, *Memoirs* (Random House, 2002), chap. 9; and David Robarge, "David Rockefeller and Army Intelligence During World War II," May 1, 1989, unpublished manuscript in author's possession. (The author worked for Rockefeller as a research assistant during 1984–89 while the latter was preparing his memoir.) The Military File includes "Itinerary of David Rockefeller During World War II"—a detailed chronology of his whereabouts during 1942–45—Rockefeller's intelligence reports filed from North Africa and France, and all other service-related documentation cited in the author's manuscript. The Correspondence File contains all personal correspondence cited in the manuscript and this article. The manuscript contains extensive citations from the Military and Correspondence Files as well as detailed background and context for Rockefeller's activities drawn from dozens of secondary sources and official histories. Only direct quotes from items in the Files will be cited below.
2. Rockefeller, *Memoirs*, 122.
3. Ibid., 106.
4. Ibid., 108.
5. Ibid., 108.
6. Rockefeller to John D. Rockefeller Jr., January 24, 1943.
7. Rockefeller, *Memoirs*, 109.
8. David Robarge, *The Soldier-Statesman in the Secret World: George C. Marshall and Intelligence in War and Peace* (Center for the Study of Intelligence, 2023), 13, 16.
9. Col. Bruce Bidwell, "History of the Military Intelligence Division, Department of the Army General Staff, Part V: 1941-1945," unpublished manuscript, US Army Office of the Chief of Military History, II:20-26, V:38, IX:1-7, 17-23.
10. Rockefeller, *Memoirs*, 109.
11. Rockefeller to John D. Rockefeller Jr., April 17 and June 14, 1943.
12. *Memoirs*, 110.
13. Bidwell, V:10; US War Department General Staff, Military Intelligence Division, "A History of the Military Intelligence Division, December 12, 1941 to February 9, 1945," unpublished manuscript, 1946.
14. Bidwell, IX:9-10.
15. Lee Kennett, *G.I.: The American Soldier in World War II* (Scribner's Sons, 1987), 121.
16. Rockefeller, *Memoirs*, 116–17.
17. Ibid., 118.
18. Robarge, 9, 19.
19. Rockefeller, *Memoirs*, 119.
20. Ibid., 120.
21. Ibid., 119.
22. Smith to Rockefeller, December 31, 1945.
23. Rockefeller, *Memoirs*, 123. ∎
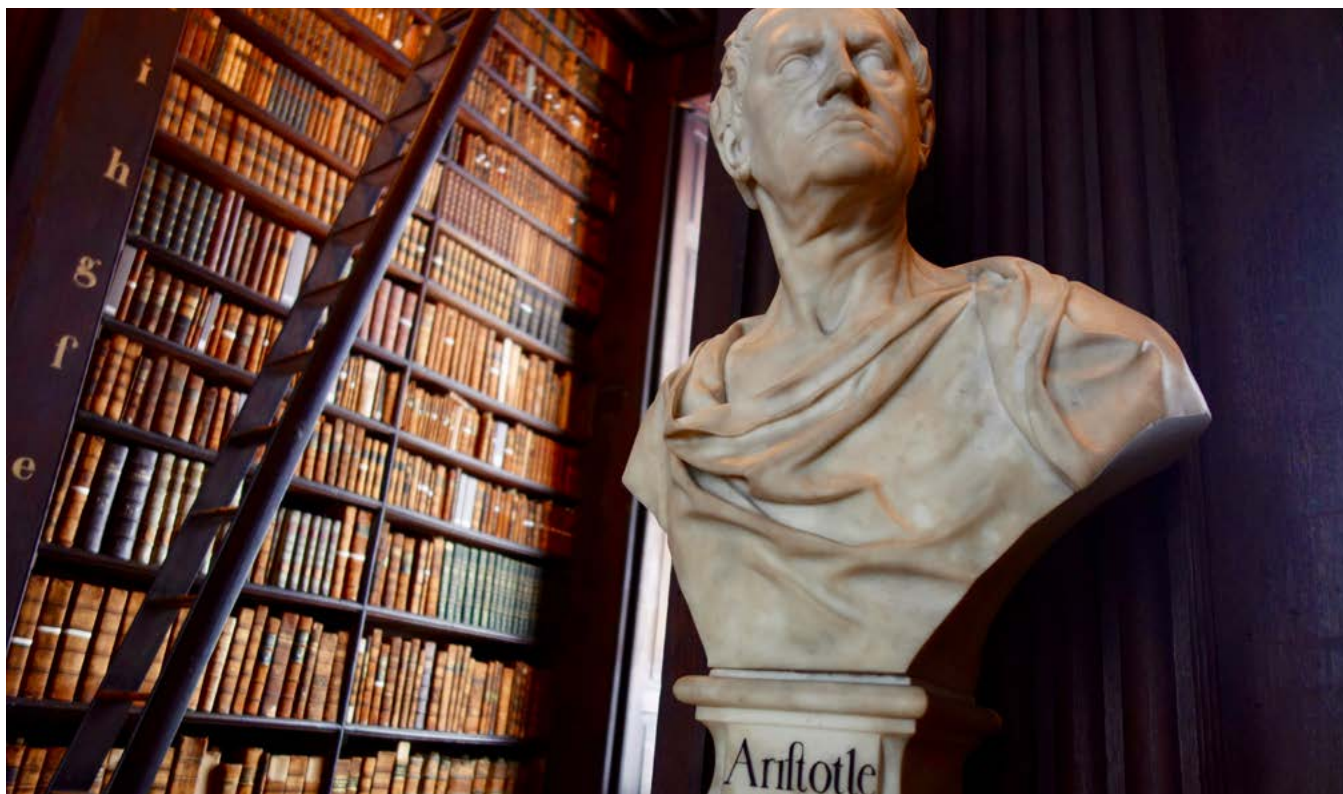
Bust of Aristotle in the Long Room, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland. (Sonse, Wikimedia)

Applying Epistemology to Analysis

Making the Case for Abductive Reasoning

Leon Niemoczynski

Leon Niemoczynski is a recent graduate of The Johns Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies. This article is adapted from his master's thesis.

The late Richards Heuer, an authority on intelligence analysis theory, whose work remains widely influential today, stated that his understanding of intelligence analysis is based on a review of "cognitive psychology literature" concerning "how people process information to make judgments on incomplete and ambiguous information."[1] While Heuer admitted that this approach "may not be wholly satisfactory to either psychologists or intelligence analysts," I think that Heuer fundamentally misunderstood the essence of intelligence analysis by reducing it to a psychological enterprise. Better intelligence analysis cannot be derived simply from understanding "mental processes" and "mistakes in thinking" if analysis is about producing knowledge.

Epistemology and Intelligence Analysis

Adjusting habits of thinking, avoiding bias, or understanding psychological tricks of the mind do not address the fact that intelligence analysis—with its goal of producing knowledge in the form of actionable insight leading to decision advantage—relies on the objectivity of epistemology, not on the subjectivity found in psychology giving accounts of mental states.[2] Heuer's focus on "the human cognitive process" and thus psychology, unfortunately, elides the rational and scientific nature of intelligence analysis's objective methodological function, the logical form of which does not depend on the human brain.

A science of analysis is misplaced if it focuses only on the subjective cognitive processes of the mind. In a sense, then, I have already admitted the thesis of this essay:

> *That intelligence analysis can be improved if it incorporates into both its theory and practice epistemological principles and concepts, considering that intelligence analysis is fundamentally epistemological where "epistemology" (from the Greek episteme, meaning knowledge or understanding) is taken to mean "the philosophical study of truth and knowledge." [3]*

Literature Review

There are two main schools of thought as regards epistemology and intelligence analysis. I have chosen the title of "formalism" to refer to the thinking of James Bruce, Roger George, and Martha Whitesmith on the one hand, and "psychologism" to refer to the thinking of Richards Heuer and Randolph Pherson, on the other.

Bruce's "Making Analysis More Reliable: Why Epistemology Matters to Intelligence" argues that the purpose of intelligence is "to create reliable knowledge" and that understanding epistemology "can help us produce better knowledge, and that some ways of producing knowledge are better than others."[4] His thesis is that "the reliability of intelligence judgments correlates directly with … the use of reliable epistemology."[5] Bruce lays out how analysis is a knowledge-building activity, and that, following the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, the attainment of knowledge requires cognition.[6]

In this way, information is inert and for information to become knowledge, human reasoning, logical judgment, and inference-making must act upon it and transform it into justified true belief. This is what I call the "formalist" approach to intelligence epistemology, as that term succinctly captures Bruce's and George's definitional approach to intelligence, defining "intelligence" as knowledge and knowledge as justified true belief.

Following Bruce and George, Martha Whitesmith in her "Justified True Belief Theory for Intelligence Analysis," attempts to answer the question, "what standards can be used to determine when we can be justified in believing something to be true?"[7] There, Whitesmith outlines her understanding of the meaning of intelligence analysis definition-by-definition, a familiar practice performed both by Bruce and George. While Bruce and George, as well as Whitesmith, justly draw attention to epistemology as a much-needed area of attention in the field of intelligence analysis theory, they stop short of following through in articulating how a defined epistemology of intelligence is to be practically applied. In other words, Bruce, George, and Whitesmith define intelligence epistemology in terms of knowledge and justified true belief, but do not articulate how it actually functions in a process of inquiry, such as intelligence analysis actually is.

Psychologism

Randolph Pherson and Richards Heuer both begin with practical applications of an intelligence epistemology which they reduce to critical thinking, which is further reduced to *behavioral psychology*. This is unfortunate because Pherson and Heuer never

succeed in establishing a coherent theory of knowledge beyond crafting psychological tools or tricks of thought intended to be applied in terms of basic human psychology. For Pherson and Heuer, intelligence failures of analysis occur due to the interference of human emotions or psychological bias.

However, their "psychologism," as I call it, makes no mention of logical errors in rational inference-making and evaluative reasoning. With Heuer's *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis* (1999) and Pherson's *Handbook of Analytic Tools & Techniques* (2011), one is left with numerous instructional mental steps or "tricks to watch for in thinking" rather than with any real understanding of how analysis takes place, the standards of epistemic justification, or the objective forms of reasoning and logic which produce and confirm or disconfirm knowledge. Thus, as both authors tend to reduce intelligence analysis to psychological acts, I call their outlook psychologism.

In a way, Pherson and Heuer are the opposite of Bruce, George, and Whitesmith: they sacrifice theoretical substance for performative psychological reflection, chalking up failure to mere mistakes induced by human emotion or psychological bias; whereas Bruce, George, and Whitesmith, who, arguably in my estimation, make significantly more headway, have a solid theoretical foundation but lack the development of that

foundation's actual application. Kant's insight that "concepts without perceptions are empty, perceptions without concepts are blind" seems apropos in this case because intelligence psychologism focuses on "doing" but without considering theory, while intelligence formalism offers theoretical basis but does not provide instruction as to how this basis can be actualized and carried out.[8]

It must be noted that Pherson does briefly mention the role of formal logic in relation to analysis-understood-as-psychology, highlighting Aristotle's principles from over 2,300 years ago as being foundational to sound reasoning in general, i.e., critical thinking.[9] However, Pherson proceeds to argue that understanding the differences between inductive, deductive, and abductive logic is unnecessary, mentioning the theory of abduction—the most commonly used sort of inference in intelligence—only in passing. Pherson further asserts that CIA analysts no longer need to grasp the distinctions of inductive, deductive, and abductive reasoning; instead, he emphasizes that the utility of analysis outweighs any understanding of formal logic.

While I partially agree with Pherson's claim that "the measurement of successful analytic products should be based on the utility of the product rather than on the logic employed," my claim is that effective analysis requires

an understanding of what analysis entails.[10] Without comprehending the underlying logic of an analytic tool, how can one improve its utility and ensure its optimal use? Assessing a tool's efficiency involves not only recognizing that it works but understanding *how* and *why* it works as it does, as well as whether it is the best tool for a given situation. Thus, understanding basic principles and concepts in epistemology—the study of truth and knowledge, formal logic and proper reasoning, and the nature of epistemic justification—can help one to do intelligence analysis in a better way.

Abductive Reasoning

The logic of abduction is crucial for intelligence analysis because it enables analysts to generate the most plausible hypotheses for a given situation and evaluate which hypothesis best explains the available evidence.[11] This involves holistically synthesizing information and assessing how well it aligns with each hypothesis. Abductive reasoning effectively "fills in the gaps" when dealing with incomplete, contradictory, conflicting, or ambiguous information, identifying what hypothesis makes the most sense of all the evidence. In this section, I will discuss the logic of "abduction," a mode of reasoning created by the American pragmatist philosopher, Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914).[12] A discussion of abduction, as well

as its corollary epistemological principles and concepts, can help readers better understand the method of Abductive Hypothesis Matrix (AHM), which is offered here as a supplement or alternative to Pherson's and Heuer's Analysis of Competing Hypotheses (ACH). Presenting AHM demonstrates how epistemological principles and concepts can help enhance intelligence analysis.

The sort of epistemological principles and concepts this thesis will consider judges truth and knowledge in terms of the practical effects it produces in its application. The school of thought that understands the meaning of truth to be "downstream" in the results of its application and concrete practical effects, is the philosophy known as "pragmatism."[13] Peirce explicitly defines pragmatism as the logic of abduction. In his essay, "Pragmatism as the Logic of Abduction" (1903), Peirce describes "the function of pragmatism" as helping to "help identify unclear ideas and comprehend difficult ones."[14] Abduction serves as a natural mode of reasoning for problem-solving, enabling one to determine what is best to believe based on the strongest fit of evidence given the most compelling reasons for belief.

Scholars who study Peirce's concept of abduction contend that, "[A]bduction belongs to what the logical empiricists called the 'context of justification'—the stage of scientific inquiry in which we are concerned with the assessment of theories … [It is a] stage of inquiry in which we try to generate theories which may then later be assessed."[15] And,

Peirce's work suggests an understanding of abduction not so much as a process of inventing hypotheses but rather as one of adopting hypotheses, where the adoption of the hypothesis is not as being true or verified or confirmed, but as being a worthy candidate for further investigation. On this understanding, abduction could still be thought of as being part of the context of discovery. It would work as a kind of selection function, or filter, determining which of the hypotheses that have been conceived in the stage of discovery are to pass to the next stage and be subjected to empirical testing. The selection criterion is that there must be a reason to suspect that the hypothesis is true, and we will have such a reason if the hypothesis makes whichever observed facts we are interested in explaining a matter of course. This would indeed make better sense of Peirce's claim that abduction is a logical operation.[16]

Peirce was the first to introduce a "trichotomy" of inference, recognizing that only abduction, as compared to deduction (the logic of proof) or induction (the logic of support), could address the reason for *why* a hypothesis should be preferred based on reasons other than a limited number of observations appearing to support it. As such, abductive hypotheses are ventured "on probation."[17] Peirce wrote:

Abduction is preparatory. It is the first step of scientific reasoning.… Nothing has so much contributed to present chaotic or erroneous ideas of the logic of science as failure to distinguish the essentially different characters of different kinds of reasoning.[18]

Both being ampliative and scientific, induction and abduction are similar in that each manner of reasoning infers non-necessary conclusions rather than logically necessary ones.[19] For Peirce, induction "infers the existence of phenomena such as we have observed in cases that are *similar,*" whereas abduction "supposes something of a different kind from what we have directly observed, and frequently from something which it would be impossible for us to observe directly."[20]

Already, it should be evident how abductive reasoning is crucially important for intelligence analysis. Abductive reasoning draws inferences concerning phenomena that cannot be observed directly as well as evidence that might be incomplete, conflicting, non-repeatable, or simply ambiguous.

While Peirce wrote in 1861 that "an operation upon data resulting in cognition is an inference," abduction is intended to provide a "formal account" that is "unpsychologistic logic."[21] Believing abduction to be the only form of reasoning capable of producing new knowledge (as induction *a posteriori* states a generalization), it is a method of "actual facticity" calibrating what is known *a posteriori* with what most likely could be—what is the case but is currently not known to be the case—*a priori*.

In other words, deductive reasoning *a priori* infers a necessary effect from cause, inductive reasoning *a posteriori* generalizes a cause from a limited number of observed effects, and abduction *a posteriori* infers a cause explaining a limited number of observed effects. Abduction is in this way a form of enthymematic reasoning. Nicholas Rescher, in his *Cognitive Pragmatism: The Theory of Knowledge in Pragmatic Perspective* (2001), demonstrates how the logic of abduction works:[22]

First example.

Premise: p

Premise: x

—

Stated Conclusion: p + q

Where it is inferred abductively that x = q[23]

Second example.

Premise: x > 3

Premise: x

—

Stated Conclusion x > 5

Where it is inferred abductively that x ≠ 4 and x = 6.[24]

Compare this with inductive and deductive reasoning. Peirce laid out how forms of inference operate with respect to a thesis by identifying a "rule," "case," and "result" in each of the premises and conclusion, forming deductive, inductive, and abductive arguments, respectively. (Note that Peirce here referred to abduction as "hypothesis.") From Peirce's "Deduction, Induction, Hypothesis" (1870):[25]

Deduction: Rule – All the beans from this bag are white

Case – These beans are from this bag

Result – These beans are white

Induction: Case – These beans are from this bag

Result - These beans are white

Rule – All the beans from this bag are white

Hypothesis [i.e., abduction]: *Rule - All the beans from this bag are white*

Result – These beans are white

Case – These beans are from this bag[26]

As can be seen in the case of induction, we generalize from a number of cases taken to be true that same thing is true of a whole class. To understand Hypothesis, i.e., abduction, imagine you walk into a room and see on one table a bag of white beans, and on another table a few loose white beans. Observing this phenomenon, it can be asked, what is an explanation for the white beans on the table? Presumably one could reason that someone broke into the room and mischievously laid on the table white beans taken from somewhere else; but, the *best* hypothesis—considering the evidence—is that the beans were taken from the bag on the other table, given the evidence of both tables of beans being white.

How, then, is abduction to be used as a logical tool in a way that affords the best explanation? By what criteria does one judge a hypothesis to be a *good* explanation as compared to its rivals? Understanding this is crucial for successfully employing the abductive scoring method in the Abductive Hypothesis Matrix (AHM). Duoven puts it like this:

In textbooks on epistemology or the philosophy of science, one often encounters something like the following as a formulation of abduction:

Given evidence E and candidate explanations H1,…, Hn of E, infer the truth of that H1 which explains E best, provided H1 is satisfactory/good enough qua explanation.

[Abduction's] *appeal* [is to] *to the so-called theoretical virtues, like simplicity, generality, and coherence with well-established theories; the best explanation would then be the hypothesis which, on balance, does best with respect to these virtues.*[27]

The "force" of abductive reasoning is the force of the *explanation* a hypothesis provides, given the evidence, i.e., how the hypothesis makes sense of a reality. It so happens that when it is true that *H* best explains *E,* that if *E* is true, then it is likely that *H* is true as well. This agrees with Lowenthal's characterization that intelligence is not about truth, but about "proximate reality."[28]

Abductive Hypothesis Matrix

A hypothesis, Heuer tells us, is a "potential explanation or conclusion that is to be tested by presenting and collecting evidence."[29] Methodologically, Analysis of Competing Hypotheses (ACH) identifies hypothesis-alternatives that then are pitted against each other "competing for the analyst's favor" rather than by "evaluating their plausibility individually."[30] Because ACH is able to entertain

multiple hypotheses simultaneously, we are told that the analyst will have an easier time "establishing the likely truth or falsity" of each hypothesis applying the scientific concept of falsification to each.[31] There are eight steps to ACH, as follows.[32]

- Identify possible hypotheses to be considered

- Compile evidence and arguments for and against each hypothesis

- Prepare a matrix with hypotheses listed across the top and evidence down the side

- Delete evidence that appears to have no diagnostic value

- Using the remaining evidence, try to disprove, rather than prove, the likelihood of each hypothesis where hypotheses with evidence against them are discounted as "unlikely"

- Analyze sensitivity by considering the consequences of the above analysis

- Report conclusions

- Identify milestones for future observation

The key with ACH is to "seek evidence that disproves hypotheses" where, for a disproved hypothesis, "there is positive evidence it is wrong."[33] One starts with a full set of alternative possible hypotheses looking to disprove each using the

evidence in the matrix, not begin with the most likely alternative possible hypothesis seeking evidentiary support. The goal is to refute the hypotheses where "the most probable hypothesis is the one with the least evidence against it."[34]

Building on Heuer's *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis* (1999), Pherson, in a section dedicated to ACH his *Critical Thinking for Strategic Intelligence* (2016), states that "ACH is the application of Karl Popper's philosophy of science to the field of intelligence analysis."[35] In this section of his book, Pherson relegates abductive reasoning strictly to the realm of hypothesis generation—rather than identifying a structured way that abduction could be used in the testing of hypothesis and their evaluation. His main concern is falsifiability, which Pherson defines as "eliminating hypotheses… tentatively accepting only those hypotheses that cannot be refuted."[36] Emphatically, Pherson states that, "It only takes one or a few items of compelling inconsistent data to discard an entire hypothesis from serious consideration."[37] So, one piece of "inconsistent data" is enough: if *any* evidence counts against a particular hypothesis, then that hypothesis is thrown out.

For Pherson, this process is essentially the opposite of abduction in that it is antithetical to a coherence theory of truth. While we are told that consistency of hypotheses with the evidence

should factor, one nevertheless proceeds by negation and disconfirmation rather than with fit established by evidence. If we are to take Pherson at his word, then disconfirming hypotheses (what Pherson interprets as falsification) is dependent upon the extent of the evidence available and whether any conflicting evidence is present. Pherson does state that a "robust flow of data" is required for ACH to operate, but then states that it also "ensures all reasonable alternatives are considered." Certainly, by now, if one is familiar with scientific falsifiability and the epistemology of Karl Popper's idea of falsifiability through logical contradiction, the inherent logical problems and rational deficiency of ACH should be apparent.

Problems With ACH

Structured analytic techniques (SATs) are designed to be structured methods that can reduce cognitive bias in that the justification and reasoning process for believing a hypothesis to be likely, plausible, or true is made explicit. As it stands, ACH is the most commonly used SAT in intelligence analysis. Unfortunately, ACH is simply assumed to work well and function without cognitive bias.

Only one proper empirical academic study has ever been done assessing the effectiveness of ACH, and that is Dhami, Belton, and Mandel's "The 'Analysis

of Competing Hypotheses' in Intelligence Analysis," published in *Applied Cognitive Psychology* 33(6) (2019): 1080–90. (The Cheike 2004 study, mentioned by Whitesmith in her *Cognitive Bias in Intelligence Analysis*, was an internal corporate technical report and not a peer-reviewed academic paper and empirical study.)

Notably, the results of the study by Dhami, et al.—as well as the non-academic Cheike 2004 study—indicated that ACH is not effective, and problematically so. The recommendation was that a new SAT with greater capability of handling nuance, complexity, and conflicting data/evidence be found. As noted in the literature review, Whitesmith's text does not claim to be a formal academic empirical study, but rather is an effort—much like this article—to bring attention to the deficiencies of ACH.

By Whitesmith's account, this deficiency is due to ACH's methodologically inherent risk of cognitive bias, while on my account it is due to ACH's inherent ampliative potential for analytic misjudgment found within the procedural mis-implementation of falsifiability. This means there is a need to incorporate epistemological concepts and principles in order to provide a better framework within which to perform analytical judgment. Whitesmith explicitly asks: "Does ACH provide a theoretically valid framework for establishing epistemic justification?"

Her answer, and the answer conjectured here is, "no."

Recall that Pherson states that "ACH is the application of Karl Popper's philosophy of science to the field of intelligence analysis." Science, however, is not concerned with making claims that a theory is true or probably true. Rather, on the account that science operates on the basis of empirical data and using falsifiability, the primary concern of scientific investigation is with the *testing* of theories, critically, and showing how they are false. In other words, the only "conclusion" scientific inquiry ever draws is that a particular theory is wrong. Karl Popper, in his *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (1934), titles this critical testing and falsifying of purported theories "falsification." Falsification is an observation that shows a theory is false, not in the sense that evidence is inconsistent or that a theory or hypothesis lacks support but that theories (hypotheses) are capable of logical contradiction in an evidentiary, empirical manner.

It was Popper's view that falsifiability, while involving empirical data, employs in falsification deductive logic in which "a theory is falsified only if we have accepted basic statements that logically contradict it." To say that a theory or hypothesis is falsified is not to claim that an alternate theory or hypothesis has been at the same time shown likely to be "true" or "more plausible." To survive falsification means, deductively and critically, that there are

no basic statements or observation claims that contradict the theory under scrutiny that rule it out and prohibit it. In other words, for Popper, hypothesis testing is about making conjectures and searching for refutations in which "theories about the world are never, strictly speaking, confirmed." At best, if a hypothesis passes falsification one can say that the hypothesis avoided disconfirmation for the time being, but this in itself gives us no new positive information.

As opposed to what is commonly believed, Popper's notion of falsifiability means that science does not proceed by inductive logic establishing general claims that can be "falsified"—i.e., overturned—by future observations. That is, it is not the case that observing a number of white swans and claiming "All swans are white" is scientific, because the conclusion is supported inductively by empirical observations and is subject to revision should a black swan be found. This is not how falsification works. Instead, science, using falsification, uses the deductive form of *modus tollens* in which a hypothesis or theory is evaluated in a testable, repeatable way in which there is sufficient data to test the theory by negating a necessary condition. The deductive logical form is as follows:

If theory T is true, then we should observe O

We do not observe O

Therefore, theory T is false

As can be seen in the above, falsification is *deductive* and takes the form of *modus tollens*.

If p then q p q Not $q \sim q$

———————

Therefore, Not p :// $\sim p$

This is all that falsification does. It does not claim a hypothesis is true because evidence seems to suggest alternate hypotheses are false.

ACH's understanding and use of falsification claims that the most likely true hypothesis is the hypothesis with the least amount of evidence counting against it. But this is not the meaning of scientific falsification. Science does not claim that hypothesis *H1* is most likely true because a limited number of observations and evidence appear to count against hypotheses *H2* and *H3*. Again, science never claims a theory is true (even likely to be true based on discounting evidence counting "against" alternate theories). This is because science understands that new observations can always prove a preferred alternate theory wrong, and in the case of ACH, new evidence or missed evidence could contribute to discounting a preferred hypothesis that was selected on the basis of the fact that there happened to be evidence absent which would count against it.

Popper identifies this mistake in thinking (misuse of falsification or pseudo-falsifiability) as an instance of aspiring deduction failing by falling into inductive generalization. The hypothesis with the least amount of evidence counting against it simply may have not been subjected to the relevant findings or fitting evidence, whether present yet outside of the data-set or somehow concealed or distorted within the data-set.

Therefore, essentially ACH is subject to two errors of reasoning and logical misjudgment: the *ad ignorantiam* fallacy and fallacy of affirming the consequent. The *ad ignorantiam* fallacy is where a hypothesis, theory, or proposition is claimed to be true because there is no or little verifiable evidence counting against it (or, conversely, when a hypothesis, theory, or proposition is claimed to be false because there is no or little verifiable evidence counting for it). As Aristotle pointed out in his *De Anima*, however, absence of evidence should not be interpreted as evidence of absence. Before discussing ACH and affirming the consequent, let's look at an example of ACH's insufficiency due to *ad ignorantiam*.

India Nuclear Testing

Suppose an intelligence analyst is tasked with evaluating competing hypotheses concerning whether India is testing nuclear weapons.

The majority of the collected data does not indicate any evidence of nuclear testing—there are no seismic activity reports, satellite imagery, or radiation readings that would suggest nuclear testing is taking place. All observable evidence seems to refute or "count against" the hypothesis that India is testing nuclear weapons. However, according to the principle of falsification, if hypothesis H is true then we should observe a set of expected outcomes, O. If O is not observed in a standard scientific test of falsifiability, we may deductively reject H as false by *modus tollens*. For instance, if the hypothesis "India is testing nuclear weapons" implies we should observe increased seismic activity or radiation signatures, and these are not observed, we could conclude that H is false. In this case, the absence of evidence that would confirm H seems to refute the hypothesis.

Notice, however, how this reasoning reveals a critical flaw in ACH, which assumes that evidence, or *the lack thereof*, is sufficient to weigh the competing hypotheses. To see the deficiency in this approach, one must ask: *If India were testing nuclear weapons, would we expect to observe clear evidence of that testing?* If India were taking measures to conceal its activities (e.g., using underground testing or advanced masking techniques), it is entirely possible that no observable evidence would be generated, even if the hypothesis were true. It is simply not logically possible for

ACH to meaningfully apply scientific falsifiability in such a case.

The India example shows how intelligence analysis, as practiced in competitive environments of uncertainty and in the presence of incomplete states of information, cannot help but misapply falsification as a failed form of logical judgment. In order to show that India *is* testing nuclear weapons without sufficient or deductive proof, we would either need to draw inductive inference of probability or abductive inference of best explanation, or we would otherwise need to *affirm the consequent* of a hypothetical conditional statement—that is, affirm as necessary what in reality is only sufficient—which is a logical fallacy and leads to an unsound conclusion. For example, one may claim "If p obtains then q event will occur," and test whether p has occurred by looking for event q. But to affirm a consequent q (versus negating it, as in modus tollens) is a fallacy, i.e., incorrect reasoning. Thus:

> *Fallacy of Affirming the Consequent.*
>
> *Premise: If p then q p q*
>
> *Premise: q q*
>
> *Conclusion: p :// p*

A conditional statement is "If x then y" where x is the antecedent, which is sufficient, and y is the consequent, which is necessary. Rendered into an argument:

> *Premise: "If it rains then the sidewalk will be wet."*
>
> *Premise: "The sidewalk is wet."*
>
> *Conclusion: "Therefore, it rained."*

This is incorrect reasoning (a formal fallacy, i.e., formal not material logic) because while it is *sufficient* to say that it rained, one cannot say so *necessarily*. It is possible that the sidewalk became wet in some other way, such as someone spraying it with a garden hose, or something spilled, or someone had been washing a car. The conclusion *may* be true, but it is not *necessarily* true. Therefore, the argument is not a valid form of reasoning. Using the India example of affirming the consequent:

> *Premise: "If India is testing nuclear weapons, then there will be seismic activity."*
>
> *Premise: "There was seismic activity."*
>
> *Conclusion: "India is testing nuclear weapons."*

The conclusion does not follow necessarily, as the argument affirms as necessary evidence which is in reality only sufficient. Thus, it is a logically invalid inference. We do not *know* that India is testing nuclear weapons necessarily as the seismic activity could have been produced some other way, such as an earthquake or some other natural event.

The India nuclear-testing scenario demonstrates that a lack of evidence does not necessarily refute the hypothesis; instead, it might reflect the limitations of the data-gathering process or the deliberate concealment of activities. A form of reasoning other than falsification is required, such as inductive or abductive reasoning. ACH's reliance on existing evidence, without knowledgeably accounting for the potential absence of critical data, or the presence of ambiguous or conflicting data that could confirm or refute a hypothesis, risks corrupting analytic judgment by way of *ad ignorantiam* or the fallacy of affirming the consequent. The framework may erroneously dismiss a plausible hypothesis simply because the expected evidence is missing, even when such evidence would be unlikely or impossible to observe.

A scientifically robust method must incorporate considerations of missing, unobtainable, or conflicting data and recognize that falsification cannot be reliably applied when critical evidence is inherently inaccessible or suppressed. For example, abductive reasoning considers the possibility that the absence of expected evidence (e.g., seismic activity or radiation) could result from deliberate concealment measures, limitations in data collection, or other contextual factors making for ambiguity. Instead of outright rejecting the hypothesis "India is testing nuclear weapons," abductive reasoning *weighs its plausibility and "fit" against alternative explanations.*

Abductive Hypothesis Matrix

I wish to show that despite evidence that is conflicting or contrary to a hypothesis—evidence which normally would be refuted by ACH—such data can be retained and serve to help establish the overall explanatory power of a strong hypothesis. Unlike ACH, which misapplies falsifiability to navigate incomplete, ambiguous, or conflicting information—claiming to refute competing hypotheses and identify a "scientifically" justified true hypothesis—an abductive hypothesis matrix (AHM) would employ *abductive* reasoning, advancing through inference-to-best-explanation. This means that AHM evaluates hypotheses based on how well they cohere with evidence, not whether or not hypotheses have survived attempts to refute them—i.e., "the least disproved hypothesis." This reduces vulnerability to the common pitfalls found in ACH when assessing the likelihood and plausibility of hypotheses.

Comparing ACH and AHM on India Testing Nuclear Weapons

Imagine that analysts are tasked with determining whether India is testing nuclear weapons based on available intelligence. To use an AHM, analysts would:

- Identify the phenomenon: Start with clear observations.

- Gather evidence: Collect, list, and study relevant evidence that supports or relates to the phenomenon.

- Generate possible explanations: Think of multiple explanations that could account for the evidence. Add to the list all possible explanations.

- Rate the fit: Evaluate each explanation based on how well it matches the evidence, using a 1–5 rating system of "very weak fit" (1) to "very strong fit" (5).

Select the Best Explanation: Choose the explanation with the highest calculated fit rating as the most likely hypothesis, given its relative strength with respect to the evidence.

Evidence

E1 (Seismic Signals): MASINT detection of seismic activity is consistent with, though not necessarily identical to, underground nuclear tests.

E2 (Radioactive Isotopes): No measurable radioactive isotopes detected in MASINT.

E3 (Satellite Imagery): GEOINT imagery shows increased construction activity at known nuclear test sites.

E4 (Intelligence Reports): HUMINT suggest covert

operations occurring potentially linked to nuclear testing.

E5 (Historical Patterns): India has history of seismic events in the same region.

E6 (Expert Analysis): Geologists confirm the seismic patterns are ambiguous and represent natural events or nuclear testing.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis A (No Testing): India is not testing nuclear weapons.

Hypothesis B (Concealed Testing): India is conducting nuclear tests but concealing the activity.

Hypothesis C (Natural Seismic Activity): The observed phenomena are due to natural seismic activity, not nuclear testing.

AHM Calculation

Hypothesis B (Concealed Testing) is the strongest hypothesis because it best explains all available evidence. (A matrix of evidence with value ratings in this exercise would show B with 20 points in fit ratings, compared to 11 for A and 15 for C.) We can abductively infer that India would *not* allow there to be evidence of its tests, and so the fact that seismic activity is not identical with nuclear testing, but is nevertheless consistent with it, means that in light of increased construction at nuclear test sites and an increase in activity in covert nuclear programs, the interpretation

of that ambiguous seismic activity being caused by hidden-underground nuclear testing in this context makes the most sense.

ACH Calculation

Hypothesis C (Natural Seismic Activity) is the most likely because it has the fewest (2) pieces of refuting evidence. (The other two hypotheses had three each.) ACH would look at the hypotheses *first* and establish whether the evidence is "for" or "against" each hypothesis. Here, the fact that ACH must choose between a "for" or "against," or between a "support" or "refute" determination for seismic activity that is consistent with, but not necessarily identical to, nuclear testing corrupts the nuance in judgment required to solve the ambiguity of information. As ambiguous and conflicting evidence is capable of different interpretation, ACH can only claim the evidence is consistent with the hypothesis or refutes the hypothesis. ACH would simply say that E1 is more consistent with Hypothesis C *if considered consistent or not on its own rather than holistically in light of the other evidence.*

Analysis of ACH and AHM Comparison

AHM assigns a stronger fit to the seismic activity being consistent with nuclear testing *given the whole of the other data.* The fact that there is increased construction at sites associated with nuclear testing means that an abductive inference would

associate a stronger fit with seismic activity that matches nuclear testing even though it is not identical. This is compared to ACH which would simply regard the evidence as "for" or "support" in both cases of nuclear testing and seismic activity, leading to the conclusion that the least refuted/disconfirmed hypothesis is C because the least positive evidence counts against it. *A whole-of-evidence approach considering the complexity, nuance, and ambiguity of the data is required, thus abduction in AHM is the preferred SAT to analyze this intelligence question.*

Conclusion

Given that the thesis of this essay is that *epistemology* – i.e. the philosophical study of truth and knowledge, including formal logic, proper reasoning, and epistemic justification – *can help to improve intelligence analysis*, I should note that Sherman Kent in his seminal *Strategic Intelligence for American World Policy* (1949) titles the very first chapter of that work as "Intelligence is Knowledge," wherein he states that, fundamentally, intelligence is a kind of knowledge upon which a successful "course of action can be rested."[38] What distinguishes intelligence as knowledge from other forms of knowledge—as obviously while all intelligence is knowledge yet not all knowledge is intelligence, just as while all Californians are Americans but not all Americans are Californians—is that

intelligence is the kind of knowledge that ensures one's welfare and security "will not suffer" nor one's "undertakings fail."[39]

In essence, intelligence as knowledge, i.e., epistemology, is pertinent to *maintaining welfare* and sustaining or maximizing *a dominant axiological category of value*, whether that means promoting (and protecting the loss of) "good," "utility," "advantage," "control," "power," etc. In the context of intelligence, knowledge achieves protection from suffering and security against failure by being a basis upon which optimal choices might be made and best courses of action pursued. In this way, intelligence—now understood as knowledge which produces *actionable insight*—is knowledge that leads to *decision advantage.* This is why Kent states: "In a small way it [intelligence] is what we all do every day … when almost anyone decides upon a course of action he usually does some preliminary intelligence work."[40]

In advancing the claim that *intelligence analysis* is fundamentally *epistemological,* this thesis has sought to demonstrate that the methodological framework of intelligence work must be grounded not in the psychological constraints of subjective cognition but in the objective epistemological principles of logic and knowledge. By critically examining the inadequacies of the Analysis of Competing Hypotheses, particularly its misapplication of falsifiability and its vulnerability to

cognitive biases, I have argued that a superior analytic framework is one which incorporates an epistemologically self-aware methodology – in this case, abductive reasoning. The Abductive Hypothesis Matrix offers an alternative to ACH, as it utilizes inference to the best explanation rather than quasi-falsifiability. This epistemological reorientation not only enhances the analytic process but also aligns intelligence analysis with the broader aim of producing actionable insight.

Moving forward, an epistemological reorientation through the application of abductive reasoning, with its emphasis on coherence and inference-driven justification, provides a model for analytical disciplines grappling with incomplete or ambiguous information in competitive environments of uncertainty. Future research might explore the integration of AHM within strategic, operational, and tactical intelligence frameworks, testing its efficacy in real-world decisionmaking contexts.

More broadly, this thesis invites a reconsideration of how intelligence as a discipline defines and evaluates knowledge and incorporates into its methodology philosophical principles and concepts derived from epistemology, inviting a more dynamic, yet conceptually rigorous, understanding of epistemic justification. In this light, the practical value of epistemology becomes clear: intelligence analysis, at its best, is not merely the practice

of acquiring information but is the disciplined pursuit of justified, true belief: actionable insight leading to decision advantage.

I close with this extended quote from Nicholas Rescher (1929–2024), a predominant representative of pragmatism, contemporary originator of abductive reasoning, and Peirce's modern philosophical heir:

> *It is a situational imperative for humans to acquire information about the world. We have questions and we need answers. The requirement for information, for cognitive orientation within our environment, is as pressing a human need as that for food itself. The quest for cognitive orientation in a difficult world represents a deeply practical requisite for us.… For us, knowledge is thus an acute practical need. And this is where philosophy comes in, in its attempt to grapple with our basic cognitive concerns and commitments. Philosophy is an inquiry that seeks to resolve problems arising from the incoherence of the matter with our most basic commitments, i.e., the matter of our practical commitments at any level, whether personal, social, economic, religious, ethical, or scientific.… The demand for understanding and knowledge, for cognitive accommodation to one's environment, for "knowing one's way about," is one of the most fundamental requirements of the human condition.[41]* ∎

Endnotes

A Note re. the below citations to the work of Charles Sanders Peirce:

Citations to Charles S. Peirce's works are to the eight-volume Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce, the two-volume Essential Peirce, and the eight-volume Writings of Charles S. Peirce. Citations give the collection abbreviation, followed by volume and paragraph number. For example, Peirce CP3: 154 refers to "On the Algebra of Logic" (1880) published in The Collected Papers of Charles Peirce volume 3, paragraph 154. Peirce EP1: 200 refers to "On the Algebra of Logic" (1880) published in The Essential Peirce volume 1, page 200. Peirce W4: 163 refers to "On the Algebra of Logic" (1880) published in Writings of Charles S. Peirce volume 4, page 163. CP numbers are paragraph numbers, EP and W numbers are page numbers.

1. Richards Heuer, *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis* (Martino Fine Books, 1999), vii.
2. Admitting one's psychological biases concerning data/information is not providing to the decisionmaker knowledge *about* that data/information. It is certainly not providing to the decision-maker actionable insight, but rather only a report about one's personally affected beliefs.
3. "The term "epistemology" comes from the Greek words "episteme" and "logos." "Episteme" can be translated as "knowledge" or "understanding" or "acquaintance", while "logos" can be translated as "account" or "argument" or "reason." Matthias Steup and Ram Neta, "Epistemology," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2024), ed. Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman. https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2024/entries/epistemology/.
4. James Bruce, "Making Analysis More Reliable: Why Epistemology Matters to Intelligence," in *Analyzing Intelligence*, 2nd edition, edited by Roger George & James Bruce (Georgetown University Press, 2014), 135.
5. Bruce, 35.
6. See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781, revised second edition 1787), translated by Werner S. Pluhar (Hackett Publishing, 1996).
7. Martha Whitesmith, "Justified True Belief Theory for Intelligence Analysis," *Intelligence and National Security* 37, No. 6 (2022): 835–49.
8. Kant, introduction.
9. Randolph Pherson and Katherine Pherson, *Critical Thinking for Strategic Intelligence* 2nd ed. (SAGE Publications, 2016), 172.
10. Pherson and Pherson, 176.
11. Peirce derived the word "abduction" from the Greek term α π α γ ω γ η (meaning "kidnapping" in Greek), ironically "kidnapping" it from Aristotle's term α ν α γ ω γ η (meaning "reduction" in Greek) used in the Prior Analytics. Peirce wrote, "[I]t is necessary to recognize three radically different kinds of arguments … recognized by the logicians of the eighteenth century, although those logicians quite pardonably failed to recognize the inferential character of one of them. Indeed, I suppose that the three [kinds of argument were first] given by Aristotle in the Prior Analytics … [where he] evidently was groping for that mode of inference which I call by the … name of Abduction." CP5: 144.
12. For a biographical account and intellectual history of Charles Sanders Peirce, see: Joseph Brent, *Charles Sanders Peirce: A Life* (Indiana University Press, 1998). Peirce's modern philosophical heir, Nicholas Rescher (1928–2024), was a philosopher whose ideas are constantly at work in the background of this thesis as he, too, was a primary originator of the theory of abductive reasoning. For more on Rescher see the Suppl. Vol. *Autobiography* of Nicholas Rescher's *Collected Papers*, In addition to his individual works referenced in this thesis, citations to Rescher's collected works are to the fourteen-volume Nicholas Rescher *Collected Papers*, 14 volumes, edited by Nicholas Rescher (Ontos Verlag, 2005–06). The Suppl. Vol. Autobiography is the 15th addition to that collection but, being a supplement and an autobiography, it did not receive a volume number. (It was published in 2010.) The fact that Rescher initially was a philosophical researcher in analytic methodology at the RAND Corporation during the 1950s is extraordinarily relevant to this thesis.
13. Two recent books providing a short but very good and conceptually thorough summary of pragmatism are: John Shook, *Pragmatism* (The MIT Essential Knowledge Series), (MIT Press, 2023) and Robert and Scott Aiken (eds.), *The Pragmatism Reader* (Princeton University Press, 2011).
14. C.S. Peirce, EP 2:226; CP 5:180–212; EP 2:226–41.
15. Igor Douven, "Abduction" in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2024), Zalta & Nodelman (eds.); https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/abduction/index.html.

16. Douven, "Abduction."
17. Peirce, CP8: 388.
18. Peirce, CP7: 218.
19. I use the term "non-necessary" because Peirce rightly distinguishes between probability and possibility. While all probabilities are possibilities, not all possibilities entail probabilities. A possibility simply means that something is not ruled out by logical contradiction and can occur, whereas a probability involves a quantifiable likelihood that it may occur. See John E. Freund, *Introduction to Probability* (Dover Publications, 1973).
20. Peirce, CP2. 640.
21. Peirce, CP7: 219
22. Nicholas Rescher, *Cognitive Pragmatism: The Theory of Knowledge in Pragmatic Perspective* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000), 123.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Peirce, CP2: 619–44.
26. Peirce, CP2: 623.
27. Douven, "Abduction."
28. Mark Lowenthal, *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy* (CQ Press, 2023), 6–8.
29. Heuer, 95.
30. Ibid., 93.
31. Ibid., 95.
32. Ibid., 95.
33. Ibid., 98.
34. Ibid., 108.
35. Pherson and Pherson, 199.
36. Ibid., 200.
37. Ibid., 200.
38. Sherman Kent, *Strategic Intelligence for American World Policy* (Princeton University Press, 2025), vii.
39. Ibid., 3.
40. Ibid., vii.
41. Rescher, *Axiogenesis: An Essay in Metaphysical Optimalism* (Lexington Books, 2010), 2–4. ∎

intelligence in public media

Homeland-Security Intelligence: Where We Are, How We Got Here, What Lies Ahead
Reviewed by Michael J. Ard

Editors: *Wesley R. Moy and Kacper T. Gradón*
Published By: Lynne Rienner, 2025
Print Pages 329; notes, bibliography, index
Reviewer: The reviewer is a retired CIA officer.
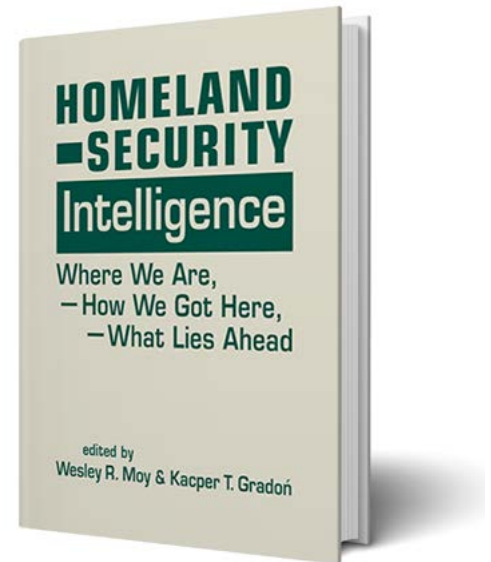
Social scientist Charles Lindblom declared in his 1959 classic article "The Science of 'Muddling Through'" that "the mosaic of public policy" comes about less by theory and more by pragmatic trial-and-error. Faced with limited information and conflicting values to solve complex problems, policymakers move cautiously and focus on limited gains.[a]

Our efforts at domestic intelligence seem to follow this pattern. This volume, *Homeland-Security Intelligence*, is a timely and informative collection of essays on various aspects of our oft-overlooked and underappreciated domestic intelligence enterprise. As its co-editor Wesley Moy correctly puts it, the homeland security enterprise is "a massive, complex and loosely connected collection of agencies and activities." (3) Lindblom would have appre-

ciated its continual effort at "muddling through," a process well-described in these chapters.

Some key domestic security institutions assumed new responsibilities after unique emergencies. They balanced overlapping objectives and competing values, including civil rights and liberties, and partisan political priorities. The Department of Homeland Security, although created to focus on terrorism, evolved to support the Federal Bureau of Investigation, traditionally the lead on domestic terrorism. Besides these principal institutions, much domestic intelligence work also occurs outside the formal Intelligence Community in the 18,000 police forces across the country.

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a. Charles E. Lindblom, "The Science of "Muddling Through,'" *Public Administration Review* 19, No. 2 (Spring, 1959), 79–88.

This important work is challenged, as the book notes, because the public attitude toward domestic intelligence is ambivalent at best and hostile at worst. If something bad happens, the public wonders where the intelligence was. But when things are quiet, it wants intelligence to be curtailed.

Shifting and ever-expanding priorities further complicate the domestic intelligence mission. As former DHS Undersecretary Brian Murphy ably tells us here, shortly after DHS got off the ground, Hurricane Katrina changed its focus from counterterrorism to disaster relief. Meanwhile, its mission also extended to public safety, border and immigration, critical infrastructure (with a mere 16 sectors!), and economic security.

But DHS's own analytic capability hasn't always matched the task. The late LTG Patrick Hughes, who held senior positions in DHS and defense intelligence, stated that DHS intelligence is "fraught with challenges" and often carries "emotional baggage." Intelligence reporting can hit the wrong political chord, as with a report in 2009 on the militia movement that sparked widespread criticism. Hughes argued the best DHS can do is "synthesize and analyze" reporting, not collect intelligence. Another issue, as New Jersey State Police veteran William Toms writes, is that DHS remains focused on prevention, not the long-term effects. In a later chapter, geospatial intelligence expert Jack O'Connor also asserts that DHS analysis tends to be "event driven." (231)

Hughes's essay asks, how to form a true "homeland security information network"? But such a network exists: the 80 fusion centers that operate nationwide under DHS's informal oversight to share information at the state, municipal, and tribal level. Over the course of 10 years, $1 billion of DHS money was directed through FEMA to the fusion centers. Often the critical goal of intelligence-sharing failed because intelligence collection must be separated from law enforcement criminal cases. (70) In 2012, the Senate Homeland Security Committee deemed this spending to largely have been wasted. Despite this damning verdict, the centers have kept going. More analysis on why the fusion centers never fulfilled their initial

promise would have added a valuable non-federal perspective to this volume.

In his chapter, co-editor Moy shifts the focus to "third order" threats. The National Strategy for Homeland Security has not been updated since 2007, but the threat horizon has significantly changed. Now, more policymakers focus on climate change, cyber-attacks, and infectious diseases. "Domestic violent extremists" also have risen to more prominence, and 200,000 incidents of human trafficking are reported annually. (109) Moy argues the third-order effects of these ever-increasing threats are poorly understood, and we lack a sound methodology to predict them. (122)

Cyber security remains a vexing problem. Hector Santiago raises the issue of cyber-security metrics—just what are they? Can we tell if we are winning or losing? (135) He sees the rise of ChatGPT and other large language model platforms as potentially deleterious to intelligence reporting itself. Deep fakes endanger human-intelligence reporting and other reliable information by creating an alternative reality. It would have been appropriate here to delve into the real jurisdiction problems of the domestic security enterprise's cyber intelligence efforts and how the DHS and FBI divide the terrain and complement civilian efforts. Also, this reviewer would have welcomed Santiago's assessment on the DHS's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency contribution to securing US elections.

Traditional institutions like the FBI have sometimes struggled to keep up with the emerging threat picture. Former FBI Special Agent David Brock noted after 9/11 the priority in the FBI was to "fill the box" with information, an unaccustomed role. The FBI wrestled with the technology and coping with new threats, e.g, botching its anthrax investigation in 2001. Today, more issues have emerged beyond its traditional areas of expertise, such as China's penetration of critical infrastructure. Despite it all, the FBI has been successful in containing the domestic terrorism threat.

In his sobering chapter on biodefense, Hamza Tariq Chaudry offers little comfort that we are prepared for a serious incident. Since 2001, the US government

spent $60 billion, much of it on the National Institute for Allergic and Infectious Diseases, which failed to predict or contain the COVID-19 pandemic. (169) Moreover, responsibilities for biodefense are spread across several agencies. (170) The government preaches a "whole-of-society" approach to tackling these problems, with little clarity and guidance on how that is to be implemented.

Considering other threat challenges, information specialist Sabrina Spieleder describes how the European Union handles disinformation, as complex and maddening a challenge there as it is here. The DHS's failed Disinformation Governance Board illustrates how the value of greater security competes with American conceptions of civil liberties. (189) Spieleder stresses the need for broader cooperation and, again, stresses more vague "whole-of-society" approaches. Still, it is unclear that such European solutions would work in the legal and cultural information environment of the United States.

Rounding out the collection picture, Jack O'Connor explains how geospatial intelligence has assumed a greater role in disaster management and especially the use of commercial, "small-sat" technology. However, its implementation is limited because of a lack of public trust. (223) Co-editor Kacper Gradón discusses law enforcement intelligence and its many uses, but he doesn't address "intelligence-led policing" and its continued relevance. He claims that law enforcement agencies are more prone to sharing information, but that might be an optimistic reading of current US practices.

To close the volume, Professor Erik Dahl of the Naval Postgraduate School asks, how do we avoid more domestic intelligence failures? DHS was criticized for not using the appropriate tools and methods to deal with riots in Portland, Oregon, in 2020; Dahl argues the backlash may have influenced the inadequate response to violence at the Capitol on January 6, 2021. Dahl believes the domestic agencies often fight the last war: focusing too much on the radical jihadist threat, which peaked in 2009 (if not earlier), while ignoring the domestic extremist threat.

As we have found to our detriment, intelligence doesn't divide neatly between international and domestic. Foreign influence operations, cybercrimes, terrorist groups, and drug traffickers have foreign origins but operate in the United States. Yet the domestic intelligence enterprise must take these matters head on. As Moy states, "We can't withdraw from the homeland." (8) Dahl believes the solution is not to "go small" on domestic intelligence, and Gradón urges that we overcome the false choice between the two security "systems," foreign and domestic. These are sensible recommendations.

Homeland-Security Intelligence offers a range of insights useful for decisionmakers, intelligence practitioners, and scholars alike. That said, readers may ask whether it suffers somewhat from timing. Lindblom's observation that governments tend to muddle through usually holds true. Yet rapid change within parts of the national security enterprise, including DHS, in 2025 challenges the pattern that it comes only after external shocks to the system like 9/11. Moy and Gradón have done a service in compiling this book, but a sequel may well be necessary sooner than expected.∎
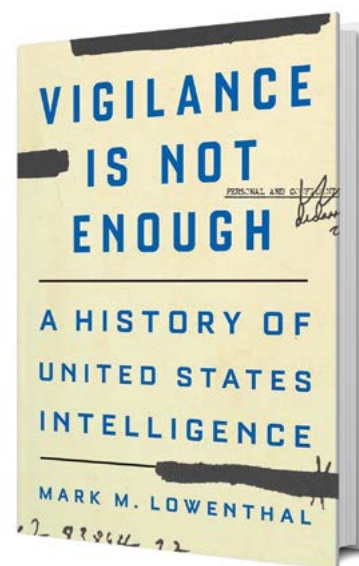
intelligence in public media

Vigilance is Not Enough: A History of United States Intelligence

Reviewed by Charles Heard

Author:	*Mark Lowenthal*
Published By:	Yale University Press, 2025
Print Pages	832, index
Reviewer:	Charles Heard is the pen name of a CIA officer.

Writing at great length is a luxury afforded to the few; for the rest of us, it is usually better to get to the point. French philosopher Blaise Pascal long ago first used what has since become a shopworn apology: he was sorry he had written a long letter, but he did not have time to write a short one.

Mark Lowenthal appears not to have had time to write a short book. At more than 800 pages, wrapped in cover art mimicking a redacted government document and armored with laudatory blurbs from high-status US and UK intelligence alumni, *Vigilance is Not Enough: A History of United States Intelligence* promises dutiful and dry reading. It delivers on both.

The book's 19 chapters are a straightforward chronological march through episodes in American intelligence history, from George Washington's first known secret tasking in 1753 up to the drone strike that killed former al-Qa'ida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri in 2022. Lowenthal's writing is workmanlike and descriptive without being prosy, befitting a former intelligence professional. Many chapters end with short descriptive summaries, providing both an accessible entrée into the history and a platform for Lowenthal to offer his own view of events.

Vigilance's scope expands dramatically after World War II; about two-thirds of the narrative covers the period since 1947. Of course, such a division seems eminently defensible. There is simply more to write about. The narrative jumps from one incident to the next, however, with little evident rhyme or reason, and it is at this point of expansion that the book bogs down in the welter of events.

As an example, the 50-page chapter on George W. Bush's two administrations covers the disputed 2000 election; the arrest of Robert Hanssen; the 9/11 attacks; the arrest of Cuban spy Ana Montes; intelligence's role in the US invasion of Afghanistan; the USA PATRIOT Act; CIA's renditions, detentions, and interrogations program; the debate over warrantless wiretapping; the congressional inquiry into the 9/11 attacks; the drafting of the Iraq WMD National Intelligence Estimate in 2002; Lowenthal's own experience developing the National Intelligence Priorities Framework; the run-up to the Iraq war; the 9/11 Commission; the WMD Commission; the beginning of the insurrection in Iraq; and the creation of the Director of National Intelligence. Despite the real variance in these incidents' importance for US (and US intelligence) history, each episode receives roughly equal treatment. The resulting impression—not unlike the cover—is of an overstuffed government file folder, papers thrown together and threatening to fall out of every corner.

There are occasional interesting notes. Lowenthal was in senior intelligence circles for some of the events he recounts late in the book, and his personal recollections in those moments add welcome color. Chapters on the interwar periods in the 19th century provide interesting summaries of mostly overlooked periods of expansion, exploration, and armed conflict that show how a range of activities began to come together under what became the conceptual umbrella of intelligence.

That said, Lowenthal's insistence on writing something about everything renders many of his observations rather anodyne. This is all the more noticeable, and disappointing, because the occasional sharp comment suggests there is more he could say. Recounting the furor over Jose Rodriguez's decision to destroy tapes from CIA's rendition, detention, and interrogation program, Lowenthal writes sympathetically that then-Deputy Director for Operations Rodriguez took "responsibility for an action that many people wanted but no one wanted to order." (546) On INR's famous long footnote about Iraq's nuclear ambitions in the 2002 NIE, he adds testily that the bureau "dined out on it for years." (552)

Mostly, however, the conclusions are bland, even when the events themselves are gut-wrenching. About the US failing to respond earlier to reports of the Nazi Holocaust, he writes, "there were few available responses and competing demands and a preference to deal with this issue after the war." (215) The suicide bombing in Khowst, Afghanistan, which killed seven CIA officers in one horrific moment in 2009, "underscored the uncertainty of human sources and the need for vigilance and security." (587) The 9/11 investigative reports and hearings did little to satisfy the families of 9/11 victims. (549, 562) Faulty targeting that led to the deaths of Afghan civilians, including children, "underscored the uncertainty inherent in drone operations." (635) And so on.

Vigilance is Not Enough will be useful for intelligence studies professors and their students—the chapter summaries are nearly tailor-made for undergraduates lagging the syllabus and running late for class. As a one-stop reference for others seeking a quick refresher on one of America's ever-lengthening history of intelligence incidents, activities, and operations, it is more approachable than a textbook like Richelson's *The US Intelligence Community* (now in its sixth edition). But as a reading experience for intelligence professionals, I found the time-to-value ratio dissatisfying, and I suspect most other practitioners might as well. ∎
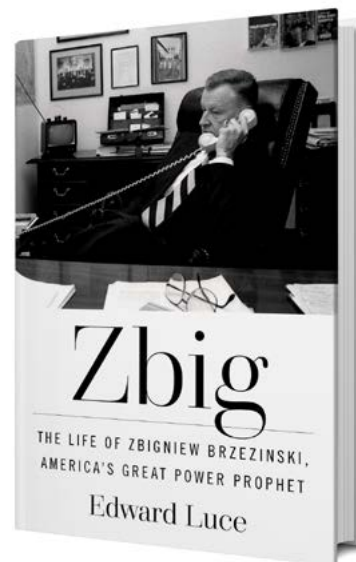
intelligence in public media

Zbig: The Life of Zbigniew Brzezinski, America's Great Power Prophet
Reviewed by Morgan Voeltz Swanson

Author: *Edward Luce*
Published By: Avid Reader Press, 2025
Print Pages 463, acknowledgment, notes, index, photos
Reviewer: The reviewer is a senior intelligence analyst.

Scholar-statesman Zbigniew Brzezinski (1928–2017) was a giant of US foreign policy whose consistently prescient strategic vision served presidents across political lines. In his new biography, *Zbig: The Life of Zbigniew Brzezinski, America's Great Power Prophet,* Edward Luce renders a thorough and clear-eyed portrait of a unique leader in a critical role. Luce has delivered an invaluable case study of the complicated realities of foreign policy decision-making, and a front-row seat to historical events that are still playing out today. Perhaps most interesting, *Zbig* clearly unpacks what made Brzezinski's read of global power dynamics so astute and so impactful.

Luce, US national editor and columnist for the *Financial Times*, tapped extensive primary-source materials that offered a range of authoritative, firsthand perspectives on Brzezinski. The Brzezinski family granted Luce condition-free access to robust family records including Brzezinski's own daily Dictaphone diaries from his years at the White House, access to settings that were Brzezinski's own life backdrops, and interviews with his family members and lifelong friends. Luce also drew on interviews with Brzezinski's colleagues, contemporaries, rivals, and even KGB files.

The biography's cradle-to-grave format is a classic choice made especially powerful for the interplay between Brzezinski's experience and world events. Luce delves into Brzezinski's formative experience to show its lasting impact on his worldview. Brzezinski was born in Poland to a family with noble roots; on the eve of World War II, they moved to Canada where his father assumed a diplomatic posting. From there, a school-aged Brzezinski watched across the Atlantic as the USSR took over

Poland and war engulfed Europe. These disruptive events seeded what Luce dubs Brzezinski's "quest to hold the USSR to account," a single overarching goal that would later drive all his choices. (2)

Zbig reveals how Brzezinski's academic years cemented his expertise in Soviet matters, expanded his personal capital, and honed his eye on Washington. Ascending the academic ladders at Harvard and Columbia Universities, researching for his earliest books and musings, Brzezinski's embrace of multidisciplinary perspectives enhanced his judgments. He applied his Russian language skills, studied Soviet political rhetoric, and considered history, culture, and identity to identify Soviet client states as the USSR's Achilles' heel and key to the bloc's unraveling. (97) Brzezinski used travel to test his ideas, and he built relationships with rising leaders in Europe and across the world that deepened his perspective while boosting his influence and access. At home, his networking efforts with US foreign policy influencers and his growing stable of White House contacts were "frenetic." (107) They bore fruit when Carter tapped him to be national security advisor.

At the epicenter of foreign policy making under Carter, Brzezinski was a master of his domain not only for his command of substance, but for his understanding of the process of foreign policy decision making. Brzezinski seemed intuitively aware that choices depended on converging factors that often defied logic, including domestic political dynamics, personal relationships, and Carter's unique style. He played to all of them while supporting Carter's efforts to build strategic ties with China, broker peace talks between Israeli and Palestinian leaders, navigate controversy over Iran, and maneuver against the USSR. Luce calls Carter's reliance on Brzezinski "one of the least likely yet most consequential relationships between a US president and an adviser." (373) It is worth applauding Luce's discerning take on Carter, as well as the insightful touch he applies to other US and world leaders,

including Chinese premier Deng Xiaoping and Pope John Paul II, who make cameo appearances in Brzezinski's story.

Luce uses clearly sourced comments and crisp journalistic prose to tackle controversy surrounding Brzezinski's outsize role, opinions, and personal flaws. By placing one detail after another, Luce upholds his objective perspective and allows readers to draw their own conclusions. His approach encourages a second look at some common misperceptions. The evidence on Brzezinski's acquaintance with reputed rival Henry Kissinger reveals a nuanced and ultimately meaningful relationship. Luce takes well-earned license to insert his own keen judgments to address seemingly contradictory elements of Brzezinski's style, such as when "his abstract writing style detracted from his message" or when his laser focus on encircling the USSR led him to treat human rights in China "as a selective tool rather than a universal standard." (409)

Despite controversy, Brzezinski's ideas continued to resonate across political lines as presidents including Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and Barak Obama sought his counsel for the rest of his life. True to his style, Brzezinski also continued to resist political or ideological labels. (117) His prophetic knack remained striking in his later publications, and Luce calls the prescience of his final book in 1992 "uncanny." (414)

Zbig is a valuable read for intelligence professionals as a reminder of the value of multidisciplinary perspectives for forming a deep understanding of global dynamics. It is a master class in the human-centric nature of foreign policy and interagency dynamics across US administrations. Finally, and more broadly, *Zbig* underscores the roots of today's questions, as many challenges that Brzezinski faced in China, Europe, the Middle East, and Russia remain unresolved. ∎

intelligence in public media

America's Cold Warrior: Paul Nitze and National Security from Roosevelt to Reagan
Reviewed by J. Daniel Moore

Author:	James Graham Wilson
Published By:	Cornell University Press, 2025
Print Pages	319, index
Reviewer:	The reviewer is a retired CIA historian.
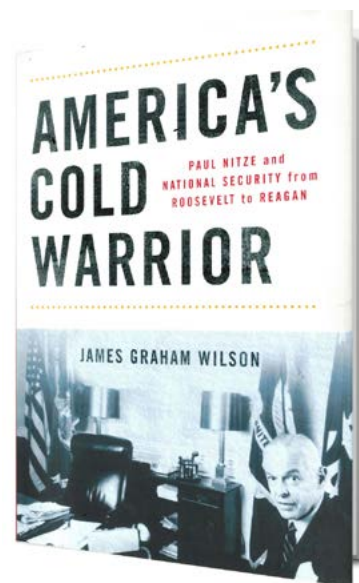
State Department historian James Graham Wilson has produced a definitive, meticulously researched study of one of the leading figures of the Cold War. Paul H. Nitze practically invented the field of national security studies. His work on nuclear arms strategy from the Truman administration to Reagan's helped to stabilize America's adversarial relationship with the Soviet Union. Nitze viewed "tension between opposites" as manageable so long as the balance of nuclear capability remained relatively even. To him, the clash of ideologies boiled down to freedom versus slavery. (74) US weakness invited foreign aggression; America's best defense was a strong military and robust nuclear arsenal (127).

Born in 1907, Nitze was a son of an influential University of Chicago professor; he grew up in the post-WWI world among accomplished people with connections.

He received an elite education: the Chicago Lab School, Hotchkiss, and Harvard. After college he landed a job with Clarence Dillon's investment banking firm on Wall Street. While Nitze walked through open doors of privilege, he achieved success on his own merits. He was no wallflower. Through intense, hard work, his drive and talent to analyze and persuade others using what he called strong "logic chains" earned him hard-won respect and success. To those in positions of power, Nitze's views, especially on nuclear power and national security after WWII, mattered.

Wilson writes that Nitze's professional tie with Roosevelt-favorite and future Secretary of Defense James Forrestal (also a protégé of Dillon's) took him to Washington just before US entry into WWII. Nitze made his mark in government as one of the architects of the

US Strategic Bombing Surveys of Germany and Japan during the closing months of the war. His research into the effect of the air war included wartime intelligence reports. Nitze's views on how to position US postwar security were, in part, reflected in the National Security Act of 1947 establishing CIA, the Office of Secretary of Defense, and the US Air Force. (48)

Throughout the book Wilson pictures Nitze as assertive, self-confident, persuasive, and impossible to intimidate—a "man of action," who succeeded. He held his own among government policymakers during eight administrations, walking the corridors of power for more than 40 years as an adviser to presidents from Roosevelt to Reagan. All, to varying degrees, sought his informed advice and judgment based on all things nuclear.

Nitze flourished in an executive branch of government that valued expertise and informed consensus—he believed in staff work, committees, task forces, commissions, and panels of experts, all of which produced important consensus reports and findings that resulted in national security policy. In 1950 Secretary of State Dean Acheson, with Truman's backing, asked Nitze for a policy paper to map US national security options. The result, National Security Council Report 68 (NSC-68) redefined US strategy. It called for a sharp increase in military spending to counter the Soviet Union's growing nuclear capabilities. The report elaborated on George Kennan's call for containment and framed the Cold War as an ideological struggle between freedom and tyranny.

Nitze had periodic involvement with CIA throughout his career. Allen Dulles asked for his input in a conference charting how the United States should approach the Soviet Union after Salin's death in 1953. There he spoke of the importance of acquiring overhead imagery, making a case that Richard Bissell later told him convinced him to sign off on the development of the U-2 spy plane. As a member of the 303 Committee, which included Richard Helms, Walter Rostow, and Charles Bohlen, he represented Defense in overseeing covert action programs in the 1960s. The author suggests that Nitze also probably worked with Deputy Attorney General Warren Christopher in developing domestic surveillance programs (144).

In 1981, CIA Director Bill Casey asked Nitze to write an outside analysis of the crisis in communist Poland, followed by a comprehensive interagency study of Soviet-US nuclear capabilities. The latter proved highly controversial, with the Pentagon protesting CIA's sponsorship of what was, in effect, a "net assessment," which DoD bureaucrats felt was under their purview.

If Nitze was wrong in supporting Kennedy's decision to overturn the Castro regime in Cuba (based on Nitze's view that the United States had the superior nuclear capability at the time), he was right in advising Johnson against increasing US ground forces in support of the Republic of South Vietnam. Nitze told Johnson the Viet Cong could not be defeated without an unacceptable troop commitment over an extended period. When LBJ decided not to run for reelection in 1968, Nitze, as deputy secretary of defense, refused to defend the administration's Vietnam policies in Congress. He later wrote, in the 1980s, that the Tet Offensive of 1968 and its aftermath shattered the Cold War consensus in America. The Vietnam War was lost due to a loss of domestic support. (135)

Nitze's influence in nuclear arms control reached its zenith during the Reagan administrations. In 1983, Reagan—who dreamed of a nuclear free world—challenged the scientific community to devise a way to defend US lives rather than avenge them. The resultant Strategic Defense Initiative conceptualized the militarization of space as a nuclear deterrent. Nitze subsequently became the lead nuclear arms negotiator with the Soviets and was integral in achieving remarkable advances in nuclear arms control as Reagan and Gorbachev paved the way. Nitze received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1985.

America's Cold Warrior should consolidate Nitze's standing as a paramount strategic policy figure of the late 20th century. Wilson has provided scholars and policymakers with an insightful portrait of a man on whom presidents leaned. During World War II, Nitze and Christian Herter founded the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced and International Studies. SAIS, he envisioned, would influence strategic policy and security studies. The institution continues his work, thereby assuring his legacy. ∎

intelligence in public media

The Spy in the Archive: How One Man Tried to Kill the KGB
Reviewed by Ian B. Ericson
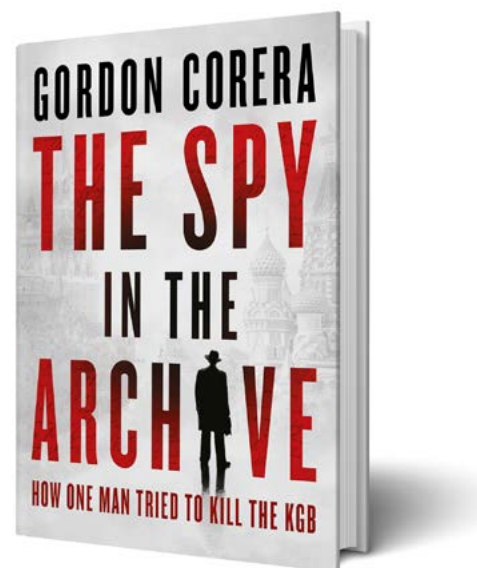
A retired CIA case officer once observed that the great US advantage in the spy business is that our adversaries produce many more unhappy people than America does, giving CIA and allied intelligence services a consistently greater pool of potential recruits. Disgruntled Americans have many outlets for their angst, including social media and the promise of future elections. In contrast, authoritarian regimes offer their people no legal means of expressing opposition to stultifying repression, censorship, and endemic corruption favoring those with friends in high places. This remains true today, but it was especially the case in the Soviet Union in the 1970s under the sclerotic leadership of Leonid Brezhnev.

By the early 1970s, few citizens of the Soviet Union had any illusions that the Communist Party had the ability or inclination to make good on its endless promises of material prosperity and surpassing the west. The KGB enforced compliance with Party directives and used its vast resources to stifle dissent. The Soviet system aspired to little more than survival, with much of the population silently seething at the government's violent and arbitrary rule.

Vasili Mitrokhin was in the nerve center of this police state. Mitrokhin worked for the KGB's First Chief Directorate (FCD), predecessor of what is today Russia's external intelligence service, the SVR. His dour and introverted personality curtailed his own spy career after inglorious and/or botched overseas assignments in Israel and Australia led to his transfer to the FCD archives in 1956. As ably recounted in British journalist Gordon Corera's new account of the Mitrokhin saga, *The Spy in the Archive*, this banal personnel move would have historic consequences.

Mitrokhin's gray, nondescript countenance masked a man of unique determination and patience. The contrast between Soviet propaganda and the truth as described in the KGB archives hardened Mitrokhin's attitude toward the organization and dictatorship he had hitherto served with unquestioning loyalty. The yawning gap between, for example, the narrative of brave Ukrainian and Soviet intelligence partisans in Odessa serving side by side to thwart Nazi invaders during World War II was an almost total inversion of the truth. In fact, Ukrainian and Soviet fighters had slaughtered one another by the score in caves and catacombs. Mitrokhin spent decades contrasting the truth of events as detailed in the FCD's meticulously documented files with the rote regurgitation of the official line by Party apparatchiks. The more lies he consumed, the more his rage grew.

In 1972, Mitrokhin's disgust with the KGB, the Communist Party, and the *nomenklatura* (elites) that ruled the Soviet dictatorship finally paired with opportunity. That year the KGB opened a second nerve center specifically for the FCD in the midst of a wooded compound on the outskirts of Moscow called Yasenevo. Mitrokhin was given the task of moving and cataloging the vast FCD archive of 300,000 files as it moved from Lubyanka, the original KGB building in downtown Moscow, to Yasenevo. This mammoth task would take years and afforded Mitrokhin the chance to take revenge upon an organization he had grown to despise.

Mitrokhin's goal was both simple and quixotic. He sought to destroy the KGB by publishing its secrets and lies, showing the world its moral degeneracy and bankruptcy. For the next 12 years, Mitrokhin took cryptic notes on files he reviewed, hiding them in his jacket, shoes and socks, and summarizing them at night at his Moscow apartment and on weekends at his dacha. Echoing Andy Dufresne of *Shawshank Redemption* fame, Mitrokhin walked out of the archives each day with a small piece of the KGB's criminal history hidden on his person, confiding in no one (not even his wife and son).

Corera explains Mitrokhin's motivations and the means by which he executed his vision in compelling detail. How could such a breach happen, daily, at the headquarters of the world's most infamous secret police? Corera explains that, surprisingly, security at Lubyanka was much laxer than one might imagine. On one occasion, a woman was seen wandering the halls looking for toys ("That would be the department store next door...." (140) In another, a drunken vagrant was found asleep on a window sill and no one, including the vagrant, could figure out how he had entered the building. Mitrokhin understood the KGB's security shortcomings better than most and took full advantage.

Mitrokhin's rage at the KGB's lies and "filth"—a word he scrawled repeatedly on his notes—fueled his mission. Corera writes that the KGB became "bloated by feeding on a culture of denunciation…by the 1970s the KGB had built an entire culture around informers…Mitrokhin could see that beneath the (KGB) facade with all its talk of defending the Motherland, lay a system which encouraged deceit, petty ambition, immorality, and betrayal." (143) Corera explains how Mitrokhin drew inspiration from arguably the 20th century's greatest dissident, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who had also hidden his subversive writings.

In addition to being an inspiring testimony of one man's rebellion against tyranny, *The Spy in the Archive* is also a good spy story. Mitrokhin's escape from Russia in 1992 with the assistance of MI6 and the Lithuanians was no easy feat. Russian security was in disarray, to be sure, but it remained a potent force that would have dealt harshly with Mitrokhin had it discovered his activities. Corera's account provides new detail on Britain's skillful handling of Mitrokhin's exfiltration and resettlement.

Corera also describes CIA's embarrassing mishandling of Mitrokhin's attempts to volunteer. Britain was something of a last resort for Mitrokhin once CIA had turned him away. How CIA passed on a volunteer offering the FCD archive at the very moment it was hunting for an FCD penetration of CIA—who turned out to be Aldrich Ames—is almost inexplicable. The fact that MI6 graciously turned the Mitrokhin debriefings into a joint effort does little to mitigate this unforced error.

Mitrokhin's contribution to our understanding of KGB methods, personalities, and history is impossible to overestimate. Christopher Andrew's magisterial

The Sword and Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB, coauthored with Mitrokhin and based on his archive, is the standard reference work on KGB history. Corera's volume repeats much of what has been published in that volume, but it also adds color and detail to the narrative. Corera's descriptions of spy cases that resulted from Mitrokhin's materials demonstrate that Mitrokhin's value was not solely historic, but also sparked or reinvigorated FBI counterespionage investigations. These include cases against George Trofimoff (a colonel in the US Army Reserves), former NSA officer Robert Lipka, and the US-based KGB illegal Jack Barsky.

One modest complaint is the lack of footnotes. It has helpful source notes, but specific citations would have been preferable. This is a trifle, however, given the quality of Corera's writing and the short, compelling chapters covering aspects of the Mitrokhin story.

Mitrokhin died in 2004 at age 81, living long enough to witness the elevation of Vladimir Putin to the Russian presidency. Unlike his inspiration Solzhenitsyn, Mitrokhin understood that Putin's KGB background assured continuity with the Soviet past and inspired Mitrokhin to toil away on the vast FCD archive until the very end of his life. Corera writes, "The end of communism had not brought the return of the deeper, ancient, more spiritual Russia whose idea (Mitrokhin) had nurtured. It had brought something bleak and garish; there was no socialism with a human face. Just an unholy mafia capitalism." (284)

Mitrokhin's assessment of Putin's Russia has proved grimly accurate. His story nonetheless indicates that future Mitrokhins are surely walking the halls of today's KGB successor organizations with similar courage, animated by disgust at a system whose lies and aggression have brought death to hundreds of thousands and stifled all dissent. In time, perhaps their efforts can build upon the work of quiet heroes like Vasily Mitrokhin. ∎
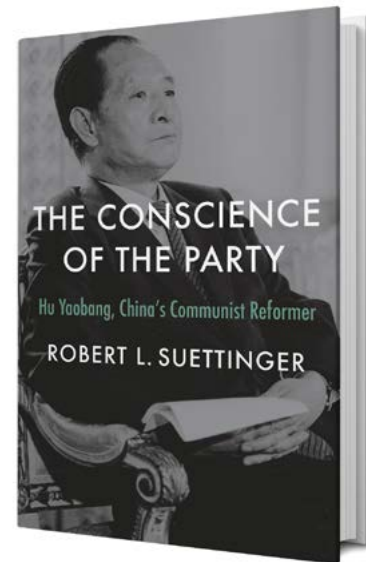
intelligence in public media

The Conscience of the Party: Hu Yaobang, China's Communist Reformer

Reviewed by Dr. Emily Matson

Author:	*Robert Suettinger*
Published By:	Harvard University Press, 2024
Print Pages	488, index
Reviewer:	The reviewer is an adjunct professor of modern Chinese history at Georgetown University.

In writing his comprehensive biography of the late top Chinese Communist Party leader Hu Yaobang, Robert Suettinger, a former senior CIA/Intelligence Community analyst and manager and now a senior adviser at the Stimson Center specializing on China and East Asia, has undertaken a monumental task. The result is not just a biography, but an excellent reading in China's history since the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949.

Arguably, along with the PRC's first prime minister, Zhou Enlai, Hu Yaobang is one of China's most esteemed leaders: the deaths of each—Zhou's on January 8, 1976 and Hu's on April 15, 1989—catalyzed large political demonstrations in Beijing's Tiananmen Square. Although many Chinese-language biographies have been written about Hu, Suettinger acknowledges that Hu is not well known among Americans, even among today's "China watchers" who closely follow events in the PRC. (1) Suettinger remedies this by introducing US readers to the life and legacy of Hu, one of China's most important reformers in the 1970s and 1980s.

For this biography, Suettinger relied heavily on the aforementioned Chinese biographies, including two by Hu's children, as well as other sources, many found in an online collection entitled "Hu Yaobang Historical Materials Information Network"—the website was taken

down in March 2024, about eight months before the publication of this book.[a]

After the introduction, the book proceeds mostly chronologically. The introduction, however, situates readers in the month of Hu's death in 1989, when students and ordinary people flocked to Tiananmen Square to "place flowers, wreaths, banners, and slogans commemorating Hu Yaobang's virtue as a contrast to the CCP leaders … who had brought about his downfall two years earlier."[b] (1) The demonstrations led to weeks of protest involving one million people, according to some estimates. The CCP leadership struggled to agree on a response, which finally came with the order to the People's Liberation Army to clear the square, which it did with tragic consequences on June 4.[c]

In my view, the book's strongest chapters address the Cultural Revolution (1966-76) and the tumultuous reform years that followed into 1989. In his early years, Hu was a stalwart defender of Mao, although he did do his part as a provincial leader in attempting to mitigate the effects of catastrophic movements such as the 1957 Anti-Rightist Campaign and the Great Leap Forward begun the year after. It was only during the Cultural Revolution, however, that Hu began to privately question his true feelings about Maoism and the revolution. (180-81) He had personally suffered greatly.

Suettinger asserts that in August 1966, Hu became one of the first members of the Central Committee of the CCP to be brought into a public "struggle" session and the first to be "physically harmed" (175). In these sessions, victims were often beaten and forced to write self-criticisms *(jiantao)* of their "errors" in failing to adhere to Mao Zedong Thought (175-76). Hu would spend months in 1966 and 1967 confined to a so-called "cowshed"[d] as a class enemy, was briefly rehabilitated, but was later sent to labor in a rural area. Suettinger observes that Hu found relief in the hard labor, notwithstanding the harsh conditions and the lingering pains of the many beatings he had suffered earlier.

In these chapters, Suettinger, befitting his years of CIA analytical work on China, shows an impressive grasp of the factional politics that plagued the CCP between 1976 and 1989. For example, he details the memberships and political positions of "three identifiable factions" within the ranks of the CCP's leading body, the Politburo: the "leftist" faction, led by Mao's wife, Jiang Qing (and the other three members of the "gang of four" that would be purged in 1976); the "old guard" faction led by Ye Jianying and Li Xiannian; and the "second-tier officials" who had been chosen by Mao and had advanced during the Cultural Revolution. (216) Although Hu was not directly involved in these factional disputes, he was inevitably drawn into and affected by them because political decisions about people at Hu's rank and above were subject to the approval (or veto) of members of the Politburo.

Suettinger's narrative really shines as he writes of Hu's return to authority in the party's central bureaucracy in early 1977, first as executive vice president of the Central Party School and then as director of the Central Organization Department, which managed personnel issues. At the Central Party School, Hu worked to reform the school's leadership, ridding it of the ghost of the leftist faction's security apparatchik Kang Sheng, and developing the publication *Theoretical Dynamics (lilun dongtai)* to help CCP leaders better

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a. Suettinger notes that many of the articles that had been on the site are not available elsewhere. For interested readers, however, he has retained printed copies of materials he used from the site.

b. In this context, Suettinger briefly mentions the connection between Hu and today's party leader, Xi Jinping. Hu had rehabilitated Xi Jinping's father, Xi Zhongxun, who had been purged during the Cultural Revolution. At the 1987 meeting leading to Hu's humiliation and dismissal, Xi Zhongxun was the only one to defend him, even at "great cost to his own career." (364)

c. For more on the Tiananmen Square massacre and the PRC's subsequent efforts to ban discussion of it, see Louisa Lim, *The People's Republic of Amnesia: Tiananmen Revisited* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

d. Suettinger explained that the name "derived not from being a cattle enclosure, but from being the place where 'cow ghosts and snake spirits' (niugui sheshen), the designated enemies, were confined during the early phase of the Cultural Revolution." "Cowsheds" holding 10 or more individuals would pop up in government courtyards throughout Beijing and the country.

understand theory and policy, thus leading the school to serve as an "ideological change agent." (227) As the director of the Central Organization Department, Hu began to vigorously overturn unjust past sentences to rehabilitate thousands of unfairly purged victims, including Xi Zhongxun (father of current CCP leader Xi Jinping).

Hu was heavily involved in the ideological debates of 1978, when he was also appointed to lead the Central Propaganda Department. In the midst of the infamous 1977–78 "Democracy Wall" poster demonstrations, in which dissident Wei Jingsheng directly critiqued the Four Modernizations as useless without the "fifth modernization" of democracy, Hu also called for a calm, nuanced response and challenged CCP members "not to use Marxism to persecute others, not to perpetuate a personality cult for anyone, and to learn from the Democracy Wall." (260)

In addition, Hu was a passionate economic reformer. For example, speaking in January 1983 as the party's titular top official since 1981 (initially as chairman then as general secretary, though Deng held the reins of power), he pressed leaders to advance the "Four Modernizations" and reform. (307) The next month, Hu went on an 18-day inspection tour of Guangdong, Hainan, Hunan, and Hubei, visiting the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone for the first time and encouraging local party leaders to "increase the pace of economic development." (309) In this context, Suettinger argues that Deng Xiaoping gets too much of the credit for "reform and opening up" *(gaige kaifang)*.

Among the many contributions Suettinger makes to English-language scholarship on CCP politics in the 1980s is to elaborate on the unofficial "Deng-Hu-Zhao troika" (306) and the understudied relationship between Hu and fellow reformer Zhao Ziyang. Although the two worked together, they did not "join forces against Deng" due to "structural, political, and personal reasons" (317). Zhao was ultimately one of many players complicit in Hu's demise, and Suettinger argues that in the fall of 1986, "personal power considerations" must be taken into account in explaining Hu's sudden fall from grace, including "Deng's

aspirations, Chen Yun's hindering actions, competition among potential successors, and 'old man politics.'" (323)

Ironically, many of the men Hu had helped rehabilitate after the Cultural Revolution most strongly supported his ouster, as they felt threatened by Hu's increasing calls for elderly party members to retire to make way for younger talent. After Hu's old friend Ye Jianying died in Beijing in October 1986, Hu's support base within the upper echelons of the party grew thin. Suettinger speculates that a meeting between Deng, Chen Yun, and Li Xiannian the day after Ye's death may have been to "decide Hu Yaobang's fate." Whatever the case, subsequent events unfolded quickly, particularly in light of student unrest in December of 1986. (328)

As Hu did during the Democracy Wall Movement in 1978, he approached the protestors in 1986 with a nuanced view, arguing for a "cool handling" of the situation and engaging in "dialogue" with the students involved. Otherwise, he warned, some would try to stir up more trouble. As the protests continued, factionalism deepened in Beijing, and the political leadership was immobilized. Hu continued to call for "cool handling" and a patient approach. Ultimately, Suettinger concludes, "it is difficult to judge how impactful the demonstrations of December 1986 were, except insofar as they provided the impetus to a group of angry old men to push out a successful, even popular, general secretary." (330)

Suettinger is most critical of the CCP elders' treatment of Hu during a meeting on December 30, 1986, when Hu was forced to submit his resignation, which he did in the form of a personal letter, "Opening My Heart to Comrade Xiaoping." (333) In response, Deng proposed another meeting of more than 50 senior CCP leaders to hear Hu's *jiantao.* Suettinger portrays the meeting on January 10, 1987, as a political ambush. Hu spent most of that morning on an elaborate confession of his shortcomings, which "was all red meat for his antagonists." (338) Starting the following day, as Suettinger notes:

> *The barrage of criticism continued at high intensity over the next three days. Everyone was expected to*

say or write something. It didn't matter if it was fair or even true. The elders routinely violated Deng's restrictions on subject matter, accusing Hu of factional activity, abuse of power, ideological distortion, and personal ambition. They falsified or distorted information.... After the meeting adjourned, Hu walked into the hallway outside the meeting room, sat down heavily on the stairs, and sobbed loudly and bitterly. Wan Li and Tian Jiyun stood by to comfort him, but Hu Yaobang was a broken man – as had been intended. (339)

This was one of the most powerful passages in the book. Emotionally raw, it captures the injustice of Hu Yaobang's abrupt dismissal from party leadership. That Suettinger found a record of this is in itself extraordinary.

Overall, I found *The Conscience of the Party* to be an outstanding study of Hu Yaobang's life and legacy. However, I wish that Suettinger had provided more details about the Tiananmen Square Massacre in the first chapter of the book, particularly regarding the decisionmaking behind it, which US readers are unlikely to be familiar with. Secondly, I was surprised that there was so little mention of Hu Yaobang's foreign policy, particularly vis-à-vis Japan.

Lastly, I must respectfully disagree with Suettinger's argument in the book's concluding chapter that "the fact of [Hu's] downfall and death also precipitated events that led the CCP, which Hu had sought to change, to return to its violent ways, dictatorial reign, and corrupt practices." (387) To me, this assumes too much of a deterministic framework of the "great man theory" of history. The overall trajectory of the CCP cannot be pinned on one man alone, nor do I agree with the portrayal of its history pre-Hu and post-Hu as an inevitable descent into ever-increasing authoritarianism.

I would also contest the book's conclusion, which portrays an increasing powerlessness on the part of pro-reform Chinese, although Suettinger is rightly concerned about the overall trajectory of power politics within the PRC. As I wrote in my book review last year of Ian Johnson's *Sparks,* we must be wary of the "misconception that China today is merely an authoritarian monolith."[a] Whether within China or in the Chinese diaspora, there continue to be many pro-reform voices, and it is essential that we continue to recognize them and thus honor Hu's legacy.■

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a. Emily Matson, *"Sparks: China's Underground Historians and Their Battle for the Future"* Review, *Studies in Intelligence* 68, No. 2 (June 2024), 53.

intelligence in public media

The Traitor of Arnhem
WWII's Greatest Betrayal and the Moment That Changed History Forever
Reviewed by Kevin McCall

Author:	*Robert Verkaik*
Published By:	Headline Welbeck, 2024
Print Pages	400
Reviewer:	The reviewer is a CIA historian.
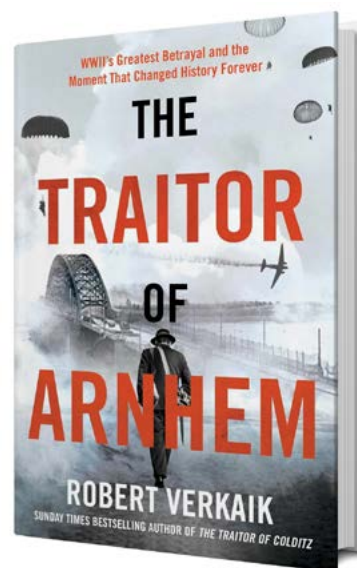
Journalist Robert Verkaik offers the best description of his book *The Traitor of Arnhem*:

This book is not a military history, there are much better-qualified historians for that job. The Traitor of Arnhem *is a spy story, an 80-year-old cold case review of thousands of primary source documents, many of them written and signed by the traitors." (x)*

Verkaik does not disappoint. The title of the cold case, is in fact, a misnomer. There was not "*a*" traitor of Arnhem. Verkaik hypothesizes that there were, in fact, two men who betrayed Operation Market Garden, the ambitious plan to create an invasion corridor through then German-occupied Netherlands. The two, independent of each other, helped stall the drive of the Allied armies to end the war before Christmas 1944. In doing so, they thwarted the largest airborne assault up to that time and caused the deaths of more paratroopers than at any time before in history. In Verkaik's book you get two traitors for the price of one.

The author admits a personal interest in the narrative: One of his relatives, Eddy Verkaik, was shot by a German officer who had faked his surrender to the Dutch resistance during Market Garden. Before he was wounded, Eddy informed British paratroopers of a Dutch double-agent, code-named King Kong (aka Christiaan Lindeman), who betrayed invasion plans to the Germans. Although King Kong's betrayal was publicly revealed after the war, and he committed suicide in prison, the author convincingly demonstrates that the level of detail about the invasion that the Germans possessed far exceeded

that in Lindeman's possession. The precise and timely German response allowed them to foil the Allied seizure of the bridge at Arnhem—famously referred to by military historian Cornelius Ryan as "a bridge too far" in his 1974 volume by that title.

Verkaik's supposition is that a second, better informed, and therefore more devastating betrayal was that of none other than Anthony Blunt, later revealed as a Soviet spy and member of the "Cambridge Five" spy ring recruited by the Russians in the 1930s. Despite Blunt's 1964 confession, according to the author, no one looked carefully into Blunt's espionage during World War II. Verkaik posits that Blunt (under the codename Josephine) deliberately leaked the Market Garden plans to the Germans to stall the Allied advance into Germany and allow the Soviets to take Berlin.

The author lays out his very compelling case in a detailed appendix. If Verkaik is right, not only was Blunt responsible for the disaster at Arnhem, but also for prolonging the war and allowing the Soviets to conquer most of Eastern Europe. According to the Verkaik: "What we can say if Blunt was Josephine— and at the very least there are reasonable grounds for suspecting he was—then Blunt can be argued to be the most devastatingly successful and destructive spy in history." (319)

In this well-written and thoroughly researched volume, Verkaik makes extensive use of the Dutch National Archives in The Hague; the British National Archives in London; the US National Archives at College Park, Maryland; as well as military archives in Amsterdam, the German Bundesarchiv, the Russian Federation Central Archives of the Ministry of Defense, and the Archive of Foreign Intelligence in Moscow. Verkaik unearthed documents he contends were either unexamined as being formerly of little interest or deliberately suppressed after the war. He adroitly weaves together a compelling narrative encompassing the effects of two separate espionage efforts used effectively against the Allies in Europe.

The Traitor of Arnhem should resonate with present-day counterintelligence officers who must address multiple layers of perfidy and complexity in their duties as well as students of the intelligence battle in Europe during World War II. ∎

intelligence officer's bookshelf

Compiled and reviewed by Hayden Peake.

Intelligence Abroad

Contemporary Intelligence in Africa
Edited by Tshepo Gwatiwa
(Routledge, 2025) 319 pages, end-of-chapter notes, index.

Tshepo Gwatiwa is a lecturer in intelligence studies at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, and senior research fellow at the Institute for Pan-African Thought and Conversation (IPATC), University of Johannesburg (South Africa). In *Contemporary Intelligence in Africa*, he presents revisions of 18 papers, by 15 contributors, originally given at a symposium on African intelligence and security held at the University of Glasgow in 2019. The objectives of the volume are to demonstrate the nature of contemporary intelligence services in African nations and regions while inspiring students and scholars to study the subject.

After a historical review of intelligence and security practices until the end of the colonial era, the volume deals with contemporary issues. The first is what Gwatiwa calls a "cosmic theory" of intelligence which he hopes will "start a conversation around the prospects for a theory for African intelligence." (1) While thought provoking, the earthly relevance of the concept is clouded by the length of his discussion and the use of terms like "ontogenetic cleavages" without explanation. (27)

Succeeding chapters discuss the intelligence services in most, but not all, of the African nations and regions, such as the Sahel, whose uncertain boundaries cover several countries and complicate intelligence operations. In each case attention is paid to the political, social, and economic factors involved.

The contributions also deal with issues that apply in varying degrees to all the services, including security, covert action, counterintelligence, counterinsurgency, and counterterrorism. More generally, they discuss examples that justify the persistent view that intelligence and security services are still an instrument of suppression and regime preservation. Thus intelligence is still a taboo subject in much of Africa because it is associated with everything wrong with African statecraft. (14)

A related topic concerns the paradoxical relationship of African and Western intelligence organizations. The latter are considered "too white" while its "form and experience remain the yardstick for optimum intelligence." (3) Despite these obstacles, or in some cases including them, African nations have distinctive characteristics, and these are discussed in chapters on several nations: Morocco, Kenya, Somolia, Sudan, Nigeria, Uganda, and the DRC. Most other nations receive passing attention.

Contemporary Intelligence in Africa is a valuable and distinctive contribution to the intellgence literature. ∎

India's Intelligence Culture and Strategic Surprises: Spying for South Block
By Dheeraj Paramesha Caya
(Routledge, 2023) 287 pages, end-of-chapter notes, appendix, index.

Dheeraj Paramesha Chaya is assistant professor of geopolitics and international relations at India's Manipal Academy of Higher Education. He earned his PhD in intelligence studies at the University of Leicester. *India's Intelligence Culture and Strategic Surprises* is based on his dissertation. The subtitle, *Spying for South Block*, refers to the part of the building housing India's intelligence power center, analogous to the "West Wing."

In his foreword to the book, Vikram Sood, former secretary (chief executive) of India's foreign intelligence service, the Research & Analysis Wing (RAW), notes that while most previous books on Indian intelligence have been autobiographies, "Dr Dheeraj's book is perhaps the first academic work on India's foreign intelligence culture." (x)

Chaya's principal argument is that the quality of a nation's intelligence performance is a function of its intelligence culture, a term he never explicitly defines. He does, however, offer some hints. They include organizational structure, management, bureaucracy, values, behavioral norms, operational flexibility, and how the nation views the subject. In short, the why and the way things are done.

India's Intelligence Culture and Strategic Surprises follows the transformation of India's intelligence culture from its Kautilyan roots, through its colonial and postcolonial periods to its modern implementation. Kautilya, author of the ancient Indian politico-economic and international relations treatise, the *Arthashastra*, posited views on intelligence that are received in India as Sun Tzu is in the West, but in Chaya's view are not applied in modern India. He emphasizes this point by discussing intelligence practices in several wars involving India. He also compares the approach of the anglosphere services in similar circumstances, finding that they tend to explain conditions in organizational terms—a somewhat narrow view—whereas Indian services rely on culture as a better explanation for intelligence failures and strategic surprises. (229)

This is a scholarly, thoroughly documented study that will inform the reader about Inidan intelligence history, while making an argument for reviving the Kautilyan intelligence culture for India's national security. But the author never recognizes that all intelligence services are a function of the national cultures in which they exist. Their differences are therefore inherent. ∎

Intelligence Practices in High-Trust Societies: Scandinavian Exceptionalism
Edited by Kira Vrist Rønn, et al.
(Routledge, 2025) 232, end-of-chapter notes, references, appendices, index.

Historian Wilhelm Agrell, professor emeritus at Lund University in Sweden, is one of the founding figures of intelligence studies in Scandinavia. In Agrell's foreword

to this volume, he reviews the evolution of Scandinavian intelligence from its very secret beginning in the late 1930s to its modern status, which encourages greater public discussion of intelligence matters.

In the book's introduction and overview to its 14 chapters, the editors discuss some important definitions and provide a "Scandinavian perspective on intelligence studies that distinguishes them from the predominant Anglo-American perspectives." (7)

To better understand the Scandinavian context, several definitions deserve mention. The first is that "Scandinavia" and its variants denote Denmark, Norway, and Sweden only. The term "Nordic countries" refers to Finland and Iceland. "High-Trust Societies" appplies to Scandinavia because of "their unique social and cultural characteristics, which foster a sense of trust, cooperation, and solidarity among citizens and institutions." (2)

The term "Scandinavian Exceptionalism" refers to three important characteristics that may affect how intelligence is practiced in the Scandinavian context: 1) the high level of trust that characterizes Scandinavian societies; 2) Scandinavian history and … the universalist welfare state; and 3) the role of the Scandinavian intelligence services in domestic and international affairs.

The contributors to this volume show that the idea of greater public openess about intelligence and its academic study emerged slowly from secrecy of the early days. One example of the early, intense protection of secrecy became public when a private researchers published a study of defense installations in Norway; the government sought to ban the publication, saying it contained "secret" defense matters. The court hearing the case rejected the government's bid when the supposedly classified information was shown to have been drawn from an unclassified "Norwegian ministry of defense telephone directory." (xiv)

Other topics addressed include contemporary issues illustrating the roles Scandinavian intelligence services play in the world. A common theme concerns the roles of relatively small intelligence organizations when cooperating with one of the larger powers. The Danish foreign intelligence service (DDIS) and the CIA is an interesting example. (11ff) Other chapter topics include accountability, oversight, counterintelligence, recruiting, education, and secrecy.

Intelligence Practices in High-Trust Societies brings Scandinavian voices to international intelligence literature. Well documented, interesting, and informative, it leaves no doubt that the quality of an intelligence service is not dependent on its size. A valuable contribution. ■

Intelligence Services in South Asia: Colonial Past and Post-Colonial Realities
Edited by Ryan Shaffer and ASM Ali Ashraf
(Routledge, 2025) 227, end-of-chapter notes, index.

Historian, author, and independent scholar, Ryan Shaffer has written extensively on Asian and African intelligence cultures, extremism, and security issues. His co-editor, Ali Ashraf, is professor and chair of the Department of International Relations at the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. He has a PhD in international security policy from the University of Pittsburgh and specializes in South Asian intelligence and security issues, traditional and nontraditional. In addition to the editors contributions, *Intelligence Services in South Asia* has articles by scholars from Australia, Scotland, England, and India.

This anthology focuses on South Asian intelligence in three eras: the ancient or Kautilyan era, named after the historian and author of the *Arthashastra* that included the precept "Every neighboring state is an enemy and the enemy's enemy is a friend;" (5) and the colonial and postcolonial periods. Although the chapters are country focused, a central theme throughout is that most countries in South Asia were influenced by colonial intelligence practices and have been further shaped by postcolonial domestic and international services.

Starting with Afghanistan the countries discussed are India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Republic of Maldives, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka. Only Pakistan relies on its military intelligence as its primary security service. The issues addressed for each country include intelligence service history, difficulties in creating an intelligence service, domestic and foreign relations, and how each has dealt with the basic intelligence functions; i.e., espionage, covert operations, counterintelligence, and internal security. A separate chapter compares intelligence oversight in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, countries that once shared similar colonial intelligence institutions but then diverged after independence to adopt dissimilar oversight mechanisms.

No operational case studies are included, as the emphasis is in on what the functions should do, where they fit in their organizations, and management issues. The editors indicate that this circumstance is in part due to the refusal of South Asian governments to routinely and systemically declassify historical records about their intelligence services while dissuading authors from publishing on the subject.

Intelligence Services in South Asia offers observations on how political systems, demographics, population size, geography, failures and successes, and "kinetic conflicts" (209) influenced intelligence changes and continuities since colonialism. The book concludes that intelligence has played a significant role in the overall security of South Asia before, during, and since independence. A valuable treatment of intelligence services not frequently discussed in the literature. ■

Israeli National Intelligence Culture: Problem Solving, Exceptionalism, and Pragmatism
By Itai Shapira.
(Routledge, 2025) 257, end-of-chapter notes, appendix, index.

Retired Army Colonel Itai Shapira's 26-year career in Israeli Defence Intelligence included a year at the Israeli National Defense College. His studies focused on the distinct intelligence cultures in national intelligence services generally, and Israel's in particular. That work serves as the foundation for this book.

Shapira defines national intelligence culture as "the set of norms, values, beliefs, and habits which create the context for Israeli intelligence organization, product, and process." (2) His book compares the cultures of the Anglosphere (i.e., the US and UK services) and the IDI, Mossad, and Shabak. For example, unlike US and UK intelligence officers, "Israeli intelligence officers are … expected to provide recommendations for strategy, policy, and operations [and] also aim to influence decision-making of Israel's partners and allies in the world." (214)

Israeli National Intelligence Culture is not, however, about Israeli intelligence operational successes and failures. In fact it only deals speculatively with one, the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack on Israel. Instead, in addition to specific examples, the book examines the reasons that culture alone cannot account for performance in real-life cases and is not sufficient for analyzing them. (7)

Drawing on the work of many respected academic contributions that provide background for his observations, Shapira concludes that the unique aspects of Israeli intelligence culture that influence the foundations of intelligence professionalism include: rejection of formal management on the national level; no insistence that national intelligence assessments be based on consensus; encouragement of innovation; emphasis on human judgment; aversion to theory; placement of the burden of national mission on individual intelligence officers; emphasis on bold action, contrarian thinking, and moral courage in the face of hierarchy.

Israeli National Intelligence Culture is an interesting study that helps explain why Israeli intelligence has an outstanding reputation. ∎