

Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf—December 2019

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HISTORICAL

Agents of Influence: A British Campaign, a Canadian Spy, and the Secret Plot to Bring America into World War II by Henry Hemming. (Public Affairs, 2019), 371 pp., endnotes, index.

Author Henry Hemming begins this book by telling how its central character, Sir William Stephenson, once saved the life of Hemming's father. Having expressed his gratitude, Hemming continues *Agents of Influence* with a biography of Sir William that emphasizes his wartime service in British intelligence, while correcting some of the myths that have accumulated around Sir William's reputation.

The most well-known inaccuracy is that Sir William was the man codenamed Intrepid. Hemming admits that this was the invention of his Canadian biographer, William Stevenson, albeit with Sir William's concurrence. Stevenson's book, *A Man Called Intrepid*, sold millions—it is still in print—and “was so inaccurate that the US publisher later had it reissued as a work of fiction.” (319–20)

But *Agents of Influence* deals with British intelligence influence operations in the United States prior to Pearl Harbor. Their objective: bring the United States into the war before it was too late for Britain. Hemming quotes a *Washington Post* assessment that judged their operations to be “arguably the most effective in history . . . a virtual textbook in the art of manipulation, one that changed America forever.” (2) Using contemporaneous poll data, Hemming asserts that when Stephenson began his operations just after the Battle of Dunkirk in 1940, “one poll suggested that 8 percent of the American population wanted to go to war.” In the weeks just before Pearl Harbor, “polls showed that more than two-thirds of Americans had decided it was time to go to war.” (2–3)

Hemming explains these results by describing two competing forces. One is the America First Movement championed by Charles Lindbergh and the rallies he held throughout the country arguing that the United States should stay out of the war in Europe. The other is Stephenson's operations supplemented by William Donovan, Ian Fleming, Robert Sherwood—the president's speech writer—and in varying degrees, the FBI.

Although Stephenson reported to MI6, he had elements of MI5 and SOE under his command, and this enabled him to take a multipronged approach. While working to increase Donovan's influence and the creation of OSS, his station—referred to as British Security Coordination (BSC)—planted stories about the gallant British fighting the Nazis, promoted propaganda films like *Britain Can Take It* and *Mrs. Minever*, supported President Roosevelt's controversial lend-lease proposals with subsidized articles in the press, and implemented “any warrantable action likely to bring the US into the war.” (153)

Not all of Stephenson's operations were preapproved by London. The most prominent example occurred on Navy Day, 27 October 1942, when, in a radio talk to the nation, President Roosevelt announced that “I have in my possession a secret map made in Germany by Hitler's government by the planners of the new world order. It is a map of South America and part of Central America as Hitler proposes to reorganize it.” This was sensational news for two reasons. First, it was coming from the president—very unusual in those days. And second, Hitler had long claimed not to be interested in the new world. And then Roosevelt added more; he also had a copy of Hitler's “plan to abolish all religions.” (250–52) At a news conference the following day, the president declined to exhibit the map or the plan. Some in the press were skeptical and a senator was told Donovan was probably involved. Hemming asks, “Did the president know these were British forgeries?” (257) He provides some persuasive, though not conclusive, evidence that suggests he did.

Agents of Influence endeavors to make the case that the clandestine BSC influence operations it describes were a principal factor in preparing the American public to join World War II. But his poll data is not strong, and nothing else presented suggests that BSC made much of a difference when compared to the impact of Pearl Harbor. Finally, the British never credited Sir William with bringing the United States into the war. Hemming's position is weak.

The Birth of the FBI: Teddy Roosevelt, the Secret Service, and the Fight Over America's Premier Law Enforcement Agency, by Willard M. Oliver (Rowman & Littlefield, 2019), 328 pp., endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

In 1935, during the Franklin Roosevelt administration, the Department of Justice created the Federal Bureau of Investigation, headed by J. Edgar Hoover. It was not a new organization, just a new name, a successor to the Bureau of Investigation (BoI), which had been founded in 1908 by President Theodore Roosevelt. The first BoI director was Stanley Finch. Today, for practical purposes, the FBI refers to its creation using the 1908 date. *The Birth of the FBI* is concerned with the very early days of its existence under the earlier Roosevelt administration and the reasons for its creation.

An official history of the FBI says that from its birth it “exercised a wide range of criminal and intelligence responsibilities,” later expanding to espionage, bank robbery, kidnapping and migratory bird investigations.^a But author Willard Oliver, a professor in the College of Criminal Justice at Sam Houston State, argues that while it would do all of those things and more, “the FBI emerged from a political . . . row with Congress over the Secret Service,” and that its “true origins . . . are shrouded in the mystery of politics.” (x)

The first few chapters of the book look at the historical evolution of the federal and private agencies created to support the legal system. Beginning with the US Marshalls Service and including the Pinkerton Detective Agency and the Secret Service, they dealt with support to the court system, counterfeiting, and assassinations. But these were not the problem that led the president to create the FBI; his motivation was environmental conservation.

Teddy Roosevelt learned early in his presidency “that thousands perhaps millions of acres of government owned lands in the West were being stolen” from legitimate

a. *Celebrating 80 Years of Counterintelligence*, by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, (Washington, DC: 2019), 11–13.

owners, who had acquired the land under the Homestead Acts. (131) Attempts to investigate these land thefts were assigned to Secret Service agents borrowed from the Treasury Department since the Justice Department had no agents with the needed authority. When one investigation “ensnared two congressmen” (138) and some senators (147), and after a lead Secret Service agent was killed, Congress passed a bill prohibiting use of Secret Service agents to investigate “private matters of members of Congress.” (149) Roosevelt and his attorney general, Charles Bonaparte—the grandnephew of Napoleon—countered that move by issuing an executive order creating the Bureau of Investigation, the same method used to create the Secret Service in 1865. (167)

The Birth of the FBI concludes with a lengthy analysis of public and congressional reaction to Roosevelt’s decision. Even though it was near the end of the president’s term, some congressmen responded aggressively with the president giving as good as he got, calling one senator, “one of the foulest and rottenest demagogues [sic] in the whole country.” (239) By the end of Roosevelt’s administration, the FBI was a legitimate organization of government.

In a short epilogue, Professor Oliver digresses to make the following point: “the greatest myth of US politics outside the belief that the Supreme Court is an apolitical branch of government is that the Federal Bureau of Investigation is a professional, apolitical governmental bureaucracy. Nothing could be further from the truth.” (261). He goes on to argue that all elements of the executive branch are political to some degree and that the FBI was born out of politics and thus will “be a political agency well into the future.” (263) His book is interesting, well documented, and informative; his political philosophy is debatable.

Lincoln's Spies: Their Secret War to Save A Nation, by Douglas Waller (Simon & Schuster, 2019), 594 pp., endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

Allen Pinkerton, Lafayette Baker, Elizabeth Van Lew, and George Sharpe were each part of the intelligence history of the American Civil War. Pinkerton provided

security for President Lincoln for the final part of his trip to Washington in 1861 and was later hired by General McClellan as his intelligence officer. Baker was an

ambitious “poorly educated and aimless drifter,” who managed to convince Gen. Winfield Scott “that he could be a superb espionage agent.” (45). Elizabeth Van Lew was a native of Richmond, Virginia, and the daughter of a wealthy slave owner, an institution she opposed. During the Civil War she privately subverted supporters of slavery and gradually became an important Union secret agent. Union Army Capt. George Henry Sharpe of Kingston, New York, was considered “a natural military leader” (25) by his superiors, and would go on to form the Bureau of Military Information, the Army’s first military intelligence unit. *Lincoln’s Spies* tells how each one contributed to the president’s conduct of the war and the events immediately following his assassination.

After presenting short biographical accounts of his four principals, author Douglas Waller discusses their contributions in greater detail. He recognizes that the stories of Pinkerton and Baker have been told before in their memoirs and other accounts, and he is careful to emphasize those exploits that are shaped more by callous narcissism than historical fact. If the measure of performance in these cases is the impact they had on the outcome of the war, the sometimes colorful but somber verdict must be no.

When that performance measure is applied to Elizabeth Van Lew and George Sharpe, the answer is an unqualified yes, they had impact, albeit for quite different reasons. Waller describes how Van Lew came to the attention of the Union Army as a potential source of intelligence and how, applying common sense tradecraft, on her own she developed “more than a dozen agents and couriers” who provided order-of-battle and related details on the Confederates. (327) She communicated using “invisible ink” and various concealment devices, helped POWs escape, and successfully fended off Confederate detectives suspicious of her activities. (330–31) Van Lew didn’t write a memoir, but Waller draws on official documents and personal letters to tell her story.

George Sharpe didn’t publish a memoir either, but his story is thoroughly documented by his wartime record and correspondence. Although much less has been written about Sharpe than the others, Waller has done a fine job of focusing historical attention on the most important of his subjects. A graduate of Rutgers University and Yale Law School, fluent in French, and a member of the New York State Militia’s 3rd Division, Sharpe had a flourishing law practice when the war started. His initial commitment was for three months, certainly enough to defeat a Confederacy with half the population of the Northern States.

Waller tells how it was Sharpe’s fluency in French that brought him to the attention of Gen. Joseph Hooker. It seems Hooker had a book on the French secret service that he needed translated, and he asked Sharpe to do it. Impressed with the work, Hooker “asked” him to remain on his staff; he did that, too. This was the beginning of the Bureau of Military Information that would also serve Generals Meade and Grant for the rest of the war. Waller also discusses how Sharpe quickly learned how to recruit and handle secret agents, interrogate POWs and deserters, intercept signals and telegrams—enciphered and clear text—intercept mail, and verify information before informing his superiors. He performed with a regularity that had escaped Pinkerton and which Baker never contemplated.

Each of the protagonists in *Lincoln’s Spies* supervises other agents who carry out espionage and counterespionage and security operations, and Waller includes many of their stories. The result is a rough chronology of intelligence, security, and military operations in the Civil War in the east and its immediate aftermath describing how the peace affected the principals, none of whom actually worked directly for Lincoln. A well-told review of the contributions of Pinkerton, Baker, and Van Lew that gives Sharpe long overdue credit.

Madame Fourcade’s Secret War: The Daring Young Woman Who Led France’s Largest Spy Network Against Hitler, by Lynne Olson (Random House, 2019), 428 pp., endnotes, bibliography, photos, maps, index.

In his history of the French resistance in World War II,^a Olivier Wieviorka, professor of history at the Ecole

Normale Supérieure Cachan, begins by pointing out that the resistance was not a single organization, and he discusses several French units. This point is reinforced by Robert Gildea, professor of modern history at Oxford, in his book on the same subject, though he takes a broader,

a. Olivier Wieviorka, *The French Resistance* (The Belknap Press, 2016).

all-European view.^a Neither mentions *Alliance*, the largest—and the only—resistance network commanded by a woman.

The reasons for the omission are organizational and political. Those units working with the British Special Operations Executive have received extensive attention, as have those supported by Gen. Charles de Gaulle. But resistance elements linked to MI6 and the French Vichy government—even for cover purposes—are much less frequently mentioned in the literature because de Gaulle opposed giving credit to any network having contact with the Vichy and because the MI6 relationship was kept secret. *Madame Fourcade's Secret War*, author Lynne Olson's eighth book, meets both of those conditions and seeks to amend the historical record, although she is not the first to make that attempt. Marie-Madeleine Fourcade's 1974 autobiography, *Noah's Ark*, told the basic story^b—without any sourcing—but she was constrained from mentioning her relationship with the British Secret Intelligence Service (MI6). Olson adds these and other operational details, while including source notes and comments on her life after the war.

Fourcade spent her early life in the East Asia, where her father was a steamship executive. She was educated in Shanghai and later in Paris. By the time World War II started, she had married, had a child, and separated from her husband, a military officer. She had also learned to fly and drive fast cars, while she worked for Frances's first commercial radio station. There, she helped launch the careers of Edith Piaf and Maurice Chevalier. It was a Paris dinner party attended by Lt. Col. Charles de Gaulle and Maj. Georges Loustau-Lacau that led to her role in the resistance, although she could not see it coming at the time.

Olson explains Fourcade's initial role working for the leader of what became the *Alliance* network, how she came to lead it, and why the Germans called it *Noah's Ark*, (196) and how it grew under her leadership to some 3,000 members spread all over France. Fourcade didn't tell MI6 she was female after taking over from her male predecessor, but by the time of her first face-to-face meeting with MI6 she had gained the organization's

confidence. Similarly, all her subordinates recognized her inherent ability to assess and command people. When she suspected a radio operator sent by MI6 was a Nazi agent, she managed, after some debate, to convince MI6 and his execution was ordered. Another suspect, however, turned out to be a valuable MI6 agent.

The book doesn't describe how *Alliance* carried out operations, but it does say that the network reported on airfield locations, ships at naval bases—especially submarines—troop movements, and related order-of-battle intelligence. With few exceptions, it doesn't say what MI6 did with the intelligence. The exceptions include a detailed 55-foot hand drawn map of the Normandy invasion beaches that reached MI6 before the invasion, (303) and reports on the V-1 program, for which the agent, Jeannie Rousseau, later also received a CIA award in 1993. (380)

Of course, the French collaborators in the Vichy government and the Gestapo were aware of *Alliance* and constantly laid traps to capture its agents. Fourcade was arrested twice by Vichy security but escaped both times since *Alliance* had penetrated it thoroughly. By mid-1943 tensions were high and Fourcade had recently given birth to a boy when she was recalled to London to meet her MI6 colleagues. She remained there, impatiently maintaining tangential contact with *Alliance* until after the invasion, when she returned by plane.

Only days after her arrival, she was arrested by the Gestapo. (317–19) Her ingenious escape and permanent return to freedom make exciting reading.

Marie-Madeleine Fourcade and all but three of her *Alliance* colleagues were denied post-war public credit for their anti-Nazi exploits, for political reasons and de Gaulle's refusal to acknowledge those who did not report to him during the war and maintained contact with the British. (377–78) Much of her post-war life was devoted to finding lost members of the network and recognizing the others who had served.

Madame Fourcade's Secret War is a well-documented, long overdue tribute to a brave woman.

a. Robert Gildea, *Fighters In The Shadows: A New History of the French Resistance* (The Belknap Press, 2015).

b. Marie-Madeleine Fourcade, *Noah's Ark* (E. P. Putnam and Company, 1974).

Our Germans: Project Paperclip and the National Security State, by Brian E. Crim (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018) 245 pp., endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

By the end of World War II, the Allies had established camps for German and Austrian scientists, engineers, and technicians who were to be screened for possible culpability in war crimes. The files of those who possessed professional skills that might contribute to research in the United States were flagged with a paperclip indicating additional interrogation was required to assess specific capabilities. Thus began what came to be called Operation Paperclip. (3)

Lt. Walter Jessel of the Army's Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC)—who would later head the CIA's Congress of Cultural Freedom—was assigned to interrogate members of the German rocket (i.e., the V-2, *Vergeltungswaffe* or retribution, ballistic missile) development team headed by Werner von Braun, whose files reached Jessel with a paperclip. Jessel's orders were to sort out the "Nazis and the hangers-on from the technical staff" so the latter could be sent to the United States. (36) The task was more difficult than it sounds, and Brian Crim, an associate professor of history at Lynchburg University, quotes from Jessel's diary that "the team consists of rocket enthusiasts, engineering college graduates, professors, all unrepentant Nazis aware of their bargaining power with the Americans. . . . They are mercenaries who want to sell their weapon," the V-2. Jessel went on to note he was "troubled by their mercenary mentality and their disingenuous attempts to stoke fears of the Soviet Union." This issue has been addressed by others, and Professor Crim acknowledges Jessel's predecessors who took a much broader view of the problem by screening for other skills like atomic or medical research. (37)

Our Germans focuses on why the US government allowed the German rocket scientists into the United States in 1947. It asks whether that decision was justified by their involvement in the US satellite program launched in 1958, and their subsequent contributions to what Crim calls the "National Security State"—"military necessity or a dishonorable episode." (5).

There is no easy answer. Crim discusses the principal opposition that surfaced in the State Department, where the objections were focused, inter alia, on the granting of citizenship to the ex-Nazis when many displaced persons in Europe were denied the privilege. As Crim recognizes,

at least one rocket scientist, Arthur Rudolf, voluntarily gave up his US citizenship and returned to Europe when his behavior at the Dora-Mittlebau camp became known in 1984. Dora-Mittlebau was the location of an underground V-2 production and storage facility built by forced laborers kept underground for as long as they could work.

While Operation Paperclip was ongoing, the Soviets were doing the same thing and managed to send some "2,522 specialists" with their families to the Soviet Union. The results were mixed, however, and most returned by the late 1950s for reasons that are never made clear. The US Intelligence Community, according to Crim, believed that 60 percent of them were sympathetic to the "communist ideology." (148)

In conclusion, Crim returns to the topic of war crimes, noting that only one of the "Paperclippers" was prosecuted—and acquitted, "despite a significant paper trail connecting them to war crimes." (188) Even Von Braun eventually gave a deposition about three SS officers and the horrid working conditions at his facility. But Crim writes that he "explicitly lied about the presence of slave labor at Peenemünde. (189) His Nazi connections were overlooked.

Our Germans leaves unasked the question: Would it have been better not to have brought the German scientists to the United States and made them citizens in return for their work on US space science? And equally important, what would the United States do if it faced a similar situation in the future?

The Rising Clamor: The American Press, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Cold War, by David P. Hadley (The University Press of Kentucky, 2019), 261 pp., endnotes, bibliography, index.

Sir Martin Gilbert's multi-volume biography of Winston Churchill has been called definitive by some reviewers, but that did not stop Andrew Roberts from writing a 1,000-page treatment of his own.^a Similarly, new books about Lincoln continue to be published. In the same way, although to a much lesser extent, books about the CIA and its relationship to the media have appeared with some frequency.^b Usually in these cases the authors have discovered new material justifying a new publication. That is not the case with *The Rising Clamor*.

Author David Hadley, a visiting assistant professor of history at Ashland University, holds that "the press was able to influence the CIA from its foundation in often unacknowledged ways." (1) At the same time, he suggests that "the potential for manipulation and abuse of the press by the CIA led to serious questions about the legitimacy of the free press." (3) Hadley attempts to document these

assertions by analyzing the "press-CIA relationships that existed in the agency's early years," by which he means from 1945 to 1976. (5)

The Rising Clamor then embarks on a chronological review of CIA relations with the press under successive directors of central intelligence during controversial operations. For example, he touches on covert action under Dulles. Then he looks at the National Student Association scandal, the battle over the publication of Victor Marchetti's *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence*, the so-called year of intelligence in 1975, and the consequent congressional investigations. Hadley concludes that to some extent, by 1976, these events had "fundamentally transformed" the CIA and its "reputation for effectiveness, trustworthiness, and respectability was for many Americans severely undermined." (172) And then Hadley suggests that in an effort to overcome this image, that "the CIA's approach to its public image has grown considerably more sophisticated in recent years. The CIA now seeks to ensure it is well represented in fiction and popular culture." (176)

But how does Hadley know these things? He doesn't provide new evidence and doesn't analyze past events in new ways. In fact, his sourcing is all secondary, and he relies on the the opinions of others. Absent first-hand knowledge or new research, Hadley offers no new insights. *Caveat lectre*.

a. Andrew Roberts, *Churchill: Walking With Destiny* (Viking, 2018). See Thomas Coffey's review of the book in *Studies in Intelligence* 63, no. 2 (June 2019).

b. See for example: Francis Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New Press, 1999); Hugh Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America* (Harvard University Press, 2008); Oliver Boyd-Barnett et. al, *Hollywood and the CIA* (Routledge, 2011); *The CIA and Hollywood: How the Agency Shapes Film and Television* (University of Texas Press, 2012).

SPIES: The U.S. and Russian Espionage Game from the Cold War to the 21st Century, by Sean N. Kalic (Praeger, 2019), 231 pp., endnotes, bibliography, photos, appendices, maps, index.

Sean Kalic is a professor of military history at the US Army Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas. In *SPIES* his objective was to show how the United States and the Soviet Union sought to achieve strategic advantage in a modern version of "the great game," with the CIA pitted against the KGB. For two reasons—one general, the other specific—he is only partially successful. The general reason follows from his statement that "neither the CIA nor the KGB were ever to move completely away from heavy reliance on intelligence officers and agents." (3) He provides no evidence that either service ever set out to achieve more

than a working balance in this area, because that is what the profession demands.

The specific reason has to do with his failure to include the detailed contributions of allied intelligence services during the Cold War and the minimum attention he has given to the National Security Agency and the FBI.

This is not to say the seven chapters in *SPIES* are without merit. The material Kalic presents is not new, though with some exceptions, it provides useful reviews. The chronological narrative begins with the Soviet penetration of the Manhattan Project, the VENONA

program, and other events that led to the National Security Act of 1947, which created CIA. A principal exception is the author's treatment of the VENONA program and his comments on the one-time pads that he calls "onetime-use codebooks," the pages of which were, in some cases, used twice. (32) His explanation that "Soviet diplomatic officers saved pages and even entire books . . . to conserve limited resources" is incorrect. The one-time pads were used by cipher clerks, not officers, and the duplication occurred when the pads were printed.

Concerning the identification of the agents in VENONA, they were identified by the FBI, not by Army personnel at Arlington Hall, as Kalic asserts. Lastly, the Soviets were not "steadily informed" about the program by Lauchlin Currie or Elizabeth Bentley; these two passed on sketchy rumors. (33) William Weisband and Kim Philby get the credit for that betrayal.

The balance of *SPIES* discusses the international situation, covert action programs, and how the intelligence services of both countries adapted to changing circumstances. Some famous cases are summarized to illustrate the level of effort. For example, in the late 1940s, the Soviets sent KGB Col. Rudolf Abel [true name: Willie Fisher] to build a network of agents in the United States. He was marginally successful, but his efforts show how the situation had changed since before

World War II. Kalic then discusses the CIA's Berlin Tunnel operation as an example of ingenuity and the need for more innovative means of collection such as the U-2 and surveillance satellites, all possessing inherent budget, bureaucratic and operational complexities.

Kalic also comments on how different directors of central intelligence (DCIs) influenced the CIA. One example, his assertion that DCI Turner (1977–81) "had boldly seized the reins of the CIA to demonstrate that he was in control and would not allow the agency to continue to be a disgrace" (129) will roll the eyes of those who served at that time.

In his concluding chapter, Kalic recognizes the changes that both the CIA and KGB underwent when the Soviet Union collapsed. For reasons not clear, he calls the service that succeeded the KGB the FSB—it is the domestic security service—and ignores the creation of the foreign intelligence service, the SVR. But he notes that many of the collection challenges remain unchanged since the end of World War II. He observes, however, that the technical means have changed and intelligence officers require new skills.

SPIES will be useful for fact-checking, but otherwise it rates mixed marks.

Trinity: The Treachery and Pursuit of the Most Dangerous Spy in History, by Frank Close (Allen Lane, 2019), 500 pp., endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

The VENONA Project involved the decryption of KGB cables by the US Army Signal Intelligence Service beginning in 1946. Among other revelations, the decryptions exposed the penetration of the Manhattan Project by British physicist Emil Julius Klaus Fuchs, a communist whose ultimate loyalty was to the Soviet Union. The FOOCASE, as the FBI called it, became public knowledge in 1950, the year Fuchs was sentenced to 14 years in a British prison for giving atomic secrets to the Soviets. Several good books have been published about the case since then, each adding something new as archival material became available.^a The most recent, *Trinity*, follows this pattern.

Author Frank Close, emeritus professor of physics at Oxford University, presents the Fuchs chronicle beginning with his life in Germany, where besides studying physics Fuchs became an outspoken socialist and anti-Fascist. Soon after Hitler came to power he emigrated to England and resumed his studies, eventually gaining his PhD. By the time World War II started, he had established himself as a promising physicist. He soon made contact with Jurgen Kuczynski, leader of the Communist Party of Britain; endured a brief deportation to Canada; joined Rudolf Peierls (pronounced Pi-Urlls), who was working on the British atomic bomb project; and sometime in 1941 began to spy for the GRU. After a bumpy start, by

a. See for example: Robert Chadwell Williams, *Klaus Fuchs, Atom Spy* (Harvard University Press, 1987); Harvey Klehr and John Earl Haynes, "On The Trail of a Fourth Soviet Spy at Los Alamos,

Studies In Intelligence 63, no. 3 at <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol-63-no-3/pdfs/Fourth-Soviet-Spy-LosAlamos.pdf>.

1942 he was being handled by Jurgen's sister Ursula (aka: Sonja), from whom he learned basic tradecraft. In the fall of that year, he became a naturalized British subject, and in December 1943 he traveled with a group of British scientists to New York, where they joined the Manhattan Project.

Before leaving England, Sonja had given Fuchs contact details for his American courier, Harry Gold, and while working in New York—about a year—he made the connection. By August 1944 he was in Los Alamos, New Mexico, where the atom bomb would be designed, assembled, and tested. Professor Close describes his contributions to the bomb project and his growing knowledge of work on the “Super” or hydrogen bomb, all of which he sent on to the Soviet Union through Gold.

Fuchs returned to Britain in the summer of 1946 and began work at the Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Harwell; the Brits were also going to build an atomic bomb. He was there in 1949, when MI5 identified him as a Soviet agent.

Some obvious questions follow from this case summary, and professor Close deals with each one in depth; it is here that he adds new material. For example, how did Fuchs pass his security check before joining the British atomic project and again before being accepted for the Manhattan Project? Did any evidence emerge that linked Fuchs to other communist agents that was not followed up or interpreted properly by MI5? Were his communist beliefs known to any of his friends and if so, what did they do with that knowledge? Since for security reasons, the VENONA decrypts couldn't be used to pressure a confession or as evidence at trial, what caused him to confess?

The well documented answers to these questions do not reflect positively on British security practices of the day and, with some exceptions, those carrying them out. The exceptions include Millicent Bagot, the MI5 officer responsible for monitoring the Comintern, who learned

Fuchs had been a communist in Germany—she would become the model for John le Carré's Connie Sachs. Her attempts to follow up on this information do not reflect well on MI5. (77–8)

Perhaps the most surprising new material in *Trinity* deals with Fuchs's confession. Professor Close shows that the common perception that during “a skillful but deceptive interrogation by Jim Skardon [MI5] . . . Fuchs was persuaded to make some highly incriminating statements,”^a was somewhat misleading. Fuchs, in fact, had previously confessed to colleagues and during his interrogation by Skardon, he mistakenly assumed if he confessed to him too, he would be allowed to remain and work at Harwell.

Trinity provides no evidence that Fuchs was “the most dangerous spy in history.” And Close is wrong on a few historical points. For example, “communist witch-hunts” did not begin with the start of the Cold War. (56) The Cold War began when communist agents were discovered in the US government thanks to Elizabeth Bentley, VENONA, and because of the behavior of the Soviet Union. The FBI did not have access to the VENONA material until after the war. (150) And as Benson has documented, the Finnish codebook played no role in the early decryption of the VENONA cables (150–51), and they were intelligence not “diplomatic cables.” (213) The statement that Gen. Curtis LeMay was Air Force chief of staff in 1946 is incorrect; the US Air Force wasn't created until 1947, and LeMay didn't become chief of staff until 1961. And finally, Kim Philby was not a “double agent.” (216)

Notwithstanding these inaccuracies, *Trinity* is the most comprehensive thoroughly documented account of the Fuchs case to date.

a. Nigel West, *Historical Dictionary of British Intelligence*, second edition (Scarecrow Press: 2014), 228.

The Myths of Tet: The Most Misunderstood Event of the Vietnam War, by Edwin E. Moise (University Press of Kansas, 2017), 276 pp., endnotes, bibliography, maps, index.

Historical analogies are often useful for explaining the strategic significance of events to those whose perspective is informed only by firsthand tactical experience or by

reading reports of the events concerned. Thus, initially, it made intuitive sense to some of those serving in Vietnam during the Tet offensive of 1968 when Ambassador

Ellsworth Bunker and Gen. William Westmoreland, among other high-ranking notables, compared Tet to the Battle of the Bulge—a failed attempt to change the momentum of the war. But it soon became evident that, as some reported, the Tet offensive was not a military disaster for the communists that would set them on the road to defeat. That is just one of the eight myths publicized by various authors and analyzed in *The Myths of Tet* by Clemson University history professor Edwin Moïse.

The nature of the other myths ranges from claims of well coordinated attacks to differences in reported MACV (Military Advisory Command Vietnam) troop strength and casualty figures to the impact on South Vietnam’s infrastructure and the US reaction. Perhaps the most recognizable myth, at least to those who recall the events, was the charge that the “American media not only failed to notice an American victory but portrayed it as the opposite—an American military defeat.” (2) As an example of this position Moïse cites authors who argued Walter Cronkite took that position and then quotes Cronkite to show that he did not. (183) On the other hand, Moïse and others emphasize that the “impact of Tet on the American public opinion did represent a political victory for the communists and a hugely important one.” (181)

As background to help readers understand the way Tet “was experienced by Americans at the time,” Moïse discusses several related topics. The first is the knowingly distorted order-of-battle figures produced at MACV—reminiscent of Pinkerton and McClellan in the Civil War—and disputes that resulted at CIA and DIA and in misleading national estimates that followed. He names

those that produced the unjustifiably optimistic figures in late 1967 that led to the official belief that “enemy forces were fading away.” (4) Moïse later concludes that people in power “should be cautious about letting their subordinates know what they want to hear.” (210) He does point out the deleterious effects of such bad staff work, though in surprisingly gentle terms. (211)

Other topics include the North Vietnamese preparation for Tet and its execution from their point of view, the varying levels of activity in the different military regions of South Vietnam, and the subsequent North Vietnamese “Mini Tet” that was partially diffused by an NVA defector. (203)

He then goes on to show that the shock of the Tet offensive was not confined to MACV. New Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford noted, “Tet, to me, was the roof falling in.” Others commented that “We did not believe they would be able to carry out the degree of coordination demonstrated.” The latter serving as an early example of the coordination myth. (152)

In a retrospective comment, Moïse suggests that “widespread beliefs among civilian and military personnel that the US media had done a grotesquely bad job of covering Tet contributed to suspicion of the media’s ability to cover later conflicts.” (209) *The Myths of Tet* documents those mistaken beliefs but is less convincing as to the long-term impact.

Those wondering what to believe about Tet and its aftermath will find answers here. *The Myths of Tet* sets the record straight, with solid documentation.

INTELLIGENCE ABROAD

SECRET: The Making of Australia’s Security State, by Brian Toohey (Melbourne University Press, 2019), 384 pp., endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

In an earlier book on the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS), Australian gadfly journalist Brian Toohey criticized ASIS’s putative cooperation with the CIA and the CIA’s covert action operations in general.^a

In his memoir, former ASIS officer and director-general of ASIO, Harvey Barnett, cited Toohey for publishing articles claiming “ASIO officers had met in Washington in secret visits ‘over many years’ with US officials and handed over sensitive information of a personal nature on prominent Australians.” Barnett found no evidence that such “bizarre and distasteful meetings . . . ever took

a. Brian Toohey and William Pinwell, *OYSTER: The Story of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service*, (Heinemann Australia, 1989).

place.”^a Toohey’s latest book, *SECRET*, continues to reflect his propensity to manufacture errors.

SECRET begins with the assertion that the birth of ASIO “in 1949 is widely attributed to the discovery of two Australian diplomats,” who spied for the Soviet Union, a view neither documented by Toohey nor supported by the *Official History of ASIO*. He then goes on to suggest three “more important, but rarely noticed, secrets behind the birth of ASIO.” The first is that nothing in the material the spies “handed over mattered.” The second “secret” was that “the USA used highly classified nonsense to harm the [Ben] Chieflly Labor government.” The third “and most important is that the Americans harboured a much bigger traitor, William Weisband, but kept his genuinely damaging activities from ASIO on a need-to-know basis.” Toohey goes on to describe Weisband as an “American counterintelligence official who told the USSR in October 1948 how to stop the US deciphering its top secret cables.”^b Seldom have so many errors appeared on a single page. (3)

As to the first assertion, the value of material provided does not absolve a spy of guilt. Secondly, the “highly

a. Harvey Barnett, *The Tale of the Scorpion* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1988), 19.

b. David Horner, *The Spy Catchers: The Official History of ASIO* (Allen & Unwin, 2014).

Special Duty: A History of the Japanese Intelligence Community, by Richard J. Samuels (Cornell University Press, 2019), 355 pp., endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

For many readers, exposure to Japanese intelligence has been episodic. Some will recall stories of WWII operations like project FATHEAD, one of Peter Fleming’s (Ian’s brother) multiple ruses that conveyed the impression of a “timid and bungling” military intelligence capability.^c Others will remember how Japan’s domestic security service captured Soviet spy Richard Sorge. And some might even recall the FBI’s arrests of commander Itaru Tachibana and Toraichi Kono (Charlie Chaplin’s former valet) for espionage. But those searching for a comprehensive history of Japan’s intelligence services have been frustrated until now, with the publication of *Special Duty*.

c. Thaddeus Holt, *The Deceivers: Allied Military Deception in the Second World War* (New York: Scribner, 2004), 408–10.

classified nonsense” is not specified. And third, Weisband did not tell the Soviets to stop deciphering cables nor was he a counterintelligence officer. And, not surprisingly, none of Toohey’s assertions are sourced.

Much of the book is a critique of Australia’s intelligence services and their internal impact on successive governments, from their origins to the present as seen from a presumably leftist perspective. Toohey discusses the contributions of MI5 and the CIA, with the latter subject to repeated charges of interference in Australia’s domestic affairs. None of the accusations are new—one example is the assertion that CIA influenced the demise of the Whitlam government (175)—and all are discussed in greater depth in the official ASIO histories.

While *SECRET* also includes Toohey’s assessment of alleged US State Department interference in Australia’s affairs, (210) the latter part of the book is concerned mainly with Australia’s domestic security, excessive government secrecy, and foreign policies such as the US-Russia relationship and the risks of nuclear calamity. He concludes with some comments on the risks of going to war with China.

From the point of view of intelligence history, *SECRET* offers little new, and much that is doubtful, and it is all influenced by a political viewpoint.

In his prefatory remarks, author Richard J. Samuels, Ford International Professor of Political Science and director of the Center for International Studies at MIT, notes that “few Japanese spies have been popularly associated with either wisdom or heroism in Western accounts.” In part this is so, he suggests, because “there is some confusion abroad regarding whether or not the Japanese are adept at espionage.” (xiii) *Special Duty* explains the reasons for the confusion and the various reforms implemented to correct misconceptions.

To establish perspective, *Special Duty* discusses the evolution of Japanese intelligence from the early 17th century to the present. For most of that time, its disparate components functioned independently. Thus, military, naval, and the government elements each created “special

duty” units—hence the title of the book. Even as a gradual measure of an integrated intelligence community was achieved, the term was applied to units undertaking operations.

To explain the somewhat spasmodic development of reforms undertaken, Samuels introduces what he terms “three generic drivers that affect the shape, pace, and direction of intelligence reform . . . strategic change, technological development, and failure.” (xv–xviii) He then examines these drivers in five chronological periods and observes how they are affected—in each period—by the basic elements of intelligence: collection, analysis, communication, protection, covert action, and oversight—as Japan gradually realizes the benefits of a coordinated intelligence community.

It is not surprising, Samuels writes, that, in its formative years, Japanese intelligence “was plagued by many of the enduring pathologies common to intelligence communities everywhere”: severe turf battles, subordination of political to military intelligence, weak analysis, and refusal of decisionmakers to listen. (33) But after World War II, Japan also suffered from a limitation not encountered by Germany: forced accommodation to US views that lasted well into the 21st century.

The historical narrative of *Special Duty* discusses how modern Japanese intelligence began to take shape in the late 19th century as government leaders demanded timely and accurate information about its principal adversaries, Russia, China, and Korea. It was not a smooth or linear evolution, and initially operations were uncoordinated mixes of efforts by diplomats, military officers, naval attachés, and special societies. Professor Samuels provides examples of these activities, successes and failures, and the principal players involved. Of particular interest are the complex covert action and espionage operations conducted by military officers Akashi Motojirō (38) and Doihara Kenji, (41–2) neither of whom had prior intelligence experience. Not to be outdone, the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) were both active during these formative years. The IJN was the first to form a service-wide intelligence unit, and MOFA succeeded in decrypting Chinese telegrams, though not the Russian traffic. A common feature of all operations was the independence—Samuels calls it stove-piping—with which they were executed and the problems that inevitably resulted.

The foremost failure to coordinate intelligence that Japan experienced prior to Pearl Harbor occurred on the Chinese-Russian border near Nomonhan, where the Soviets defeated the IJA. Among the contributing factors were the counterintelligence reporting of Richard Sorge and the firsthand order-of-battle intelligence given by an NKVD general officer defector, intelligence that was ignored by the Imperial General Staff. In the typical after-action investigation, the intelligence units were, unjustly, given “the brunt of the blame,” (57) although improved training resulted, including the famous Nakano School that produced impressive intelligence officers. Still, as in the United States until the late 20th century, intelligence officers lacked the same status as other combat support elements.

In his summary of intelligence operations that contributed to Japan’s defeat in World War II, Professor Samuels includes Japan’s tactical success and strategic defeat at Pearl Harbor. He gives examples of other failures that involved each of the six elements from collection to oversight while adding one new factor—“delusions that spiritual power would prevail”—a “god is on my side” belief—common in Japan’s ruling class. (77)

With the help of the United States and to some extent its wartime allies, Japan’s economic and political recovery after World War II was relatively rapid and democratic. Not so for the evolution of its intelligence community. Samuels gives two principal reasons for this. The first was the aversion of the Japanese population to returning to the oppressive domestic security environment created by the Kempetai (military police with a wide remit) and the Tokkō (Special Higher Police for Public Surveillance) during the imperial period. The second, and perhaps more important, was the bitterly resented subordination of policy and operations to US priorities that lasted in varying degrees from 1945 to 2001. *Special Duty* analyzes the manipulative Japanese behavior that undercut the MacArthur regime, the controls imposed by the United States during the Cold War, which restricted independence, and the gradual political and organizational changes that led to successful reengineering of the intelligence community in 2013.

With three exceptions, *Special Duty* is thoroughly documented with both English and Japanese sources. Curiously, the exceptions deal with US history. The first refers to Herbert Yardley’s “Black Chamber,” which broke Japanese naval codes after World War I. Samuels writes that “it was disbanded by President Herbert Hoover

in 1921 at the conclusion of the Washington Naval Conference.” (4) Of course, Hoover was not president in 1921, and the Black Chamber wasn’t disbanded until 1929, Hoover’s first year in office. On the same page, there is mention of the “U.S. Civil War in 1860.” Finally, in a discussion of America’s first imagery satellite, the statement that the film was released in cannisters “that parachuted back to earth” is incorrect. The parachutes were intercepted in the air.^a (5)

a. For more, see David W. Waltrop, “Recovery of the Last GAMBIT and HEXAGON Film Buckets from Space, August–October 1984,” *Studies in Intelligence* 58, no. 2 (June 2014), <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol-58-no-2/pdfs/Waltrop-Catching%20the%20End%20of%20an%20Era-June2014.pdf>.

For those unfamiliar with Japanese intelligence history, the structure of *Special Duty* is particularly helpful. Each chapter refers to the elements of the model established in chapter 1 and adds a summary section at the end to reinforce the principal points made. The final chapter reviews the entire book and could be read first if a detailed overview of the book is desired. By any measure *Special Duty* is a seminal contribution to the intelligence literature.



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