

Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf

Compiled and reviewed by Hayden Peake

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Current Topics

America The Vulnerable: Inside the New Threat Matrix of Digital Espionage, Crime, and Warfare, by Joel Brenner. (New York: Penguin Press, 2011), 308 pp., endnotes, index.

Joel Brenner, a Harvard Law School graduate, served as the National Security Agency's inspector general and later as the national counterintelligence executive (NCIX), jobs in which he gained a genuine understanding of the contemporary cyberthreat. To gain the attention of readers, he begins his story by stating that the Chinese downloaded "up to twenty terabytes of information from the Defense Department—equal to about 20 percent of all the data in the Library of Congress. And we don't know what they took." (1) Now those who have served in the Pentagon may conclude that if the stolen documents were written in "Pentagonese," China may never do it again. On the other hand, if the downloads contained sensitive material, a serious problem exists. *America the Vulnerable* assumes the latter and goes on to describe this "new form of espionage: how it works; what the biggest and most valuable targets are; who does it best; as well as what it means for the future of warfare, intelligence, market competition, and society at large." (2) It is a sobering account—he is talking billions in potential losses of secret technology.

But the vulnerability is not confined to cyberespionage. He makes a very strong case that personal data and social networks are being electronically undressed. Likewise, commercial secrets that could threaten the economy, and the

power grid are all targets. Corrective action can't, he suggests, be taken serially. The vulnerability is present simultaneously.

Brenner identifies numerous real-world problems and some hypothetical ones that are anything but unrealistic. One real-world example is the criminal organization called ShadowCrew, which operated worldwide and demonstrated the hazards of not attending to security when using the internet. (27-31) Other examples include the cyberattacks on Google technology and commercial cyberespionage against the Ford Motor Company. He offers a hypothetical scenario that suggests how such capabilities can affect international security.

A review of an assassination in Dubai in the chapter "Spies in a Glass House" illustrates the risks associated with the today's surveillance society—such as drones and GPS—and the threat from groups like WikiLeaks. The title is taken from an experiment in transparency conducted by architect Philip Johnson, who built a glass house and was confounded by society's reaction. (11, 244)

America the Vulnerable deals with an alarming situation without being alarmist. It is very well written and concludes with some suggestions to Congress, the executive branch, individuals, and the private sector for "managing the mess." No one person can implement defensive measures; that burden is on us all. Brenner does not estimate the likelihood of success.

General

The Art and Science of Intelligence Analysis, by Julian Richards. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 197 pp., footnotes, index.

After obtaining a PhD in Political Violence in Pakistan from Cambridge University, Julian Richards spent 17 years as an intelligence analyst with the UK Ministry of Defence before re-

turning to academia. He is now deputy director of the Centre for Security and Intelligence Studies at the University of Buckingham. *The Art and Science of Intelligence Analysis* is a

thoughtful and practical two-part introduction to the topic.

In preparation for an examination of the components of intelligence analysis, Part I begins with a discussion of the definition of intelligence, in which Richards concludes that it is a complex system and that no single definition adequately applies. He then identifies the prevention of surprise as a key analytic goal and recognizes the difficulties imposed by the huge volume of data in the contemporary information environment.¹ In order to deal with this problem, Richards argues that a theory of an “intelligence system” is necessary and suggests how the “system” should work in any given circumstances. Such an approach is required, he argues, in order to understand why intelligence fails. Further background in this part of the book covers the evolution of the current intelligence threat and how analysis today also applies to law enforcement and security functions. Part I concludes with a discussion of how the

roles of analysts are influenced by organizational cultures, politics, and ethical considerations.

Part II of the study first considers aspects of analytical theory that are more art than science. These are elements requiring judgment, critical thinking, communication, and intuition. Richards notes in passing that these topics have received significant attention at Center for the Study of Intelligence and the Sherman Kent School at the CIA. (117) The scientific elements of analysis are then reviewed—for example, hypothesis formulation and testing and other tradecraft techniques; the role of social networks; the value of timelines; and massive data extraction techniques. A basic assumption for all analysts, he stresses, is that they all obtain extensive background knowledge and training.

The Art and Science of Intelligence Analysis is a basic primer for anyone concerned about what it takes to become an intelligence analyst. Well documented and clearly written, it is a worthwhile introduction to the topic.

Eyes on Spies: Congress and the United States Intelligence Community, by Amy B. Zegart. (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 2011), 130 pp., footnotes, index.

Author and former Assistant Director of Central Intelligence for Analysis and Production Mark Lowenthal recognized that “the oversight of intelligence has always been a problem.”² University of Georgia professor Loch Johnson wrote that “oversight is better than it used to be, but nowhere near as good as it should be.”³ The 9/11 Commission called Congressional oversight “dysfunctional.”⁴ These observations are typical of those of many commissions that have investigated intelligence. While each one suggests possible functional corrections and improvements—larger staffs, a joint intelligence committee, and no term limits are just three examples—none have addressed the fundamental

question: why aren’t the intelligence committees doing their job? *Eyes on Spies* answers that question in simple declarative sentences.

While UCLA professor and Hoover Institution senior fellow Amy Zegart strongly supports legislative oversight and the post-9/11 congressional reforms, she argues persuasively that “Congress has been largely unable to reform itself.” (3) Or put another way, “many of Congress’s biggest oversight problems lie with Congress” as an institution. (9) With regard to intelligence oversight, she is more specific: “Simply put, Congress has never expended as much effort overseeing intelligence as other pol-

¹ His use of the “signal-to-noise” metaphor (29) in this regard is, however, incorrect. By definition, noise has no signal content.

² Mark Lowenthal, *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy* (Washington, DC: Sage, 2012) 217.

³ Loch Johnson, “Accountability and America’s Secret Foreign Policy,” in *Intelligence: Critical Concepts in Military, Strategic & Security Studies, Volume 4* (New York: Routledge, 2011) 61.

⁴ *The 9/11 Commission Report: The Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 2004) 420.

icy areas.” (10) The reasons for this situation are straightforward, she concludes: “the intelligence oversight system...is well designed to serve the reelection interests of individual legislators and protect congressional committee prerogatives but poorly designed to serve the national interest.” (11) Current practice is weak on monitoring accountability, meeting strategic objectives, and “ensuring compliance with the law and public trust for agencies that...must hide much of what they do.” (6)

In order to get a handle on the problem, Chapter 2 of this six-chapter study examines the question: What does good oversight look like? After reviewing the history of oversight and its problems of partisanship, turf battles, and conflicting bureaucratic interests, Zegart concludes poor oversight is hard to define but is easily recognized. Her interviews support this assertion. One legislator called oversight “horrible.” (32)

Zegart then identifies two metrics that suggest an additional reason for poor oversight: the number of hearings held and the number of bills passed. She presents persuasive data that indicate the intelligence committees rank poorly on both counts when compared with other committees. Why is this the case?

Subsequent chapters look at answers suggested by analysts using political science techniques and various intelligence study methods. The literature they have produced identifies functional weaknesses, Zegart suggests, but misses the key

point—the limited electoral incentives for service on the intelligence committee do not justify the effort required to get the job done properly. Chapter 5 reinforces this conclusion by considering the deficiencies that apply to the intelligence committees in particular. She provides ample evidence that they are “not designed to oversee intelligence agencies well,” restricted as they are by inexperienced members and staff, term limits on the committees, “weak budget authority” splintered among other committees, and a lack of other incentives for service. (112)

In conclusion, Zegart suggests steps to improve the situation. The main one is giving the intelligence committees sole control over the Intelligence Community budget. In effect this means “Congress will have to reform itself,” something she does not see happening in the current environment—electoral self-interest and protection of turf are very powerful factors. Finally, she notes that while “executive branch secrecy may make meaningful oversight difficult...Congress’s self-inflicted weaknesses make it next to impossible.” (120-1) One point not considered, however, is whether effective oversight would increase the already excessively time-consuming burden on the IC.

Eyes on Spies focuses critical attention on intelligence oversight to the same degree that Sherman Kent’s *Strategic Intelligence for American World Policy* did on intelligence studies. It is a bold, articulate book and should be taken as seriously.

Fixing the Facts: National Security and the Politics of Intelligence, by Joshua Rovner. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), 263 pp., endnotes, index.

When an intelligence system fails as it did before 9/11 or its judgments are as wrong as they were before the Iraq War, severe consequences result, and the relationships among foreign, military, and homeland security policymakers suffers. In order to prevent such occurrences, it is necessary to examine why they happen and what needs to be done to avoid them in the future. Dr. Joshua Rovner, an MIT political science graduate and currently an associate professor of strategy and policy at the US Naval War College, addresses these issues in *Fixing the Facts*.

The facts to be fixed, however, are not errors by intelligence analysts, as a glance at the title of this book would suggest. Rovner takes a different approach. He is concerned with “the connection between intelligence officials and policymakers...a relationship prone to dysfunction.” (3-4) For purposes of his study, he assumes the intelligence disseminated is as correct as possible, although perhaps not as complete or on point as may be desired by policymakers. Understanding the intricacies of the resulting friction or dysfunction is essential to fixing the problem.

Rovner analyzes the problem from a political science point of view, in which interactions are characterized by three “pathologies of intelligence-policy relations”: neglect, excessive harmony, and politicization. (5) Neglect occurs when policymakers disregard intelligence that doesn’t conform to their expectations. Excessive harmony causes groupthink. Since these first two pathologies have been studied elsewhere, Rovner chooses to focus much of his discussion on the third, politicization, which he defines in detail and with many examples. After listing criteria to test the impact of the three pathologies, Dr. Rovner applies them to three cases: the Johnson administration and Vietnam, estimates about the Soviet Union in 1969 and 1976,

and US and British estimates on Iraq during 1998-2003. In a chapter on each case, he discusses the interaction of the three pathologies.

The concluding chapter summarizes Rovner’s theoretical constructs using examples—the implications of then DCI Richard Helms’s judgment in the Vietnam order-of-battle controversy and George Tenet’s “slam dunk” assessment, to name two. Whether application of the models describing sound intelligence-policymaker relations will reduce friction and dysfunction in the future is impossible to say. That the models identify key issues to be considered and a construct for doing so is evident. *Fixing the Facts* is a stimulating and challenging contribution.

Intelligence and Intelligence Analysis, by Patrick F. Walsh. (New York: Routledge, 2011), 332 pp., bibliography, index.

Australian Patrick F. Walsh is a senior lecturer in criminal intelligence at Charles Stuart University. Before that he was an intelligence analyst in the Office of National Assessments in Canberra. *Intelligence and Intelligence Analysis* examines the post 9/11 reforms in the profession in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and the United States. In particular, he looks at the changes that have necessitated a closer relationship between domestic security agencies (17) and the traditional foreign intelligence organizations in each of those countries.

however. There are chapters on leadership and management, the need for innovation and collaboration, the importance of education, and the value of research and theory building.

The discussion of each topic is accompanied by commentary on current literature dealing with the subject and what Walsh calls case studies. The latter are actually summaries of what the countries in his book are doing on each topic. For example, in the chapter on intelligence frameworks and or organizational issues, there is a case study on how each country has applied a new framework to a problem. In the case of the United States, for example, it is fusion centers; in New Zealand, it is the integration of intelligence into its single police agency.

After reviewing the situation before 9/11, Walsh looks at two areas in which new practices have emerged to meet the changed threat: corrections and biosecurity. Both illustrate the magnitude of the challenges and the need for rapid exchange of integrated information. Subsequent topics include improving operational capacity at various levels of government, intelligence models and frameworks that may achieve this goal, and how to assess effectiveness. Walsh does not neglect the contributions of individuals,

Intelligence and Intelligence Analysis does not pretend to present answers to meeting all post 9/11 challenges, but Walsh has provided examples across five nations, making clear that the problems are recognized and are being addressed by each. It is a unique contribution.

Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy (Fifth Edition), by Mark M. Lowenthal. (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2011), 386 pp., bibliography, appendices, index.

In 1984, perhaps looking toward retirement, Mark Lowenthal hypothesized that well-written books describing the Intelligence Community

(IC) would require new editions in perpetuity. In this, the fifth edition of *Intelligence*, Dr. Lowenthal—who has served with the Congressional

Research Service, the State Department, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, the National Intelligence Council, and the Director of Central Intelligence—provides an expanded update of this basic text.

The 15 chapters that cover the basic functions of the profession and the IC remain unchanged, and there are 51 new pages. Additions include changes concerning operational matters—for example, the use of drones, policy initiatives of the Obama administration, and personnel changes since 2009. There are also several new sections in the chapter on transnational issues: demographics, support to the military, and cyberspace. The latter replaces the section on network warfare. The chapter on intelligence

reform has been substantially revised and updated, as has the chapter on foreign intelligence services. New sources have been added to the suggestions for further reading at the end of each chapter.

Intelligence is more than a description of the functions, operational mandates, and other obligations of the IC. Lowenthal has included analysis of performance, suggestions for improvement, the role of ethics, and the need for community-wide accountability and reform. For these reasons, the book is both a valuable introductory text and a source of information on contemporary issues facing the IC. Only source notes could improve its quality.

Historical

Castles Made of Sand: A Century of Anglo-American Espionage and Intervention in the Middle East, by André Gerolymatos. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2010), 347 pp., endnotes, bibliography, chronology, index.

The track record of the attempts of foreign nations to control and influence political events in the Middle East is a mix of short-term success and long-term failure. In *Castles Made of Sand*, Simon Fraser University historian André Gerolymatos explores the role of Anglo-American espionage and intervention operations in the region. The story he tells, however, is not confined to intelligence and covert action. He includes the political determinants and the contributions of other national players—for example, Germany, France, Israel, and Russia—and Islamic movements like the Muslim Brotherhood.

Gerolymatos begins with the effects of the Crusades on current Islamic politics. He also covers the British imperial era, focusing on Egypt and the local anti-Christian wars that resulted. Other major events include WW I and the Arab Revolt—and Lawrence of Arabia—the end of the Ottoman Empire and imperial Islam, the forced creation of the modern Middle Eastern States in 1922 (Churchill's fix), and the origins of turmoil in Palestine under British mandate. Also includ-

ed are the WW II and postwar policies of the Truman and Eisenhower presidencies—specifically, in Iran, Crete, Syria, and Pakistan—that continue into the present period.

Castles Made of Sand, however, is chronologically disjointed. Chapter 1, "Assassination," for example, looks at attempts on the life of Gamal Nasser by the Muslim Brotherhood and the role played by MI6. The next chapter concerns disruptions in Egypt and Sudan in the late 19th century, only to be followed by a chapter on events in 1924. This, in turn, is followed by a chapter concerning events in 1916. Though the ordering improves in the second half of the book, Gerolymatos never makes clear the reason for this confusing chronology and doesn't establish a smooth flow of events or ideas.

Some of the topics Gerolymatos covers really don't fit well. One example may be found in the chapter on CIA subversive operations. It includes background on Otto Skorzeny, Reinhard Gehlen, Carmel Offie, and covert actions in Eu-

rope, but there are no apparent links to the Middle East.

The book is mostly drawn from secondary sources, not all of them reliable. In the chapter titled “Spies, Adventurers, and Religious Warriors,” for example, Harry St. John Philby is identified as both a British civil servant and an intelligence officer; he was never the latter (53). On the topic of the CIA in the Middle East, Gerolymatos discusses the role of James Angleton and his links with Israeli intelligence, information from a source identified only as “close friend.”

The Fear Within: Spies, Commies, and American Democracy on Trial, by Scott Martelle. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2011), 296 pp., endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

The 1940 Smith Act set criminal penalties for advocating the overthrow of the US government.⁵ It also required all noncitizen adult residents to register with the government, and it barred admission into the country of communists from abroad. The rationale for the act “was not abstract—Hitler’s Abwehr and Stalin’s NKVD were actively trying to plant spies in the United States.” (3) During WW II the act was used to prosecute Nazis without public objection. But author Scott Martelle argues that when the act was used in 1949 to justify jailing leaders of the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA), authorities were guilty of overreaction. Worse yet, it was a threat to the American way of life. The Warren Supreme Court eventually ended Smith Act prosecutions, having concluded that intent to advocate overthrow of the government by violence was insufficient for conviction—one had to try and do it before the law was violated. *The Fear Within* tells the story of the convicted communist leaders and attempts to draw parallels with the PATRIOT Act of 2001.

The spy scare began in the mid 1940s when four agents of the Soviet Union defected—Igor Gouzenko in Canada and Louis Budenz, Elizabeth Bentley, and Whittaker Chambers in the

The final chapter considers Pakistan and its Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) organization, from its creation to the present. The US and British intelligence roles were relatively minor. The focus in this chapter is on ISI’s role in assassinations, its support to the Taliban, and its links to radical Islam.

Castles Made of Sand stops at that point, badly in need of a summary chapter that isn’t there. Overall, a disappointing contribution.

United States. Martelle reviews the consequences of the evidence they presented. Each claimed firsthand knowledge of American communists who were spying for the Soviet Union. Some identified leaders of the CPUSA as active agents. But there was no firsthand evidence admissible in court except for what Chambers produced, and espionage charges were not possible since the statute of limitations had run out. Curiously, even though evidence of Chambers’ espionage has long been documented, Martelle raises doubts that Chambers “was indeed a communist” and claims that evidence of his “working for the Soviets remains murky.” (264, fn 33) Thanks to Kim Philby, the Soviets quickly learned of the defections and shut down the networks. The FBI was unable to gather direct evidence of espionage, so the Justice Department decided to prosecute the party leaders under the Smith Act. (31)

Martelle discusses the case against the CPUSA leaders in detail, emphasizing their family ties and personal circumstances, while admitting they were indeed committed communists. He also describes the often disruptive public reaction to the trials from the right and left, and the consequences for left-leaning faculty in academia. He admits that the arrogant behavior of

⁵ Alien Registration Act (18 U.S.C. § 2385) of 1940.

the CPUSA leaders hurt their position. And when the FBI produced witnesses who had penetrated CPUSA meetings and added documentary evidence—somehow obtained from CPUSA files—the outcome was clear. Eleven were convicted. All appealed. Some went directly to jail; others jumped bail but eventually landed in prison.

Mastermind: The Many Faces of the 9/11 Architect, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, by Richard Minter. (New York: Sentinel, 2011), 278 pp., endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

How did a young, 5' 4" Kuwaiti graduate of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (NCA&T) end up in a Guantanamo Bay prison seeking martyrdom? Is he really a member of al Qaeda, as he claims, and if so, how did he join? Was he the so-called "mastermind" behind 9/11, and if so, why did he do it? What is his real name? In *Mastermind*, investigative journalist Richard Minter attempts answers to these questions. Working from official reports, unattributed interviews, and secondary sources, he begins piecing together a view of Khalid Shaikh Mohammed's (KSM) early life. From interviews with people who knew him at NCA&T, Minter describes KSM's often unhappy student days in America. He examines the formative influences of the Muslim Brotherhood and the role of KSM's extended family on the path to his calling: His sister-in-law was an MIT graduate charged with the attempted murder of a US soldier (5); one nephew was involved with Richard Reid and the shoe bomber plot; another nephew, Ramzi Yousef, helped carry out the first Twin Towers bombing; and one of KSM's brothers was a leader of a terrorist group in Pakistan.

Minter traces KSM's Islamic radicalism from his college days, where KSM claimed to have planned the murder of Meir Kahane, a rabbi and founder of the Jewish Defense League. This is followed by training in Afghanistan, experience

The Fear Within argues that the victims of the Smith Act prosecutions were just good Americans with different points of view about the political future. The government and the public overreacted to their radical views, which were permitted under the First Amendment of the Constitution. Martelle warns—and this is the main point of the book—that we risk doing the same thing today.

in Bosnia, and his debut terrorist act, planned by KSM but carried out by Yousef. It was after that event that he met Osama bin Laden and was encouraged to continue the good work. Opportunities were everywhere, and KSM considered killing the pope, President Clinton, and Benazir Bhutto. He also began thinking about the use of airplanes as bombs. Of these, he attempted only the Bhutto plot, and it failed. Minter then tells of the events that led to KSM's capture.

Minter traces the psychological, religious, and operational connections between various terrorist events. He answers some of the questions raised above and speculates on others. He also reviews different CIA interrogation techniques and examines al Qaeda's functioning. But has he got it right? Many key points in *Mastermind* are based on sources that can't be positively corroborated, including many of KSM's. At least one of those can be verified, however—there is a video of his beheading *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl. Minter is careful to distinguish between the verifiable and the unverifiable.

Mastermind conveys the motivations and determination that drive terrorists in general and KSM in particular. It is a discouraging story but well worth contemplating.

Operation Fortitude: The Story of the Spy Operation that Saved D-DAY, by Joshua Levine. (London: HarperCollins, 2011), 316 pp., bibliography, photos, index.

The codename for the deception plan for the Allied invasion of France on 6 June 1944 was Fortitude. Several lengthy, scholarly books have

been written about it.⁶ What, then, is left to say? Is *Operation Fortitude* more than just a good summary of those well-known events? The an-

swer is a qualified “yes.” The “more,” though it is not extensive, mostly touches on three areas.

The first concerns three previously unreported German agents in Britain. The account of the undetected agents disproves, Levine suggests, the MI5 claims that all Abwehr agents dispatched to England after the beginning of the war were identified and captured. However, these three had nothing to do with Fortitude and are included here only as part of the historical background.

The second area includes the addition of new details to a few well-known spy cases. These include material about MI5 officer Christopher Harmer derived from letters to which Levine was given access.

The third area involves correction of a previous account of deception—the case of GARBO, the Double-Cross agent to which the book’s subtitle refers. Here Levine offers new facts based on letters GARBO sent as part of the Fortitude deception.

The most interesting new material concerns two other contributors to the Allied deception,

British Commando Lt. George Lane (a Hungarian whose true name was Dyuri Lányi) and a German general, Hans Cramer, who had been released in a prisoner exchange before D-Day. Lane landed in France on a reconnaissance mission and was captured before the invasion. Eventually he was interrogated, over tea, Lane later wrote, by German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, who was in command of German troops in Western Europe. Cramer also met Rommel. Together, Lane and Cramer further convinced Rommel that the main invasion target was the Pas-de-Calais. Lane, though not part of the deception plan, did so cleverly in his conversation with Rommel. Cramer as part of the deception operation achieved the same result. Levine documents this effort in a narrative essay on sources. In the Cramer case, he corrects a version of the story previously reported by Anthony Cave Brown in his book *Bodyguard of Lies*. Brown’s version differs substantially and was not documented, while Levine relies on firsthand accounts obtained after the war.

Operation Fortitude is a well-written summary of the principal and most successful deception operation of WW II and is a useful addition to the historical literature on intelligence.

Red Conspirator: J. Peters and the American Communist Underground, by Thomas Sakmyster. (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2011), 251 pp., endnotes, bibliography, index.

J. Peters was a major figure during the heyday of communist agents in the United States. From 1932 to 1938 he was associated with underground operations of the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA). At various times he worked with the NKVD and the GRU and dealt with American agents like Whitaker Chambers, Alger Hiss, Hede Massing, Hal Ware, and Victor Perlo. Peters has not received much scholarly attention, mainly because he took the Fifth Amendment before Congress and because he left the United States in 1949, before the FBI could prove he was a spy.

Thomas Sakmyster, professor emeritus of history at the University of Cincinnati, has exam-

ined documents about Peters in US and Hungarian archives—including Peters’s own unpublished autobiography—and interviewed former US colleagues. The story he unearthed begins in Hungary, when WW I veteran Sándor Goldberg—Peters’s true name—became a communist. Postwar economic conditions offered little opportunity, and he emigrated to the United States in 1924, telling officials at Ellis Island that he was a doctor. Curiously, they didn’t believe him, the documents show, but he was allowed stay anyway. For the next eight years, Peters worked at a variety of jobs. Finding he had a talent for writing, he began editing a Hungarian language newspaper. Soon contacts developed with various communist workers’

⁶ See for example: Roger Hesketh, *FORTITUDE: The D-Day Deception Campaign* (London: St. Ermin’s Press, 1999); and Thaddeus Holt, *The Deceivers: Allied Military Deception in the Second World War* (New York: Scribner, 2004).

organizations and eventually the Comintern. In 1931 he went to Moscow and Berlin, where he received training in conspiratorial operations and became what Sakmyster calls an *org practi-cant*, an agent. On his return to America, Peters began espionage activities, although he kept a hand in CPUSA matters. (40)

Sakmyster deals at length with the years Peters spent operating “the Washington Set-up,” the name he gave his illegal apparatus. He describes the problems Peters had coordinating with the CPUSA, the NKVD, and the GRU, and his successful efforts setting up and servicing mail drops, providing false passports, placing and handling agents in the federal government, transmitting documents, and battling turf-sensitive contemporaries from Moscow. By 1937,

with Stalin’s purges in full swing, Peters’s operations began to fall apart when Chambers decided to defect. After that event, Peters changed his name to Alexander Stevens and went underground. He eluded the FBI until 1943, when he was identified during a search for communists. With no hard evidence of espionage, the Immigration and Naturalization Service pursued a charge of illegal immigration against Peters. Before he was deported in 1949, Peters left voluntarily for Hungary, where he died in December 1990. (180)

Red Conspirator fills a gap in the story of communist agents and activity in America. It is an important contribution to counterintelligence history.

The Wars of Afghanistan: Messianic Terrorism, Tribal Conflicts, and the Failures of Great Powers, by Peter Tomsen. (New York: PublicAffairs, 2011), 849 pp., endnotes, bibliography (online at publicaffairsbooks.com), maps, index.

Author and career Foreign Service officer Peter Tomsen served in Thailand, Vietnam, India, the Soviet Union, China, and in various senior State Department positions before President George H. W. Bush appointed him Ambassador and Special Envoy on Afghanistan in 1989. His task was to “coordinate United States policies and programs with the Afghan resistance.” (277) Part three of *The Wars of Afghanistan* tells the story of his ultimately unsuccessful efforts to accomplish his mission. Here, he focuses on the post-Soviet era and the American-Afghan relationship during this period as influenced by their devious mutual ally Pakistan. The first two parts of the book review the history of Afghanistan from the 19th century and the era of the “Great Game,” to the end of the Soviet occupation in 1992. Readers unfamiliar with this period will learn of the centuries-long tribal traditions that still dominate Afghanistan’s way of life. Tomsen also identifies the key players, their Islamic pedigrees, and the rationale behind their sudden and frequent shifts in loyalties.

The dominant themes of *The Wars of Afghanistan* explain Afghanistan’s geopolitical importance and why all attempts by Britain, the Soviet Union, the United States, and Pakistan to control its tribal society have failed. Tomsen identifies the political issues, internal bureaucratic battles, and turf wars that complicated attempts to achieve peace, while stressing the role of the various forms of Islam in shaping every decision.

In Tomsen’s view, his extensive efforts to work out a reasonable settlement to the Afghan wars after the Soviet withdrawal were complicated by two factors. The first was an ambivalent US policy, which CIA complicated by supporting—against official US policy—radical Islamic elements backed by Pakistan. Those elements, he argues, were attempting to establish an Afghan government by force and opposed moderate forces favored by the State Department. This view is not universally held, as former CIA officer Charles Cogan explains in his review of Tomsen’s book last year⁷.

⁷ Charles Cogan, *Foreign Policy*, 15 September 2011.

The second factor complicating Tomsen's efforts was the behavior of duplicitous Pakistan, the "ally from hell that created the Taliban." (531) Pakistan's continued support of the Taliban thwarted all attempts for a peaceful settlement on terms acceptable to the United States.

The Wars of Afghanistan ends with Tomsen's recommendations for preventing Afghanistan from returning to the era of shattered tribal

zones with no effective central government—the worst case scenario—when US troops leave. The focus here is on Pakistan, not Afghanistan, (692) and takes into account Pakistan's relationship with India and the Taliban. The key component, however, is that a lasting solution must rest with moderate Muslims that the West can support. Tomsen has provided a fine panoramic view of the problem, with all its attendant frustrations.

Memoir

(Five memoirs, four by retired CIA officers are reviewed in a separate article, beginning on page 27.)

Intelligence Abroad

FAREWELL: The Greatest Spy Story of the Twentieth Century, by Sergei Kostin and Eric Raynaud, translated by Catherine Cauvin-Higgins. (Las Vegas, NV: AmazonCrossing, 2011), 429 pp., photos, no index.

In February 1981, Vladimir Vetrov, a KGB officer assigned to the Scientific and Technical Directorate, offered his services to the French DST (Direction de la Surveillance du Territoire—equivalent to the FBI) rather than the SDECE (Service de Documentation Extérieure et de Contre-Espionnage—equivalent of the CIA), which would have made more sense. Vetrov knew what he was doing. He had served in Paris, where he knew Frenchmen linked to the DST. He knew, too, that if the DST sent the right handler, he would escape KGB notice since they were concerned only with officers in the SDECE. And that is what happened. The DST secured Prime Minister Mitterrand's approval and then, without informing the SDECE, assigned Vetrov the English codeword FAREWELL, hoping that in the event it became known, the KGB would look to the MI6 or the CIA for the source—and they did. During the next 12 months, Vetrov provided extensive details on all manner of Soviet scientific data. In February 1982, authorities in the USSR arrested Vetrov for murder, not espionage.

In 1985 he was executed for espionage, not murder, the authors explain why.

While elements of the case have been mentioned in the press since 1986, many questions remained.⁸ Authors Sergei Kostin and Eric Raynaud have delved deeply into Vetrov's life, examining records and interviewing participants—including his wife, mistress, and various intelligence officers. *FAREWELL* presents the results of that research.

Vetrov's family had no KGB connections. He grew up in Moscow, became a mechanical engineer, and went to work in a factory. He played sports well and met his wife-to-be at the Dynamo Sports Club. In 1959, he was recruited by the KGB directorate responsible for foreign intelligence collection during its post-Khrushchev "Secret Speech" expansion. He did well in early KGB training and found he had a gift for languages. His first foreign assignment was to France. He later served in Canada, where he ac-

⁸ See Thierry Wolton, *Le KGB en France* (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1986).

cepted a recruitment pitch, according to the authors. But if anything ever came of it, they were unable to learn what it was. Back in Moscow after the birth of a son, Vetrov had professional problems, began drinking too much, and acquired a mistress. In need of money, he contacted a Frenchman who traveled frequently to Moscow and let it be known he was interested in cooperating with French intelligence.

Kostin and Raynaud explain the unusual relationship of his recruitment and handling. The material he provided, they say, was passed to the CIA, which set up a special unit to handle it. The authors claim that the CIA, with National Security Council consent, arranged to have false data leaked to the KGB to lead its scientific efforts astray, but they cannot provide documentary evidence. At some point—the authors are not sure

just when or how—a mole passed clues to the KGB that material was finding its way to Washington. Vetrov was one of only a few who had access to that material. Before proof was found, Vetrov murdered a man in the aftermath of a lovers' quarrel. He was arrested, tried, and sent to the Gulag. While there, he wrote to his wife asking her to contact his French friends and ask for help. The KGB intercepted the note. He was interrogated and promised only a prison term if he confessed. He did, and he was executed.

FAREWELL is an incredible tale of espionage with many unexpected twists, turns, and unusual tradecraft elements. Whether it is “the greatest spy story of the century” is open to question. But it is a very interesting case and well worth reading.

Guerrilla Leader: T. E. Lawrence and the Arab Revolt, by James J. Schneider with a foreword by Thomas E. Ricks. (New York: Bantam Books, 2011), 328 pp., endnotes, index.

The 1962 motion picture *Lawrence of Arabia* starred 6'2" Peter O'Toole as T. E. Lawrence, a British Army intelligence officer who led an army of camel-riding Arabs to victory over Turkish troops during WW I. In *Guerrilla Leader*, Professor Emeritus James Schneider covers much of the same ground, but his account is more accurate.⁹ While the movie projects a heroic image of Lawrence's leadership as a given, Professor Schneider analyzes how the 5'5" Lawrence, a civilian archeologist with no military experience at the beginning of the war, did indeed become the successful leader of the Arab Revolt. He explains how Lawrence developed his relationship with Arab leaders by applying his language skills and his sensitivity to Arab culture and traditions, and how he came upon the idea of using guerrilla tactics rather than fighting a war of annihilation—a major departure for British army doctrine. Most important, however, Schneider focuses on Lawrence's leadership skills and especially on how he conceived and applied them.

Schneider analyzes how the stress of British efforts at political deception of the Arabs weighed on Lawrence. But more significant was the stress of battle and the demands of leadership. According to Schneider, it was the latter that eventually led to what he identifies as post-traumatic stress disorder, an affliction that followed Lawrence for the remainder of his life. A turning point, writes Schneider, occurred when his Arab troops discovered that Turkish soldiers had massacred civilians in the village of Tafas. He quotes Lawrence as commanding, “The best of you bring me the most Turkish dead,” and later his order to “take no prisoners.” (293-4) Lawrence, professor Schneider concludes, was never the same after that defining experience.

But there was another incident—which Schneider inexplicably does not mention—that contributed to Lawrence's psychological condition. He does allude to Lawrence's reconnaissance of the town of Deraa (183) but omits his capture by the Turks and the humiliation of a sexual assault by Turkish guards before he escaped. In his book *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, Lawrence

⁹ Schneider is professor emeritus of military theory at the School of Advanced Military Studies at the United State Army Command and General Staff College (USACGSC) in Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas.

discusses this event and the lasting impact it had on him. While some Lawrence biographers questioned whether it had in fact occurred, the most reliable narratives take it seriously, arguing that it accounts for much of Lawrence's eccentric behavior after the war¹⁰.

The only source notes in *Guerrilla Leader* refer to Lawrence's writings. Schneider suggests other sources were omitted to make the narrative read more easily, though he does not explain why eliminating reference numbers should have

this effect. In any case, the reader is left to wonder how he knew of many of the details in the book. In fact, the account of Lawrence's illegitimate origins, education, and intellectual pursuits tracks well with the available record. As to Schneider's psychological interpretation of them and their links to Lawrence's leadership qualities during the Arab Revolt, the reader must make a judgment. *Guerrilla Leader* is a thoughtful book that addresses the fundamental question of leadership in its many forms through the life of an extraordinary individual.

Michael Collins and the Anglo-Irish War: Britain's Counterinsurgency Failure, by J.B.E. Hittle. (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2011), 296 pp., endnotes, bibliography, appendices, index.

During the failed Easter Rising of 1916, a group of Irish rebels attempted to gain independence from England. Taking a different tack, on 21 January 1919, a group of Sinn Féin party members recently elected to the British Parliament declined the honor and instead issued the Irish Declaration of Independence. On the same day, two Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) officers were killed in an ambush. These incidents precipitated the undeclared Anglo-Irish War. *Michael Collins and the Anglo-Irish War* is a study of that war and the events that led to the creation of the Irish Free State, a Dominion of Great Britain, in December 1921.

Michael Collins, the chief of the IRA's Intelligence Department—just one of his many titles—is the central character battling the British in numerous works. Retired CIA operations officer-turned-academic J.B.E. Hittle readily acknowledges those histories and the controversies they ignited. His approach to the subject differs in that he looks at events from the perspective of an intelligence officer. Consequently, his interpretations differ in many cases from those of academic historians. For example, when Collins discovered that William Doran, a porter at the hotel where Collins met colleagues,

was a British informer, he ordered Doran executed. When Doran's wife, who believed her husband worked for Collins, applied to Sinn Féin for a pension, it was granted.

The family was allowed to believe the assassination was the work of the British. When Michael T. Foy, a historian at Queen's University, Belfast, described the incident, he concluded that Collins "did not have the heart to tell [Doran's wife] the truth and authorized financial assistance to the family¹¹." Hittle sees the act differently. It was, he argues, "simply good tradecraft" and preserved the unit's reputation in a battle "against a cunning, numerically superior, and extremely dangerous adversary." (36-7)

Michael Collins and the Anglo-Irish War begins with a review of the history that led to the war and follows Collins's ascent from a minor participant in the Easter Rising to a principal player—who had contacts with Churchill—in the Irish rebellion. Particular attention is given to the network of informers Collins organized, the insurgency techniques he developed and exploited so effectively, the role of propaganda, and his ruthless use of assassination to

¹⁰ For an account that questions whether the incident occurred, see James Barr, *Setting the Desert on Fire: T. E. Lawrence and Britain's Secret War in Arabia, 1916-1918* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2006), 195ff. For the most authoritative account that argues the incident did take place and discusses the impact on Lawrence, see John E. Mack, *A Prince of Our Disorder: The Life of T. E. Lawrence* (Boston: Little Brown, 1976), 229ff. Mack was a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical school.

¹¹ Michael T. Foy, *Michael Collins's Intelligence War: The Struggle Between the British and the IRA 1919-1921* (Phoenix Mill, UK: 2006), 181.

achieve his goals. The most famous example of the latter is Bloody Sunday, when his IRA men eliminated most of Britain's intelligence officers in Dublin.

British intelligence and its attempts to counter Collins's operations is a parallel theme of the book, and Hittle provides detailed critical analysis of those efforts. He concludes that the post-war bureaucratic battle for the counterterrorist mission in Britain created confusion, mixed

with egocentric incompetence, that accounted for much of the Irish success.

This book is not a primer on the IRA—of which the modern IRA is a political offshoot—and its many predecessors, affiliates, and successors. Readers with limited knowledge on these subjects may wish to read the concluding chapter first. It contains a fine summary of events that may ease understanding of earlier chapters. This fresh look at familiar history is a very worthwhile addition to the literature.

SMERSH: Stalin's Secret Weapon; Soviet Military Counterintelligence in WWII, by Vadim Birstein with a foreword by Nigel West. (London: Biteback Publishing, 2011), 512 pp., endnotes, photos, index.

Some words by their very sound convey an impression of malicious intent. For readers of fiction, Scrooge, the Grinch and SMERSH—the latter thanks to Ian Fleming's James Bond—are familiar examples. Now Russian-American historian, Vadim Birstein, provides a thoroughly documented nonfiction story of SMERSH with an unprecedented level of evil behavior that was unknown to Fleming. This is not the first book on SMERSH in English. Dr. Birstein reviews the other two and also discusses relevant Russian literature only recently made available.

The original proposal for a new Soviet counterintelligence organization named it SMERINSH—an acronym for the phrase “death to foreign spies.” In the version approved and signed by Stalin in March 1943 and sent to Viktor Abakumov, the organization's first and only chief, the word “foreign” had been eliminated and SMERSH—“death to spies,” foreign and domestic—was created. Birstein provides several chapters describing events that led to the creation of SMERSH; his final chapter records the reasons for its demise in 1946.

The bulk of the book, however, is devoted to the operations of SMERSH officers who were assigned, with no distinguishing badges on their uniforms, throughout the Red Army and Navy.

They reported all suspicious and “inappropriate” behavior to Abakumov, and he reported only to Stalin. It was SMERSH that sent Solzhenitsyn to the gulag for criticizing Stalin in a letter, and it was SMERSH that some accounts say executed the “spy” Raoul Wallenberg. One element of SMERSH worked against spies of the German army and often turned them into double agents. Another dealt with Nazi defectors, and the still unsolved case of the “Klatt Bureau,” a German espionage network that operated in the USSR, is told from the Soviet point of view. (153ff.) After the war, SMERSH interrogated POWs held in German camps and sent most to Soviet camps. Only one group of Soviet prisoners escaped the grasp of SMERSH. They found refuge in Liechtenstein, population 12,141 in 1945, where the government ignored SMERSH threats. With the help of Allen Dulles and OSS, the ex-POWs subsequently made their way to Argentina. (320-1) It was SMERSH, too, at Stalin's insistence, that represented the Soviet Union at the Nuremberg Trials. (374ff.)

Birstein relates these events in extensive detail based on 10 years of research in Russian, American, British, and Swedish archives. *SMERSH* is not easy reading, but it fills an important gap in the literature. Another volume, focusing on Viktor Abakumov, is in the works.

Spies and Commissars: Bolshevik Russia and the West, by Robert Service. (New York: MacMillan, 2011), 440 pp., endnotes, bibliography, photos, maps, index.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 surprised leaders throughout the world during WW I—even among the Bolsheviks. For the next four years, Bolshevik protagonists employed all forms of power to create a government and promote the revolution throughout the world. It is a story, as historian Robert Service acknowledges in his first sentence, that “has been told a thousand times...to the exclusion of the global situation,” a judgment readers of George Kennan and Richard Pipes may find hard to accept. The basic story covers the travels of Lenin and Trotsky from foreign lands to join the uprising in Russia, their overthrow of the provisional government, their ruthless consolidation of power, and the peace treaty with Germany. Then he covers the reaction of Western governments to prevent Russia from leaving the war, culminating in military intervention—strongly supported by Churchill—and the successful civil war that solidified the Lenin government.

But in one sense, Service is correct. More than earlier histories of the revolution, *Spies and Commissars* includes considerable anecdotal detail on the contributions and reactions of journalists, spies, politicians, intellectuals, diplomats and émigrés. For example, Russian émigré Maxim Litvinov was so excited after the news of Lenin’s success that he “tried to shave with his toothpaste and got into the bath without having turned on the water.” (13) More serious topics tell how some Western spies struggled at first to keep Russia in the war and, when they failed, to overthrow the Bolsheviks. British intelligence officer George Hill, fluent in Russian, did both. He worked with the Czarist opposition before the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty and helped Trotsky set up the Soviet Air Force after

it. In the meantime, he and a Canadian officer smuggled the Romanian crown jewels out of Russia, at one point holding a gun to a train engineer’s head. (221) More familiar to those tracking Soviet intelligence history are the efforts of the British ambassador Robert Bruce Lockhart, “Ace of Spies” Sidney Reilly, and the American agent Xenophon Kalamatiano to overthrow the Bolshevik government, and the successful efforts by the Cheka to prevent it. The espionage exploits of Paul Dukes and journalist Arthur Ransome, among others, are also discussed.

Service describes unsuccessful Bolshevik efforts to spread the revolution to the entire world, starting in Hungary and Germany. At the same time, with astonishing irony, Trotsky attempted to establish diplomatic relations with the very countries the Bolsheviks intended to overthrow. Then there is the mixed reaction from America. Despite military intervention, which Russians hold against the United States to this day, Herbert Hoover, director of the American Relief Administration, negotiated food relief for starving Russians, which the Russians seldom acknowledge. On an individual level, Service tells of the pro-Bolshevik actions of John Reed—whom he correctly describes as being buried beneath, not in, the Kremlin wall—and others like Emma Goldman, who found communism did not live up to its promises.

Spies and Commissars is, with a few exceptions, based on secondary sources. Besides being entertaining, it also makes clear, with abundant evidence, that military force, spies, and diplomacy will not deter a government that does not count lost lives as a determining factor in its policies.



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