

1989

Foreign Intelligence Organizations

Walter Clarke

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Clarke, Walter (1989) "Foreign Intelligence Organizations," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 42 : No. 3 , Article 29.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol42/iss3/29>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

in other places, such as the United States. Among these influences are regional politics (where family or tribal loyalties may sometimes conflict with loyalty to the state), shifting popular ideas of security "threats," rapidly and greatly changing economic conditions (here affected by oil), and the participation of foreigners in the process. Eickelman points out the value of understanding how perceptions of political activities in different cultures shape the knowledge their intelligence communities generate (what is reported and how it is reported), and how this can affect the policies formed as a result of that knowledge. The small scale of the intelligence apparatus in Oman allows a full exploration and understanding of how various pressures and assumptions helped shape the reporting, analysis, and contributions to policy.

The final piece, by Adda Bozeman of Sarah Lawrence College in New York, is entitled "Political Intelligence in Non-Western Societies: Suggestions for Comparative Research." Bozeman begins with an explanation of the need to explore the history, culture, theology, and other aspects of the peoples one wishes to understand. The emphasis is that the "other" must be understood on its own terms, rather than from a framework of one's own values. She presents several case studies, mostly of Europeans in Africa and Asia, to illustrate successes and failures which hinged on this concept. She also offers observa-

tions on American approaches to foreign societies and shows why we have not done as well in winning friends as we might have due to our indisposition to look at circumstances from the viewpoint of the "other."

National interests increasingly revolve around places and peoples different from America and Americans in varying, sometimes drastic, degrees. Learning how the decisions and actions of other nations are influenced may be considered the very essence of foreign intelligence.

D. A. DUVAL
Commander, U.S. Navy
Naval War College

Richelson, Jeffrey. *Foreign Intelligence Organizations*. Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger, 1988. 330pp. \$89.95

As someone who has worked most of his professional life on the periphery of the intelligence community, I feel some reluctance to reveal one of its greatest and best-kept secrets: no matter what the conclusions are (or how they are packaged), the intelligence process itself is usually boring. The intelligence community is made up of thousands of bright, dedicated, and, frequently, very interesting and serious people who may spend their working hours poring over obscure newspapers or satellite photos; the field operative, trying to convert the distracted midnight comments of a source into something coherent and meaningful for the home office, feels

far removed from the wonders of the Tom Clancy hero or the James Bond operative whose only concern about cover is who or what he finds under it.

The latest intelligence survey by Professor Jeffrey Richelson, *Foreign Intelligence Organizations*, demonstrates at length the same painstaking review of available sources which is characteristic of the intelligence community analyst. The book appears to review just about everything available in the public domain (with an occasional comment from the author's own sources) on the intelligence organizations of the United Kingdom, Canada, Italy, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Israel, Japan and China. Each chapter follows a similar formula for each country: a section on the history of intelligence collection, details on the structure of the intelligence community, and a concluding section on recent intelligence-related incidents.

Although no new avenues are opened, the concluding items are the most interesting: the failure of British intelligence to anticipate the Argentine invasion of the Falklands; the response of Canadian military intelligence to Soviet under-ice missile firing capabilities in the Arctic; the Italian P-2 affair, and the alleged role of rogue intelligence units; a brief commentary on West German airborne collection capabilities over the Baltic; the French government's misguided attempt to divert protesters from its Pacific nuclear testing range by sinking the

Rainbow Warrior in Auckland harbor; various Israeli intelligence successes and failures, including the infamous Pollard spy case; the Japanese maritime collecting organization whose extensive structure was revealed by the U.S. Government when it decided to exploit public indignation over the Soviet downing of *KAL 007*; and lastly, the almost incredible story of the long-term Chinese Communist "mole" in the CIA, Larry Wu-Tai Chin.

Diplomats and military commanders look at intelligence from widely divergent perspectives. The military commander, always Clausewitzian when combat looms, no doubt expects intelligence to provide clear conclusions that can help in battlefield tactics; modern technology ensures that what he gets is a cloud of information that adds to the fog of war. In contrast, the diplomat delights in the usual lack of clarity and options which intelligence provides; diplomatic careers are made in the ability to exploit these unclear zones. This tension between civilian and military leaders on the goals of intelligence is implicit in all policy determinations in the intelligence field. Unfortunately, these fundamental elements of the intelligence culture are not addressed in the various case studies in the Richelson book.

Professor Richelson has placed at least one reference on every paragraph in the book, for a total of 889 footnotes, distributed at the end of each chapter. It may seem strange to complain about sourcing in the face

of such a flood of references; however, in most case studies in the book, the author shows over-dependence on single sources, sometimes quoting the same book more than a dozen consecutive times. Of course, governments, with rare exception, publish little about their intelligence operations. For that reason, Professor Richelson must remain a prisoner to the books that refer to his subject and to newspaper articles on more recent matters. There is no separate bibliography, but such is clearly unnecessary.

Despite its shortcomings, Richelson has written one of the most comprehensive books available on the various intelligence services.

One hopes that he eventually addresses such emerging Third World powers as Brazil, India, South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan. Each one has been in the press for one intelligence problem or another.

Military officers who deal with any of the countries covered will find the book of considerable value, but intelligence professionals will find it of only marginal utility. The intelligence buff will find it interesting, but will probably be looking for the latest Clancy volume before too long.

WALTER CLARKE
Naval War College

Recent Books

Barnett, Correlli. *The Pride and the Fall: The Dream and the Illusion of Britain as a Great Power*. New York: The Free Press, 1987. 359pp. \$22.95

In 1986, Correlli Barnett published this book in Britain under the title *The Audit of War*. In this fully documented study, he explains Britain's fall from status as a great power since the Second World War. He focuses on the weakness of British industrial resources and financial capabilities, which was evident during the war. Barnett attacks Britain's failure to reconstruct her industrial base, reconstitute and retrain her work force, and reinvest her capital. The author's criticism of Britain is reminiscent of many of the points made by those who suggest that America is now a declining power.

Bowker, Captain Francis E. *Atlantic Four Master: The Story of the Schooner Herbert L. Rawding, 1919-1947*. Mystic, Conn.: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1986. 96pp. \$22 (hardcover) \$12 (paper)

American deep water commercial sail lasted until the Second World War. The former master of Mystic Seaport's two-masted schooner *Brilliant*, who was bosun aboard the *Herbert L. Rawding* in 1940-42, tells the story of the