



Topic  
History

Subtopic  
Modern History

# The Agency

## A History of the CIA

Course Guidebook

Professor Hugh Wilford  
California State University, Long Beach



Published by

# THE GREAT COURSES

## Corporate Headquarters

4840 Westfields Boulevard | Suite 500 | Chantilly, Virginia | 20151-2299

[PHONE] 1.800.832.2412 | [FAX] 703.378.3819 | [WEB] [www.thegreatcourses.com](http://www.thegreatcourses.com)

**Copyright © The Teaching Company, 2019**

Printed in the United States of America

This book is in copyright. All rights reserved. Without limiting the rights under copyright reserved above, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form, or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise), without the prior written permission of The Teaching Company.



# **HUGH WILFORD, PHD**

**Professor of History**

**California State University, Long Beach**

**H**ugh Wilford is a Professor of History at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB). He was born in the United Kingdom and graduated with a BA with honors in Modern History from the University of Bristol. Professor Wilford earned his PhD in American Studies from the University of Exeter. He began his career teaching US history in England at Middlesex University in London and the University of Sheffield. While still based in the UK, he received scholarships from the Fulbright Commission and the British government to teach and research in the United States, first at CSULB, then at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he remains a Faculty Affiliate.

At CSULB, Professor Wilford has received a President's Award for Outstanding Faculty Achievement in teaching and research and the Distinguished Faculty Scholarly & Creative Achievement Award. He has also received awards from several other US institutions, including the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Princeton University Library, and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.

Professor Wilford has published extensively in the field of US history on such topics as the CIA, US–Middle East relations, Americanization and anti-Americanism in Europe, the American left, and US intellectuals. He is the author of many scholarly articles and papers as well as several books, including *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America*; *The CIA, the British Left and the Cold War: Calling the Tune?*; and *The New York Intellectuals: From Vanguard to Institution*. Professor Wilford's book *America's Great Game: The CIA's Secret Arabists and the Shaping of the Modern Middle East* won a gold medal in The Washington Institute for Near East Policy's Book Prize competition. He is the coeditor, with Helen Laville, of *The US Government, Citizen Groups and the Cold War: The State-Private Network*. Professor Wilford's work has been featured in numerous TV, radio, and newspaper interviews. ■



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

Professor Biography .....	i
Table of Contents .....	iii
Course Scope .....	1

## LECTURE GUIDES

1 • Secrecy, Democracy, and the Birth of the CIA .....	3
2 • George Kennan and the Rise of Covert Ops .....	12
3 • The CIA, China, and the Korean War .....	20
4 • The Iran Coup of August 1953 .....	28
5 • Regime Change in Guatemala .....	37
6 • Operation Rollback in Eastern Europe .....	48
7 • U-2 Spy Missions and Battleground Berlin .....	56
8 • The CIA in Syria, Indonesia, and the Congo .....	65
9 • Under Orders: The Agency Targets Castro .....	76
10 • Missile Crisis in Cuba and at Langley .....	85
11 • Unquiet American: Edward Lansdale in Vietnam .....	95
12 • CIA Fronts and the <i>Ramparts</i> Exposé .....	105

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

13 • Spies in Hollywood: Romance and Thriller	114
14 • Nixon, Kissinger, and the Coup in Chile	123
15 • Watergate, Nixon, and the Family Jewels	132
16 • James Angleton and the Great CIA Molehunt	141
17 • Colby, Church, and the CIA Crisis of 1975	149
18 • The CIA, Carter, and the Hostage Crisis in Iran	159
19 • Reagan, Casey, and the Iran-Contra Scandal	169
20 • Afghanistan, the Soviets, and the CIA	179
21 • Intelligence Failure: The Road to 9/11	188
22 • CIA Advance in Afghanistan, Retreat in Iraq	198
23 • CIA Renditions, Interrogations, and Drones	208
24 • The CIA Balance Sheet: Wins and Losses	217
Quiz	226

## SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

Timeline of Notable Events (1941–2011)	230
Bibliography	236
Image Credits	244
Quiz Answers	247

# THE AGENCY

## A HISTORY OF THE CIA

### COURSE SCOPE

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is America's premier intelligence organization, charged with keeping constant watch in an increasingly dangerous and unstable world. Some critics have accused it of not doing enough to protect US national security. In the view of others, it has done too much, intervening excessively overseas and threatening civil liberties at home. Are these criticisms of the CIA justified? The aim of this course is to give you the information you need to decide for yourself.

The coverage begins with a brief survey of the history of American intelligence prior to the CIA's creation in 1947, exploring how ever since the nation's founding, Americans have swung between a deep suspicion of spying and an acceptance of the need for it in times of emergency. From there, the course traces the development of the young CIA in the early years of the Cold War as it grew from a small intelligence unit to a key instrument of US foreign policy, engaging in covert action all over the world. Individual lectures tackle major operations such as the coups that took place in Iran and Guatemala during the early 1950s. Others examine the CIA's efforts to gather secret intelligence about the communist bloc, including during the global crisis that erupted when the Soviet Union sited nuclear missiles in Cuba in 1962.

Eventually, after a series of press revelations about dubious operations overseas and illegal spying at home, the pendulum of public opinion swung against the CIA. During the 1970s, Congress imposed a set of controls on the CIA intended to make it more accountable. However, as later lectures make clear, these measures proved only partly successful. The CIA reverted to its earlier activist mode in the 1980s, with the same mixed results as earlier: success in Afghanistan, scandal in Iran and Nicaragua.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

The final section of the course focuses on the years after the end of the Cold War, when a new threat arose in place of communism: Islamist terrorism. The CIA failed to avert the attacks of September 2001, but has since been in the frontlines of the War on Terror, capturing or killing suspected terrorists. Some Americans have celebrated the CIA's victories in this conflict, such as the successful manhunt for Osama bin Laden. Others have protested what they perceive as a new round of intelligence abuses, especially the CIA's torture of terrorist detainees.

As well as learning about the CIA's history from its founding to the present day, you will encounter a range of fascinating personalities. Among these are directors of the CIA such as Allen Dulles, the spy romantic who presided over the CIA's during the 1950s; the amiable but lightweight George Tenet, undone by a debacle in the War on Terror; and the CIA's first woman director, Gina Haspel, haunted by her past association with the CIA's torture program.

You will also be introduced to the directors' most important lieutenants, including the covert-operations chief Frank Wisner, the adventurous aristocrat Kim Roosevelt, the legendary Edward Lansdale, and the counterintelligence guru James Angleton.

Finally, you will meet the CIA's greatest foreign foes. Such figures include the Iranian prime minister overthrown by Kim Roosevelt, Mohammed Mosaddeq; Fidel Castro, the Cuban who survived repeated Agency attempts to eliminate him; and the terrorist Osama bin Laden.

Between them, these various individuals personified deep tensions in the CIA's history that furnish the themes of this course: the fundamental contradiction between the CIA's dual intelligence and covert-action missions, successive presidents' desire for secret intelligence and covert operations versus the public's preference for openness and transparency, and the ongoing challenge of serving as the secret intelligence service of the world's largest democracy. ■

## LECTURE 1

# SECRECY, DEMOCRACY, AND THE BIRTH OF THE CIA

---

This lecture concentrates on the origins of the CIA. In particular, it tries to answer the question: Why did the United States feel it necessary to create a secret foreign intelligence service? After all, it is not a country that had been particularly fond of government secrecy.

In tackling this question, the lecture covers three main periods of US government intelligence before the birth of the CIA in 1947:

1. The era of the American Revolution to the late 1930s.
2. The years of World War II and the wartime Office of Strategic Services, or OSS, the CIA's most obvious predecessor.
3. The period immediately after the war, from 1945 to 1947.



### BACKGROUND ON THE CIA

The tension between secrecy and American democracy is not unique to the CIA. It is as old as the United States itself. The first point to make about the creation of the CIA is that it happened relatively late. The spy services of other major powers date back to the early 1900s. Examples include Great Britain's MI6 and the Soviet Cheka, a predecessor to the KGB.

There are several good reasons for this. Two vast oceans naturally defended the United States, so it did not need intelligence about possible threats to its security in the same way that the Europeans did. By and large, America lacked foreign enemies or overseas possessions that it had to defend. Finally, its people didn't like the idea of secret government power.

Still, despite Americans' dislike of spies and spying, there were times of national emergency when the country did resort to secret intelligence. Usually, this was when the nation was at war, when its leaders felt an urgent need to find out what the enemy was thinking—and planning—for military purposes.

This might involve sending spies into the enemy camp to eavesdrop on conversations, or more sophisticated means, like the interception of military signals traffic. Whatever the technology, this was espionage: gathering information by secret—and, as far as the enemy was concerned—illegal means.

But secret intelligence work might also go beyond espionage to include covert action; that is, clandestine operations designed to hurt enemies. This could involve sabotaging their supplies, or deceiving them about troop movements, or demoralizing them by spreading false or doctored information. Theoretically, separate units could carry out espionage and covert operations. In practice, they have tended to be housed in the same organization.

## THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION TO THE LATE 1930S

Despite Americans' traditionally anti-spy perspective, they have always used espionage and covert action in moments of crisis, starting with the founding of the nation. Early in the American Revolution, George Washington set up a committee to communicate secretly with sympathizers abroad. He also regularly sent spies into British-occupied territory in the colonies.



### Nathan Hale

One of the first martyrs of the American cause was a spy. The British caught young Nathan Hale on a secret mission on Long Island and hung him on a street corner in Manhattan. Hale's last words became a famous early statement of American patriotism: "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

The Americans' eventual victory over the British was due, in part, to a classic deception operation. Fake American dispatches fell into the hands of British spies, and British general Charles Cornwallis was trapped at Yorktown.

Still, for all the importance of espionage and covert action during the American Revolution, citizens of the young republic never really took spying to heart. The pattern of intelligence growing in importance during time of war and then fading again after the return of peace repeated itself throughout American history.

During the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln hired the private detective Allan Pinkerton to provide security for the Union side and to gather information on the Confederacy. After the war, he earned headlines by going after the famous outlaws Frank and Jesse James. However, this adventure backfired when Pinkerton agents wounded the bandits' mother and killed their young half-brother. This incident—combined with the Pinkerton agency's involvement in the bloody labor battles of the late 1800s—contributed to Americans' dim view of the spy profession even after the Union victory.

The World War I era did see the US government enter further into the intelligence business than it ever had before. The State Department created an elite, central intelligence unit called U-1. A colorful character named Herbert Yardley ran a code-breaking operation known as the Black Chamber. And in 1924, a young detective by the name of J. Edgar Hoover became director of the Bureau of Investigation, later the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The government appeared to be gradually taking over the business of national security from private agencies like the Pinkertons.



J. Edgar Hoover

## 1 • Secrecy, Democracy, and the Birth of the CIA

The moment did not last, however. As Americans retreated into isolationism after World War I, the anti-spy tradition came roaring back. The government closed down U-1 and the Black Chamber.

This was the background to the approach of World War II, and one of the greatest intelligence shocks in American history: Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. Most historians agree that two factors were crucial to the surprise. One was a failure by politicians to imagine that the Japanese were capable of such an attack. The other was a lack of specific intelligence pointing toward the precise timing and place of the raid.

Whatever its exact causes, Pearl Harbor would have huge consequences for the subsequent development of US intelligence. First, it created a strong argument for those advocating a permanent intelligence agency. Second, Pearl Harbor brought the United States into World War II. In doing so, it dealt a huge blow to the isolationist, anti-spy habits of mind that had previously slowed the growth of American intelligence.

### THE OSS

The second phase of US intelligence history involves the Office of Strategic Services, or OSS. If any single individual could be called the father of the CIA, it is the soldier and diplomat William "Wild Bill" Donovan. In 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt dispatched Donovan to London to assess Britain's chances of surviving a Nazi invasion. During his visit, Donovan had extraordinary access to British intelligence. He began to formulate a plan for an American secret service, modeled largely on MI6.



William Donovan

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

When Donovan returned to the United States with this plan, he encountered opposition from J. Edgar Hoover, who saw it as a threat to the FBI. The State Department and military intelligence units—such as the Office of Naval Intelligence, and the Army’s G-2—also opposed the idea. It did not matter. The president shared Donovan’s regard for the British and wanted to prepare the country for the war that was surely coming.

In the summer of 1941, Roosevelt appointed Donovan the coordinator of information, with historically unprecedented powers over the existing civilian and military agencies. After Pearl Harbor, the function was renamed the Office of Strategic Services, or OSS. The United States had its first central intelligence agency.



Franklin D. Roosevelt

Though it had some organizational chaos and ill-formed ideas, the OSS had a fine overall war record. Its special operations branch ran guerilla campaigns in occupied territory that inspired local resistance movements and distracted the enemy.

The OSS was also important historically as the forerunner of the CIA. First, many people who served in the OSS went on to serve in the CIA, including no fewer than four directors of Central Intelligence.

Second, the OSS had a distinctly Ivy League, Anglophile—even aristocratic—air to it. This social identity carried over into the CIA, at least during the agency’s early years. This would give the new intelligence organization a strong sense of social cohesion and esprit de corps. But it would also earn the mistrust of those who were suspicious of elites and foreign influences. It did not help that the OSS and CIA were the creations of Democratic presidents. Many conservatives saw them as outgrowths of liberal big government, endangering American freedoms.



## 1 • Secrecy, Democracy, and the Birth of the CIA

Finally, the OSS prefigured the CIA in that it housed intelligence work and covert action under one roof. This was not necessarily a problem so long as the two missions were given equal weight. However, Donovan's natural inclination was toward covert action rather than intelligence work. This preference would be inherited by the CIA, with occasionally unfortunate consequences.

### **AFTER THE WAR: 1945–1947**

After World War II ended in 1945, the familiar pattern of the US government pulling back from intelligence work during peacetime appeared again. Bill Donovan tried to fight the tide. He lobbied the White House with a plan for a permanent civilian intelligence agency, but opponents in Congress and the media attacked the proposal.

It is possible that Roosevelt might have supported Donovan, but the president died in April 1945, and his successor Harry Truman turned out to share the concerns of Donovan's critics. In September 1945, the president ordered the breakup of the OSS.



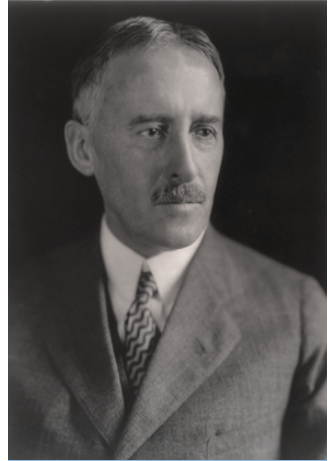
Harry Truman

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

However, Truman's mind changed. The postwar world was a confusing, threatening place, especially for a president with little experience in foreign affairs. Additionally, Truman didn't much care for the lengthy briefings he was getting from career foreign service officers in the State Department.

In January 1946, Truman established a new body, the Central Intelligence Group, to provide him with daily foreign intelligence digests. To run this body, Truman turned to a trusted friend, Rear Admiral Sidney Souers. The Central Intelligence Group still had no intelligence-gathering capability of its own, and no powers of covert action.

Truman's timing proved just right because the international environment began to deteriorate again in 1946. This leads to the main reason why the CIA was created: the start of the Cold War.



Sidney Souers

The two postwar superpowers—the United States and Soviet Union—failed to reach an agreement on how to deal with various countries in Eastern Europe after the War. The Soviets wanted them firmly within Moscow's sphere of influence, to act as a buffer zone against possible future foreign aggressors. The Americans wanted them independent, part of a new international order that implicitly favored US interests.

From this initial disagreement, superpower tensions escalated at alarming speed. Each move by one side seemed to increase the other's feelings of insecurity. Gradually, a new pattern of conflict emerged, in which the two nations used any means short of direct military conflict to check the other.

## 1 • Secrecy, Democracy, and the Birth of the CIA

Superpower tensions came to a head in 1947. In March of that year, President Truman went before Congress to announce what became known as the Truman Doctrine. This was a new foreign policy committing the United States to defending smaller nations threatened by Soviet takeover. (Truman did not explicitly mention the Soviet Union, but it is clear that is what he meant.)

That June, Secretary of State George Marshall proposed US assistance to rebuild the war-shattered economies of Western Europe. The Marshall Plan was another escalation of the Cold War. Then, in July, Truman signed the National Security Act, creating the Central Intelligence Agency and much of the modern US national security apparatus.

Unlike the earlier Central Intelligence Group, the CIA had its own, independent powers of intelligence gathering. The CIA also had the ability to perform undefined “other functions and duties related to intelligence.” These words would soon be interpreted to mean covert operations. Decades after the other great powers, the United States had its own permanent intelligence service.

---

### Suggested Reading

Andrew, *For the President's Eyes Only*.

Jeffreys-Jones, *Cloak and Dollar*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 Why was the United States slower than other great powers to develop a peacetime intelligence agency?
- 2 Why did it eventually acquire one in 1947?

## LECTURE 2

# GEORGE KENNAN AND THE RISE OF COVERT OPS

---

This lecture introduces how the CIA went from being strictly an intelligence agency to housing the United States' premier covert-action unit in the first two years of its existence. This means introducing the personalities most responsible for shaping the agency's mission at this crucial early phase of its existence. It will also entail discussing other international crises of the late 1940s. These supported a belief in Washington that the United States needed to engage in covert action, even during peacetime.

### GEORGE F. KENNAN

A key figure in the conversion of the CIA into a covert-operations shop was George F. Kennan, a State Department expert on Russia. In May 1947, he acquired power when he became chief of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff, created at the request of Secretary of State George C. Marshall. This was a new, top-level government unit responsible for devising US Cold War strategy.

In his new position, Kennan urged the US government to adopt a series of aggressive measures against the Soviet Union. After all, the Soviets themselves were already waging a secret assault in Western Europe, he said.

Europeans were still reeling from the effects of World War II. In 1947, they suffered the worst winter for decades.

Food riots were breaking out in French cities. Looters terrorized the streets of Rome. Moscow was taking advantage of the suffering to foment protests and strikes, hoping that local communist parties would seize power—just as they had in Eastern Europe. The Soviets were also propagandizing against the United States, portraying American efforts to help Europeans—in particular the Marshall Plan—as dollar imperialism.



**George F. Kennan was a deeply emotional man. He had a deep affection for the Russian people but despised Soviet communism.**



In October 1947, the Soviet leader Joseph Stalin created a Russian-led political body of Eastern Bloc communist parties known as the Cominform party in order to coordinate these propaganda attacks.

Fortunately for Kennan, there were others who shared an enthusiasm for political warfare and the desire to take on the Soviets. Among them was Donovan's former deputy in Europe, Allen W. Dulles. He had worked with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and was now head of the Council on Foreign Relations.



Allen Dulles

### NEW POWERS

Kennan's efforts paid off in December 1947. Harry Truman signed National Security Council directive 4/A, which authorized the CIA to carry out "covert psychological operations" to counteract Soviet propaganda.

The CIA soon put its newfound powers to the test. In the spring of 1948, Italy faced a crucial general election. The communists were bidding for a majority in the country's first republican parliament.

To counteract the communists, the CIA arranged for the printing of anti-communist posters. It bought up scarce newsprint for the use of pro-Western newspapers. The agency did not yet have a budget of its own for covert operations, so the money came from an obscure US government currency exchange fund. These funds found their way to Italy by various routes, including apparent gifts from wealthy Italian Americans and US labor officials.

## 2 • George Kennan and the Rise of Covert Ops

James Angleton, a young American intelligence officer who'd had wartime experience in Italy, led the operation on the ground. And the center-right Christian Democrats beat the Italian communists handily. Washington celebrated, and CIA boosters claimed credit, sowing the seeds of a notion that covert interventions could be a magic bullet in the Cold War. Historians are unclear whether the CIA action really did swing the election.

### THE OFFICE OF POLICY COORDINATION

In February 1948, communists took over in Prague. Czechoslovakia fell behind the Iron Curtain. In Germany's occupied and divided city of Berlin, the Soviets began to block the access of their western Allies—the United States, Britain, and France—to the sectors under Moscow's control.



Early in May 1948, Kennan's policy planning staff presented a plan for "the inauguration of organized political warfare." It envisioned the creation of a new "covert political warfare operations directorate within the government." In other words, Kennan was proposing to take covert operations away from the CIA.

The agency, Kennan explained, was failing to carry out its covert-action mission and was leaving the field to freewheeling private operators. What was needed, Kennan went on, was a more determined approach and, at the same time, greater government control.

Kennan got his way. In June 1948, National Security Council directive 10/2 created a new unit to carry out covert operations. This was the Office of Policy Coordination, as it soon became known—a deliberately bland name designed to conceal the organization's extraordinary range of secret powers.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

The Office of Policy Coordination—or OPC—was a strange beast. Per Kennan's desire for control, it answered to the secretaries of state and defense rather than the director of Central Intelligence. However, to save the State Department and Defense Department from the potential taint of dirty tricks, the OPC was housed administratively within the CIA.

Covert operations were now the responsibility of a unit that hovered somewhere in-between the State Department and CIA. This arrangement would last until 1952, when the OPC was folded into the CIA.

### FRANK G. WISNER

The obvious pick to head the OPC was Dulles, but when Kennan offered him the job, Dulles turned it down. Like most Americans at the time, he assumed that Harry Truman was going to lose the presidential election of 1948. He fully expected that the resulting Republican administration would choose him as the new director of Central Intelligence. However, Truman won, and Dulles ended up having to wait until 1953, when a Republican—in the person of Ike Eisenhower—did win the White House.

Kennan turned to another veteran of the OSS: Frank G. Wisner. As assistant director for policy coordination, Wisner quickly got to work recruiting staff members who shared his love of covert action and hatred of communism. Many were—like him—upper class and former operatives of the now-defunct OSS.

### THE OPC IN ACTION

The Office of Policy Coordination opened for business in September 1948. At this stage, it had an improvised feel. However, it soon became clear that the new unit had bureaucratic clout. Field officers fanned out across the world, usually under the cover of a diplomatic posting.

## 2 • George Kennan and the Rise of Covert Ops

Genuine diplomats in the US foreign service now had to get used to spies appearing in their midst, often with mysterious access to foreign officials and better pay. The OPC had money because it was granted secret access to funds associated with the Marshall Plan, the post–World War II US program for reconstructing the economies of Western Europe.

The OPC was able to spend these funds on covert operations—or so-called projects—without having to give any account to Congress. The following year, in June 1949, Congress enshrined the principle in law through legislation known as the Central Intelligence Agency Act. It exempted the agency from having to disclose any of its spending. In effect, Congress had handed Frank Wisner a blank check.

The OPC stepped up its covert funding of politicians and groups deemed friendly to the US cause. These included the European Movement—a coalition of European leaders who were advocating for continental federation. This was an initiative that would eventually become the European Union.

In the late 1940s, Washington was keen on European unity: trade, diplomacy, and security. All would benefit, the Americans felt, if they could deal with a politically united Europe. Consequently, US officials sought to support the European Movement, but they wanted to be discreet because they did not want to embarrass their allies politically.

The solution was along the lines of one that George Kennan himself proposed: the creation of an apparently private group of US citizens who would accept funding and guidance from the government and act as a secret channel of financial support to the European Movement.

The American Committee on United Europe came into existence in early 1949 and was soon channelling OPC subsidies to the European Movement of nearly \$1 million a year. The intelligence connections of the American Committee on United Europe were not even very well disguised. The chairman was none other than William Donovan and the vice chair was Dulles.

### LIBERATION EFFORTS

Strengthening Western Europe, and containing the spread of communism, was clearly a priority for Frank Wisner's OPC. Arguably even more important was the other half of George Kennan's grand strategy: liberation.

In 1949, the OPC helped to establish another public organization, the National Committee for a Free Europe. Its purpose was to relieve—and organize—the many thousands of Eastern Europeans who'd fled the communist bloc to find freedom in the west.

The Cold War work of the National Committee for a Free Europe was limited to psychological warfare (or propaganda). But Kennan's vision of liberation also involved even more direct action. That led to the OPC's effort to infiltrate Eastern Bloc émigrés behind the Iron Curtain, in hopes that they might inspire resistance movements against the communists, including the October 1949 operation against Albania's Enver Hoxha, a communist leader.

### ENVER HOXHA

On a moonless night in October 1949, a fishing schooner named *Stormie Seas* approached the Albanian coast. Submachine guns, radio transmitters, and codebooks were concealed in dummy fuel compartments. Crouched in the hold were nine men waiting for a signal to lower themselves onto a smaller boat that would take them ashore.

*Stormie Seas* was part of a joint Anglo-American plot to oust Hoxha. British officers from the Secret Intelligence Service—MI6—had started planning the operation in the fall of 1948. Their aim was to infiltrate Albanian émigrés who were loyal to the deposed King Zog back into their homeland. These émigrés would organize a resistance movement to overthrow the communist Hoxha.

However, the British had discovered that they lacked the resources to pull off the operation on their own. In what would become a recurring pattern, they turned to the Americans for support.

## 2 • George Kennan and the Rise of Covert Ops

The CIA—only recently formed—came up with the funding for the operation. It also arranged for the monarchists who were supporting King Zog to receive paramilitary training at a secret facility in Heidelberg, Germany. Meanwhile, MI6 set up operational headquarters on nearby Malta.

However, after the émigrés landed, it soon became apparent that the communist authorities had expected their arrival. It is not clear who gave the plot away: It could have been other Albanian émigrés or perhaps the British double agent Kim Philby, who had presided over MI6-CIA planning meetings.

Whatever the case, the result was disaster. Three of the men were killed within an hour of landing, and a fourth disappeared, never to be found again. The other five managed to flee south to Greece, where they reported that Albania clearly was not ready for liberation. Perhaps covert operations were not a magic bullet after all.

---

### Suggested Reading

Corke, *U.S. Covert Operations and Cold War Strategy*.

Gaddis, *George F. Kennan*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 Why did George Kennan believe that the US government needed to practice political warfare in peacetime?
- 2 Why did the CIA initially resist housing covert operations as well as intelligence, but then end up responsible for them anyway?

## LECTURE 3

# THE CIA, CHINA, AND THE KOREAN WAR

---

The term of CIA director Walter Bedell Smith coincided almost precisely with the three-year duration of the Korean War (1950–1953). During Smith's spell as CIA director, he carried out reforms that would influence the agency's structure and mission for the next 50 years. But he is also significant because of what he did not accomplish. In particular, he failed to achieve one of his fundamental aims: reining in the CIA's growing emphasis on covert operations and restoring its original focus on intelligence-gathering and analysis.

## THE KOREAN WAR

The Korean War—sandwiched between World War II and Vietnam—has the reputation of being a forgotten conflict. At the time, however, it seemed that it might become a third World War. In Washington, Korea inspired a rethink of Cold War strategy.

This was summed up in a 1950 planning document, NSC-68, which basically shifted US policy away from the doctrine of containment—as espoused by the career foreign service officer George F. Kennan—toward a more aggressive, militarized approach. Korea also caused a major shakeup at the CIA, with the agency getting its first really effective director.

The outbreak of war in Korea—and the subsequent Chinese invasion—had taken Washington by surprise. Even before it, 1949 had been a year of shocks. Not only did China turn communist, but the Soviet Union successfully tested an atom bomb. Neither had been anticipated by the CIA.

Then came the outbreak of war in Korea, swiftly followed by the Chinese invasion, both also chalked up as fails for agency analysts. By this time, the CIA had earned a reputation of being lousy at predicting world events.

However, it is not true that the CIA failed to see the Korean conflict or the Chinese invasion coming. Instead, reports by the agency's Office of Reports and Estimates in 1949 and early 1950 painted northern aggression against the south as quite likely.

The problem was there was no definite warning of an invasion—something actionable. Plus, in what was already becoming a Cold War reflex, CIA analysts saw the situation in Korea almost entirely in terms of Soviet ambitions, with the Kremlin pulling the strings of local communist parties around the world. This view underestimated the North Koreans and Chinese influence on them.

Much the same was true of the Chinese intervention later that year. CIA analysts reported Chinese troops as massing near the Korean border, but offered no decisive prediction.



### WALTER BEDELL SMITH

To sum up, CIA estimates regarding Korea were not altogether wrong. But coming so soon after the earlier failures, they were flawed enough to create a widespread view in Washington that the agency was failing in its intelligence mission. The result was a changing of the guard.

Out went the agency's director, Roscoe Hillenkoetter, and in came Walter Bedell Smith. Smith arrived at the agency in October 1950. Immediately, he stamped his authority on it. First, he transformed the analytical machinery. He abolished the Office of Reports and Estimates, which had performed so disappointingly, and he created a new Office of National Estimates, or ONE. To run it, Bedell Smith brought in Harvard historian William Langer. Langer was a former chief of the research and analysis division branch of the CIA's predecessor agency, the Office of Strategic Services.

Under Langer and his successor, Yale's Sherman Kent, the new Office of National Estimates developed a much better reputation for producing useful, reliable estimates. Bedell Smith created a number of other new analytical units at the CIA as well, and grouped them together in the new Directorate of Intelligence.

Analysis was now better organized and better funded. By the end of the Korean War, the directorate contained 10 times the number of trained analysts as had existed in June 1950.



Walter Bedell Smith

## COVERT OPERATIONS

Smith clearly improved the intelligence side of the CIA. However, that was not the only dimension to the agency. Thanks to George Kennan and others, there was also the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC), which ran covert operations.

Smith did not necessarily object to covert ops in and of themselves. However, for a variety of reasons, the Office of Policy Coordination bothered him. He did not like its odd position within the national security bureaucracy, hovering between the CIA and the State Department. Additionally, he did not trust its boss, the former OSS operative and corporate lawyer, Frank Wisner.

In Smith's view, Wisner was running too many operations of dubious value. Smith was particularly skeptical about the sort of paramilitary missions that the Office of Policy Coordination was launching into the communist bloc: airlifting agents and trying to arm resistance movements. This was Pentagon territory, he felt.

The lax security of Wisner's setup worried Smith, too. The OPC, at this point, was still housed in moldering temporary huts on the Washington Mall. This location was a counterintelligence nightmare.

As a backdrop to all of this was a fundamental division in the institutional culture of the early CIA. Smith was a military man, through and through. He was used to a clear chain of command. In contrast, Wisner was happy to let his officers go their own way and even initiate operations.

## SMITH'S REFORMS

Smith did make some strides toward reforming covert operations. After just a week as director of Central Intelligence, he took complete control of the Office of Policy Coordination, claiming the authority of the 1949 Central Intelligence Act to cut State and Defense out of the loop.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

Not long after, Smith effectively demoted Frank Wisner by creating a new post above him in the CIA chain of command. He gave this position—the deputy director of plans—to the former OSS European chief, Allen W. Dulles. Smith also browbeat Wisner mercilessly. He demanded to see cables between Office of Policy Coordination headquarters and field stations, and fired about 50 of the socialites he had recruited.

Finally, in 1952, Bedell Smith would merge the Office of Policy Coordination with the Office of Special Operations. This created a new clandestine-service division within the agency alongside the intelligence directorate he had already created as well as another devoted to routine administration. With the emergence of this tripartite structure, the CIA reached organizational maturity, all thanks to Smith's forceful managerial hand.

However, Smith never did succeed at disciplining Frank Wisner and his covert operations crew. Covert ops continued to grow haphazardly throughout Smith's tenure as director. In 1949, the Office of Policy Coordination had 302 staff members and a budget of \$4.7 million. By comparison, three years later, its budget had mushroomed to \$82 million and its personnel to 2,812, excluding 3,142 overseas contractors.

### WISNER IN KOREA AND CHINA

Wisner was interested in building up the agency's presence in the new Cold War battleground of Korea and China, despite military commander Douglas MacArthur's resistance. This was not just about collecting intelligence on Cold War foes China and North Korea. It was also about trying to destroy the communists from within, by launching infiltration missions and fomenting resistance movements.



Douglas MacArthur

### 3 • The CIA, China, and the Korean War

To support these aims, Wisner's Office of Policy Coordination flooded nationalist Taiwan with personnel and money. Additionally, the CIA had its own Taiwan-based airline, the Civil Air Transport. It also had a front company, Western Enterprises, which built up a small fleet of junks and patrol boats.

Taiwan was an important operational base from which the CIA launched incursions onto the Chinese mainland. However, partly because of the difficulties of dealing with the exile nationalist government in Taiwan, the agency also established facilities on a number of other islands in the region, including one on a mountaintop in Saipan, constructed at a cost of \$28 million.

To run this massive operation, Wisner turned to one of the most dashing CIA operatives of the era: Desmond FitzGerald, a product of East Coast prep schools and Harvard. During World War II, FitzGerald had fought alongside Chiang Kai-Shek's Chinese Nationalists against the Japanese in neighboring Burma, now called Myanmar.

FitzGerald was impatient to rejoin the Chinese Nationalists in the fight against the communist government.



### THE RESULTS

All of this effort and expense did produce some results, including several successful missions to collect intelligence and destroy enemy facilities in North Korea. Overall, though, the CIA's covert action record during the Korean War was disappointing. Almost all attempts to insert resistance units into North Korea and China ended in capture or death.



One operation was counted a partial success in Washington at the time, but later came to look like another mistake. This involved a Chinese Nationalist general, Li Mi, now living in exile in Burma. FitzGerald had a rather romantic notion of using Li Mi and his followers against the Chinese communists.

The Office of Policy Coordination channelled millions of dollars to Li Mi. Partly to conceal the source of this support, Li Mi entered the region's opium trade. The Burmese government was understandably unhappy about this development and tried to expel him. The resulting conflict distracted Burma from its own efforts to deal with domestic communism and badly damaged Burmese relations with the US.

Li Mi was eventually persuaded to relocate to Taiwan, but many of his followers remained behind, farming opium poppies in what would become known as the Golden Triangle. Despite all of these unintended consequences, FitzGerald earned praise from his bosses.

## **CONCLUSION**

Despite its failures, CIA covert operations continue to grow during the early 1950s. There are two main reasons, one general and one specific.

### 3 • The CIA, China, and the Korean War

First, despite Americans' long history of mistrusting even its own spies, the CIA was under little external scrutiny at this point. In particular, Congress and the news media—the two main institutions that would call the agency to account later in its existence—were usually prepared to turn a blind eye to covert errors and excesses in the early 1950s.

The second reason why covert operations continued to grow was a rare poor management decision by Smith himself—that is, bringing Allen Dulles into the agency as one of his deputy directors. Dulles had shown during World War II and afterward that he was an ardent advocate of covert operations.

His new position offered him the chance to press the cause within the CIA itself. That prepared the way for what was now surely inevitable: the day when Dulles would succeed Walter Bedell Smith as the director of Central Intelligence.

---

## Suggested Reading

Prados, *Safe for Democracy*.

Thomas, *The Very Best Men*.

---

## Questions to Consider

- 1 How did Walter Bedell Smith change the CIA during his tenure as director in 1950–1953?
- 2 Why did Smith fail to reverse the growing dominance of covert operations over intelligence?

## LECTURE 4

# THE IRAN COUP OF AUGUST 1953

---

In January 1953, out went Harry Truman and in came Dwight Eisenhower as president of the United States. Eisenhower was a fan of political and psychological warfare. He had seen it work as supreme Allied commander, confronting Nazi Germany. Now in the White House, he turned to it as a cheap—and deniable—way of waging the Cold War.

Other officials in the Eisenhower administration shared this view, particularly the new secretary of state, John Foster Dulles. Over the next few years, John Foster Dulles would tend to use the CIA—rather than the State Department—as the main instrument of US foreign policy. Additionally, his brother, Allen Dulles, had recently replaced Walter Bedell Smith as head of the CIA.

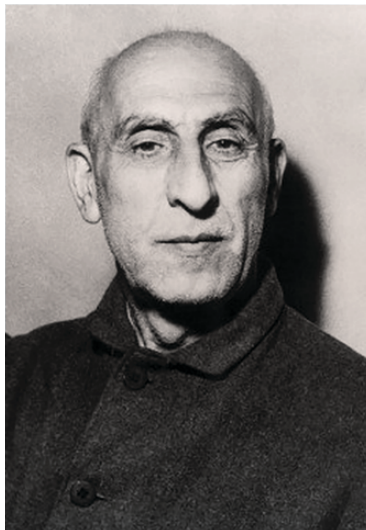
At this point, the Dulles brothers controlled the entire US foreign policy establishment. Consequently, 1953 would be a crucial year in the history of the CIA, which had steadily drifted toward a greater focus on covert action—that is, secretly trying to change the world rather than just observing it.

## 4 • The Iran Coup of August 1953

### IRAN

The CIA was about to become engaged in clandestine warfare all over the world, notably with a plot to overthrow the democratically elected prime minister of Iran, a nationalist named Mohammad Mosaddeq. Another goal was to strengthen the monarchical rule of the Iranian shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. Washington would come to view the removal of Mosaddeq as a stunning US victory in the Cold War.

In the early 1950s, the CIA was entering a struggle between super powers that had been going on for more than a century. This was the Great Game. Originally, it was a battle between the Russians and the British for supremacy in central Asia.



Mohammad Mosaddeq

Iran was an important arena of the Great Game for at least two reasons. One was its strategic location next to British India and Russia itself. Another was its vast oil reserves.

Even during World War II, the Great Game had persisted. This was when the shah's father and predecessor, Reza Shah, began courting Nazi Germany, partly in order to offset British and Russian influence in the country. As wartime allies, the British and Russians had responded by deposing him. For ordinary Iranians, this was the latest in a long list of humiliating foreign interventions. They were proud heirs of an ancient civilization, and they dreamed of a national future free of outside control.

Initially, the Iranians saw the United States as a potential ally in their nationalist struggle. That came to change.





## CHANGING FACTORS

One important factor was the emerging Cold War. The Americans had inherited the British suspicion that the Russians wanted to annex Iran so they could have access to a warm water port in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. (Today, historians are skeptical about this picture of Soviet intentions.)

Tied up with strategic fears of Soviet expansion were the Americans' concerns about securing a reliable oil supply. Understandably, Iranians were not happy about the British effectively owning their country's primary natural resource. Nationalist anger over the issue grew until the young shah—fearing nationalism as a threat to his own rule—appointed the veteran Iranian politician Mohammad Mosaddeq as his prime minister in April 1951.

Mosaddeq was a well-known nationalist and advocate of constitutional government in Iran. A few days after his appointment, the shah signed a law nationalizing Iran's oil industry.

## 4 • The Iran Coup of August 1953

American oilmen didn't like this development. They feared it might lead to similar moves against US drilling operations elsewhere in the Middle East, including the fantastically rich oil fields of Saudi Arabia. However, Washington was not thinking only about the commercial implications of Mosaddeq's actions. US Cold War planners were also worried that any measure to deprive Britain of cheap oil would greatly weaken America's major ally in the fight against Soviet communism.

### Mohammad Mossadeq

For many Iranians, Mosaddeq was—and remains—a national hero: patriotic, fearless, and charismatic. Western politicians found him to be a perplexing figure, however. He was 71 and sometimes appeared frail, especially when he carried out his duties from bed, as he liked to do. Nevertheless, he was a skillful politician.

### SOVIET FEARS

A view grew in Washington that Iran was in serious danger of falling to a Soviet takeover. The CIA began mounting operations intended to undermine Mosaddeq and head off a possible communist coup.

With the British boycotting Iranian oil, popular support for him broke down. That caused violent demonstrations on the streets of Tehran and forced Mosaddeq to get tough with the protestors, making him even more unpopular.

By this point, most Americans had forgotten their earlier sympathy for Iranian nationalism. In their eyes, Mosaddeq was looking more and more like a communist agent intent on handing his country over to the Soviet Union.

### BRITISH INVOLVEMENT

However, it was not the CIA that came up with the idea of staging a coup to get rid of Mosaddeq. It was the British, still dismayed by the loss of oil revenue and furious about what they saw as an act of infernal cheek by a colonial upstart.

A British coup plot was already under way in the fall of 1952, when the Iranian government got wind and expelled all UK officials from Tehran. At this point, the MI6 station chief in Iran, Christopher Woodhouse, decided he would have to involve the Americans in any effort to overthrow Mosaddeq. He traveled to Washington to persuade the CIA to back a plan for a joint operation, codenamed BOOT.

Meanwhile, Woodhouse's colleagues in the UK reached out to the chief of the CIA's Near East division, Kermit Roosevelt, who happened to be traveling through London at the time.

The British stressed two factors they thought might sway the Americans: the threat of Iran falling to communism and Mosaddeq's eccentricity. Interestingly, while Kim Roosevelt thought highly of the Arab nationalist leader Nasser, his view of the Iranian Mosaddeq was colored by classic Western prejudices.

The British strategy worked in part because they got lucky. The efforts to rope in the Americans coincided with the election of Dwight Eisenhower as president and the elevation of Allen Dulles to the directorship of the CIA.

Harry Truman and Walter Bedell Smith—along with their institutional sense of caution—were now of the past. Dulles eagerly signed up to the plan and appointed Kim Roosevelt as the CIA's field commander in Iran.



Kermit Roosevelt

## 4 • The Iran Coup of August 1953

### SPRING AND SUMMER OF 1953

In the spring of 1953, Roosevelt traveled to Tehran to meet with Iranian agents and a retired army major general picked to take over from Mosaddeq as prime minister. This was an influential politician and Mosaddeq opponent named Fazlollah Zahedi.

That May, teams from the CIA and the British intelligence service MI6 met in Cyprus to thrash out details of the plot, which was now called TP-AJAX. Churchill and Eisenhower signed off on the plan in July. The same month, Kim Roosevelt slipped over the border from Iraq into Iran. He hid in the home of a local CIA officer just outside Tehran and, from there, set to work turning the operation into reality.

The crux of the CIA plan was to provoke a constitutional crisis, in which Iranians were forced to choose between Mosaddeq and the shah. Roosevelt and his colleagues were confident that the most powerful elements of Iranian society—in other words, army officers, merchants of the bazaar, and Muslim religious leaders—would rally to the shah.

The problem was that the young shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, was nervous about doing anything that smacked of foreign meddling. Therefore, the shah hesitated to sign royal decrees—or *firmons*—dismissing Mosaddeq and appointing Zahedi in his place.

Kim Roosevelt tried to apply pressure through the shah's famously strong-willed sister, Princess Ashraf. When that didn't work, Roosevelt went to see the young monarch himself, hiding under a blanket as he was driven through the palace gates. The shah retreated a safe distance to a royal resort on the Caspian Sea and then signed the orders on August 13. With arrangements in place for the arrest of Mosaddeq and his remaining supporters, August 15 was set as the day for the coup.



Fazlollah Zahedi

### AUGUST CHAOS

Then, everything went wrong. Thanks to at least one security leak, Mosaddeq learned of the plot and ordered the arrest of the soldiers who were supposed to arrest him. Zahedi hid in the basement of a CIA officer's home. The shah fled, first to Baghdad and then to Rome. Washington ordered the evacuation of TP-AJAX operatives from Tehran.

Instead of pulling out, Roosevelt spent the next few days improvising. He used the British agents now working for him and US journalists in Iran to publicize the shah's decree dismissing Mosaddeq. He also sent messengers to pro-shah army commanders stationed outside Tehran, urging them to march on the capital. According to one account, he threatened to kill two of the CIA's Iranian agents if they failed to carry on their anti-Mosaddeq activities.

The tide turned on the morning of August 19. A crowd gathered in Tehran's bazaar waving pictures of the shah and chanting his name. Soon, the procession was joined by royalist army units that began to attack buildings linked to the Iranian communist party.

In the afternoon, the crowd took over Radio Tehran. At this point, Fazlollah Zahedi emerged from hiding, and went on air declaring himself the rightful prime minister.

A pitched battle between pro-shah and pro-Mosaddeq forces followed, resulting in at least 200 deaths. The fighting culminated outside Mosaddeq's residence, which was ransacked by a mob. Mosaddeq himself was forced to flee over the garden wall. Three days later, on August 22, Mosaddeq was caught, and the shah returned from Rome in triumph.



Mohammad Reza Pahlavi

## 4 • The Iran Coup of August 1953

At a secret midnight meeting the following day, the Iranian king raised a glass to Kim Roosevelt and told him, “I owe my throne to God, my people, my army, and to you!”

### **AFTER THE COUP**

Kim Roosevelt, on his way back to the United States, stopped off in London to brief MI6, the Foreign Office, and the prime minister, Winston Churchill. He found Churchill in bed after a recent stroke, but Churchill praised him. The CIA operative earned a similar reception in Washington.

Roosevelt eventually wrote a memoir, and some commentators have questioned his narrative. It is clear that Roosevelt did embroider his account of events; in places, his memoir reads like imperial British spy thrillers that he had read in his youth. Also, it is evident that players other than Roosevelt and his CIA colleagues played a big part in Mosaddeq’s downfall, including the Iranian prime minister himself, who made a series of crucial errors of judgment on August 19.

However, it is a mistake to take away all credit—or blame, depending on one’s perspective—from Kim Roosevelt. In the months running up to the coup, CIA agents constantly agitated the political atmosphere in Tehran, helping to destabilize Mosaddeq’s government. It is difficult to imagine the events of August 19 taking place if Roosevelt had not pressured the shah into signing the decrees that dismissed Mosaddeq as prime minister.

The irony is that years later, the coup began to look less like a cause for celebration and more like a ghastly mistake. The Iranian Revolution of 1979 wasn’t merely a delayed response to the CIA intervention of 1953. It was more complex than that. However, memories of 1953 were a big factor for the protestors who took to the streets, calling for the removal of the shah and the return from exile of Ayatollah Khomeini.

---

## Suggested Reading

Rahnema, *Behind the 1953 Coup in Iran*.

Wilford, *America's Great Game*.

---

## Questions to Consider

- 1 Why, in the years immediately after World War II, did US attitudes gradually change from supporting Iranian nationalism to opposing it?
- 2 Does the CIA deserve credit—or blame, depending on one's point of view—for bringing about the 1953 coup in Iran?

## LECTURE 5

# REGIME CHANGE IN GUATEMALA

---

By late evening on June 26, 1954, the Guatemalan president Jacobo Árbenz was desperate, holed up alone in the presidential palace. His army had refused to fight a small band of rebels led by an old political rival, Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas. Unmarked planes were bombing targets in Guatemala City. A radio station calling itself the Voice of Liberation was broadcasting rumors that his government was about to collapse. This lecture looks at how Árbenz's situation came to be.



## BACKGROUND ON THE CRISIS

Earlier, Árbenz and his closest advisors had discussed the possibility of arming the Guatemalan people to resist the rebels. The army high command nixed the idea, and instead asked Árbenz to step down for the good of the country. On the following day, June 27, Árbenz recorded an emotional message bidding farewell to his fellow Guatemalans. Árbenz then walked from the palace to the Mexican embassy to seek asylum.

Árbenz blamed his downfall on “obscure forces.” He was probably referring, in part, to American business interests, and one corporation in particular, the United Fruit Company. Mainly, though, he meant the United States, particularly the CIA.

### Jacobo Árbenz's Background

Jacobo Árbenz was the son of a Swiss immigrant father and *ladino* mother from Guatemala's white elite. Smart and handsome, he won a place at the prestigious Military Polytechnic School. He rose rapidly through the ranks of the Guatemalan army. He also developed a strong social conscience, something he shared with his wife, the American-educated Maria Villanova.



## CONFLICT WITH UNITED FRUIT

In 1944, Guzman had joined a movement to overthrow then-dictator Jorge Ubico Castaneda. Ubico had represented the interests of the land-owning elites and of the American-based United Fruit Company, which owned more than a half-million acres of Guatemalan land. Árbenz became defense minister in the new revolutionary government and helped carry out social reforms that benefited the Guatemalan peasantry.

In 1950, Árbenz won the presidential election. He took office the following year, at the age of 37, pledging in his inaugural speech to end Guatemala's "semi-colonial" status. In June 1952, Árbenz won passage of legislation known as Decree 900. This law required large landowners to sell uncultivated holdings to the government for redistribution to peasant families.



United Fruit Company

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

It was a bold challenge to United Fruit, which left 85 percent of its half-million acres uncultivated. Adding insult to injury, Árbenz offered the American company compensation of just \$1 million. The valuation was based on the artificially low tax rates that had been set by his predecessors to favor big landowners.

Outraged, United Fruit demanded \$16 million instead. United Fruit also hired prominent publicists and lobbyists to spread an image of Árbenz as a dangerous communist. The US press supported the move to topple Árbenz, in contrast with later periods when it would report critically on the CIA.

United Fruit—in lobbying Washington to take action against the Guatemalan president—was really pushing at an open door, especially after Dwight Eisenhower became president in 1953. The Eisenhower administration was stacked with individuals who had ties to the company, starting with the new secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, and his brother, CIA director Allen Dulles.

### MOTIVES

Many people have concluded that the 1954 coup was a classic case of economic imperialism. In this view, the CIA basically was doing the bidding of corporate America. Others think that perhaps it wasn't that simple. Several more recent studies have pointed to the role of Guatemalans themselves. After all, there was no shortage of powerful figures in the country who disliked Árbenz and his land reforms.

These included Guatemalan landowners who'd lost holdings to Decree 900 and Catholic leaders—including the powerful and fiercely anti-communist archbishop, Mariano Rossell y Arellano—who saw Árbenz as a radical and atheist, along with conservative army officers who disliked Árbenz's left-wing politics.

## 5 • Regime Change in Guatemala

Castillo Armas, as the leader of the CIA-backed uprising in 1954, had plotted against Árbenz long before the agency got involved. In 1950, for example—on the eve of Árbenz's election as president—Armas was wounded when he led an unsuccessful attack on an army barracks in Guatemala City. In a sense, then, the story of the Guatemala coup is one of the longstanding personal rivalry between the urbane Árbenz and the rather undistinguished Armas.

Additionally, Guatemala was surrounded by hostile neighbors with conservative governments. Some neighboring leaders—including the Nicaraguan patriarch Anastasio Somoza García and the Salvadoran Óscar Osorio—actually approached US officials to warn them that Árbenz was a communist. Somoza and Osorio had also reached out to Castillo Armas before he got involved with the CIA.

Ultimately, however, it wasn't rival Central American leaders or conservative Guatemalans—or even United Fruit executives—who toppled Árbenz. Instead, it was the CIA, in support of the US government's national security concerns rather than principally economic motives.

### **SOVIET WORRIES**

Communism was an important influence in Árbenz's Guatemala. The Guatemalan communist party was small, but it was also unusually well connected to the government. However, this is not the same as saying that Árbenz was an agent of the Soviet Union.

Regardless, American officials worried over the possibility that Árbenz's brand of nationalist, agrarian socialism might spread to neighboring countries and make the whole region vulnerable to a communist takeover. The United States concluded that it had to do something to contain the possibility.

### PBSUCCESS

The plan for PBSUCCESS—the CIA’s codename for its Guatemala operation—emerged in the late summer and early fall of 1953. This was immediately after the successful coup against Mohammad Mosaddeq in Iran. Like the Iranian operation, it was based on the idea of forcing local elites to take sides.

In Guatemala, the choice was to be between Árbenz and counterrevolutionary forces led by Armas. In particular, the CIA wanted to peel away the army—the most powerful institution in Guatemalan society. PBSUCCESS would be a psychological campaign: an effort to get into the minds of elite Guatemalans.

To lead the operation, Allen Dulles and his covert action chief Frank Wisner eventually turned to Tracy Barnes, a veteran of the World War II Office of Strategic Services. Acting as his assistant would be Richard Bissell. Rounding off the command team as the operation’s field commander was Army colonel Al Haney, the agency’s former station chief in South Korea, another Cold War hotspot.

The White House approved PBSUCCESS in November 1953 with a budget of \$3 million, and the plan moved into operation. Al Haney set up operational headquarters in Opa-locka, Florida, at an unused Marine air base. The site—codenamed LINCOLN—was soon humming with activity.

Meanwhile, there was a reshuffle of personnel on the ground. The existing CIA station chief in Guatemala was moved out and replaced with someone more gung-ho. Washington also sent a new ambassador to Guatemala City, Jack Peurifoy. His job was to bully Árbenz.

In the months that followed, Haney assembled the working parts of the operation. CIA officer E. Howard Hunt—later a household name because of his involvement in the Watergate scandal—oversaw a variety of psychological warfare projects, including the Voice of Liberation.



The Voice of Liberation broadcast anti-Árbenz propaganda, as read by a small team of Guatemalan announcers based in Miami. Haney also set about creating a small rebel air force to spread fear and confusion in Guatemala.

Finally, there was the liberation army led by Castillo Armas. Armas's army consisted of only a few hundred men, but radio broadcasts and rebel overflights would deceive Guatemalans into thinking they were under attack from a much larger force.

## **PROBLEMS**

PBSUCCESS ran into problems from the outset. First, there was a constant locking of horns between all the alpha-male types Dulles had put on the team. There was also tension surrounding the chief of the Latin American division, J. C. King, who was close to the United Fruit Company. Wisner cut him out of the loop, sending a message to United Fruit that this was the CIA's show.

Other problems also emerged. The CIA had succeeded at opening channels to some opposition elements in Guatemala. These included the Catholic Church of Archbishop Rossell and a group of students who daubed anti-government graffiti on the walls of the capital city.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

However, the CIA team wasn't able to infiltrate the institution that really mattered: the Guatemalan army. Despite having \$10,000 a month set aside for that purpose, CIA efforts to bribe senior officers simply weren't working. The officers appeared to be more concerned with their honor—and the country's—than with money.

There was also the challenge of keeping the whole operation secret. In January 1954, a Panamanian diplomat working with the rebels went to Árbenz with PBSUCCESS planning documents. The Guatemalan president published them. After this embarrassing breach, Frank Wisner, the CIA's covert operations chief, tried to tighten up security, but obvious signs of American involvement remained.

### SPRING 1954

By the spring of 1954, key elements were still not in place. The CIA lacked a good pretext for unleashing the rebel air force and army. That May, the PBSUCCESS team tried to invent the necessary proof by planting a cache of Soviet arms supposedly bound for Guatemala on the coast of Nicaragua. This story gained little traction in the local or US media. However, that same month, Árbenz handed the CIA a propaganda coup.

A freighter carrying a shipment of communist-bloc arms docked at the Guatemalan port of Puerto Barrios. Evidently, the president had ordered two tons of weapons from Czechoslovakia in an effort to keep the Guatemalan army loyal. The CIA now had its pretext.

The Voice of Liberation stepped up broadcasts, reporting imaginary government outrages and rebel uprisings. On June 18, Castillo Armas drove a beat-up station wagon across the border into Guatemala from Honduras, followed by a couple of hundred troops. The rebel air force scrambled, dropping hand grenades and Molotov cocktails on Guatemala City.

Soon, it became clear that the invasion was going nowhere. Defense forces shot up two rebel planes, and a third ran out of fuel and had to ditch in Mexico. The Árbenz government cracked down on the opposition, rounding

## 5 • Regime Change in Guatemala

up and killing 75 student leaders. Armas ground to a halt just six miles into Guatemalan territory. At operational headquarters in Florida, the PBSUCCESS team was growing desperate, urging Washington to authorize more aggressive measures.

In the capital, Frank Wisner froze. Barnes and Bissell began to plan for the evacuation of rebel forces from the Guatemalan coast. Then—as in Iran months earlier—imminent defeat turned to victory.

### THE FALL OF ÁRBENZ

On June 22, 1954, Allen Dulles went to President Eisenhower requesting more air power, and he received authorization to purchase three Thunderbolt fighter-bombers. The planes were in action the next day, bombing sites in and around Guatemala City. Among them, unfortunately, was a radio station run by American missionaries.





Árbenz responded with some bad decisions. He grounded the Guatemalan air force because he was worried about its loyalty, and he allowed the government radio station to go off the air for maintenance work, effectively ceding the airwaves to the Voice of Liberation.

Even operational errors were now working to the CIA's advantage. One rebel plane dropped a bomb down the smokestack of a British freighter that subsequently sank—without loss of life, fortunately. The CIA quietly paid off the insurer, Lloyd's of London, to the tune of \$1.5 million.

Observing the incident, Guatemalan army officers concluded that the Americans would stop at nothing to get rid of Árbenz. In other words, PBSUCCESS was working—not because it was covert, but because it was so blatant.

Árbenz believed he had lost the confidence of the army. He also came to believe that the best way of preserving the Guatemalan revolution of 1944 was to hand over power to someone else.

Armas did not succeed him straight away. Two weeks of maneuvering and bullying by Ambassador Jack Peurifoy ensued, as power changed hands five times before Armas marched into Guatemala City. At last, he was greeted by cheering crowds and firecrackers supplied by the CIA.

### **AFTER THE CHANGE**

Armas's first actions as the head of a new government included suspending the constitution, arresting and murdering his enemies, and repealing Árbenz's land-reform program. Armas would be assassinated in 1957, but the political unrest continued. Árbenz himself died in exile in 1971, while the Guatemalan Civil War lasted until 1996, and claimed some 200,000 civilian lives.

## 5 • Regime Change in Guatemala

Guatemala became less stable as a result of the 1954 coup. US intervention served to persuade neighboring Central Americans that concerns about American imperialism in the region were justified. For the CIA, however, Guatemala was another stunning success.

---

### Suggested Reading

Cullather, *Secret History*.

Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 Why did Jacobo Árbenz resign the Guatemalan presidency in June 1954?
- 2 What factors drove the CIA operation against Árbenz?

## LECTURE 6

# OPERATION ROLLBACK IN EASTERN EUROPE

---

This lecture discusses how the CIA attempted to liberate the Eastern Bloc countries during the early 1950s and what happened to those efforts. It also looks at the events leading up to the tragic failure of a Hungarian uprising—one of the CIA's first major setbacks.

## 6 • Operation Rollback in Eastern Europe

### THE EARLY 1950s

In the early 1950s, Frank Wisner and the CIA were undertaking efforts to roll back Eastern European communism. They were carrying on an effort to organize anti-communist Eastern European émigrés in the west into a secret army that could return east and spearhead the liberation of their homelands. This meant covertly funding and directing an apparently voluntary, nongovernmental refugee relief organization called the National Committee for a Free Europe.

Launched in 1949, the Free Europe Committee, or FEC, was headquartered in New York City's Empire State Building. It was run by an eminent group of public figures, including—before he joined the CIA—Allen Dulles, the agency's director from 1953 to 1961. To help Dulles and the others maintain the fiction that the FEC was acting independently of the government, the CIA set up a cover fundraising campaign called the Crusade for Freedom.

In 1951, Frank Wisner, as CIA covert-operations boss, created a sister organization for the FEC: the American Committee for Liberation of the Peoples of the USSR, or AMCOMLIB. This organization kept a lower profile but did similar work. It sought to assist and organize anti-communist Russian émigrés and the minority nationalities—that is, refugees from the other Soviet republics. Significantly, these included Muslims from Turkic-dominated areas on the Soviet Union's southern rim.

### RADIO FREE EUROPE AND RADIO LIBERATION

The FEC and AMCOMLIB both worked to penetrate the Iron Curtain with propaganda. Their goal was to drive a wedge between the ordinary peoples of the captive nations and their communist leaders.

The FEC planned a station of its own to directly compete with—and attack—communist-controlled media in the Eastern Bloc countries. Individual country desks would be staffed by émigré broadcasters. Poles would speak to Poles, Hungarians to Hungarians, and so on.



Radio Free Europe began operating on July 4, 1950, from an old airbase in Lampertheim, Germany. By 1953, it had a brand-new headquarters in Munich and 26 of its own transmitters. That same year, AMCOMLIB rolled out Radio Liberation—later known as Radio Liberty—also based in Munich, to broadcast into the Soviet Union. The CIA could now beam its liberation message right into the heart of the communist empire.

## **PARAMILITARY EFFORTS**

In addition to psychological measures, Frank Wisner and the CIA carried on with paramilitary methods. For example, in Poland, Wisner oversaw the secret channeling of gold, guns, and radios to a resistance network known as the Freedom and Independence Movement, or WiN, after its Polish initials. There were also missions to parachute-drop émigré agents into the Soviet Union.

Between 1949 and 1954, a series of such operations involved some 85 agents. Finally, Wisner worked to set up so-called stay-behind networks in Western Europe that would form resistance movements should the Soviet Union ever invade and occupy the rest of the continent. Under this program, local anti-communist groups such as the League of Young Germans received millions of dollars from the CIA.

## 6 • Operation Rollback in Eastern Europe

The paramilitary operations were not successful at all. The émigré agents who parachuted into their homelands were caught and imprisoned, executed, or simply disappeared. The stay-behind networks were also problematic; for example, the League of Young Germans were grizzled veterans of the Hitler Youth. It later emerged that these former Nazis had plans to assassinate not just communist officials but prominent Western German social democrats, as well.

### Security Issues

The CIA rollback program itself terrible security problems. For example, the British MI6 officer and Soviet mole Kim Philby possessed detailed knowledge of operations like the earlier US-Anglo attempt to organize political resistance in Albania. Even after Philby's American colleagues grew suspicious of him and booted him out, security issues remained.



### THE ÉMIGRÉS

The CIA's attempts to manage the émigré population in the United States included an effort to organize them into distinct national councils. Despite the best efforts of the Free Europe Committee to bring the émigrés together, the national councils ended up badly split, or did not even form in the first place. Similar efforts by the FEC's sister organization AMCOMLIB to unify the émigrés from the Soviet Union at a series of meetings in Germany also led nowhere.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

No one could have brought unity to the émigrés. It is difficult to imagine a more divided group of people. First, there were old historical rivalries between particular nationalities, such as Poles and Ukrainians. There were also ethnic tensions within national groups. Finally, while the émigrés were united in hating communism, often they agreed on little else politically.

The internal conflicts made the émigrés a security nightmare. Most had a good idea that the CIA was secretly backing the Free FEC and AMCOMLIB. If an émigré group secured the support of one of these organizations—and an opposing faction didn't—members might boast that the US government preferred them to their rivals, thereby blowing the CIA's cover.

Members of the group that missed out might go to their congressman to complain, again a security leak. Rival political tendencies in national groupings—the Russians and Ukrainians, for example—were even known to try to play off the CIA against the British MI6, which was also mounting émigré operations.

### THE CIA REASSESES

Despite some successes, such as the radio operations, rollback was a mess. Eventually, the CIA began to realize this, and even firm believers in the strategy backed away. One example is Franklin Lindsay, who oversaw the CIA's penetration missions into Eastern Europe. By 1952, he was looking to close down such operations.

Attempts to drop agents behind the Iron Curtain started to decline after 1953. So, too, did efforts to organize the émigré populations into national councils. The only part of the original program that remained fully intact was the radios. Yet all of this was happening at a time when a new president had entered the White House, and who—on the campaign trail, at least—had called for more, not less, rollback.

## 6 • Operation Rollback in Eastern Europe

In reality, Dwight Eisenhower didn't want to do anything that might cause war with the Soviet Union. He had seen enough fighting during World War II to last a lifetime. That was why in June 1953, when students and workers in East Germany took to the streets protesting communist control, the Eisenhower administration balked at arming the protestors.

Frank Wisner shared Eisenhower's caution. He did not want to start a shooting war, either, but these developments pained him deeply: He had been working ferociously to roll back communism in Eastern Europe.

### UNREST IN HUNGARY

In 1956, unrest swept Hungary. It was inspired, in part, by a Radio Free Europe broadcast of Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev's famous speech denouncing his predecessor Joseph Stalin. The CIA had obtained a copy of the speech and Allen Dulles made the decision to publicize it.

This was the moment that Frank Wisner had been waiting for. Wisner was haunted by a memory from the end of World War II, when he'd served as chief of operations in Romania for the CIA's predecessor, the Office of Strategic Services. Wisner had been forced to stand by as Russian soldiers herded tens of thousands of ethnic Germans onto trains bound for Soviet labor camps.

Now, in the fall of 1956, redemption seemed at hand. Wisner was back in Europe, on a tour of CIA stations. He arrived just as a wave of unrest was sweeping across the Eastern Bloc. In Hungary, thousands of protestors had taken to the streets of Budapest to protest Soviet control of their country. Elements of the Hungarian army were siding with the protestors, even providing them with arms. The Soviet empire appeared to be cracking.

Then, tragedy struck. On November 4, 1956—the day before Wisner was due to arrive in Germany—the Soviet army invaded Hungary. Its tanks razed whole blocks of Budapest. Troops went from house to house, executing rebels. Wisner looked on in dismay, helpless again.





Budapest fell to the Russians on November 6, and—the following day—Wisner rushed to Austria. There, he watched as Hungarians attempted to flee over the border. It was Romania all over again.

Next, Hungarian announcers on RFE got carried away. During the uprising and the Soviet invasion, they implied that the West would come to the rebels' aid. Once again, it seems, the CIA had lost control of the émigrés.

### THE FALLOUT

Frank Wisner felt personally responsible for what happened. After watching Hungarian refugees streaming over the Austrian border, he returned to the American Embassy in Vienna. There, he telephoned Washington, begging the White House—with no success—to commit troops to Hungary. His behavior grew manic.

Three years later, he was eased out of his duties, and given the largely ceremonial role of station chief in London. In 1965, at the age of 56, Wisner took his own life.

## 6 • Operation Rollback in Eastern Europe

Hungary effectively destroyed Wisner and was the death knell of rollback as well. There would be no more agent drops behind the Iron Curtain or efforts to unify the émigrés. Even the fate of the radio stations seemed uncertain. However, a series of reforms designed to centralize authority in Washington eventually ensured their survival. Meanwhile, the CIA itself experienced a new round of critical reports—and White House moves to bring it under closer supervision.

Ultimately, rollback must be marked down as a CIA failure. This wasn't due to a lack of commitment, or conviction, on the part of dedicated professionals like Wisner. Rather, the problem was the impossibility of breaking down the communist bloc with covert action alone.

For the time being, the Cold War would be frozen in place, the two sides eying each other warily across the Iron Curtain. This was the sort of conflict for which spies, arguably, were much better suited.

---

### Suggested Reading

Grose, *Operation Rollback*.

Johnson, *Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 How did the CIA implement the US Cold War strategy of rollback?
- 2 Why did the CIA's rollback campaign end in failure?

## LECTURE 7

# U-2 SPY MISSIONS AND BATTLEGROUND BERLIN

---

Though the CIA's early leaders attached much more importance to covert action than to espionage, the agency did still partake in espionage—that is, the secret collection of intelligence about rival powers. This lecture focuses on the CIA's efforts to gain intelligence about its chief Cold War enemy, the Soviet Union. In particular, the lecture looks at the use of human agents (known as HUMINT), communications-interception efforts (SIGINT), and the use of advanced science and technology (TECHINT).

## 7 • U-2 Spy Missions and Battleground Berlin

### HUMINT

The agency's early record in espionage was, if not stellar, at least better than in covert operations. Still, the Soviet Union had a definite advantage when it came to human intelligence. Although the KGB didn't come into existence until 1954, it had a long and clear line of predecessors going back to the revolution of 1917. Soviet spies were more experienced, and arguably tougher and more cynical than their American opposite numbers.

### Cold War Berlin

In Berlin during the Cold War, spies waged the battles normally fought by soldiers. Restaurants, parks, and street corners all were the backdrop for quiet encounters between intelligence officers and would-be agents.



## The Agency: A History of the CIA

A notable CIA figure of the 1950s was William Harvey. He flushed the British mole Kim Philby out of Washington in 1951. The next year, he was rewarded with a plum assignment: CIA station chief at the epicenter of the Cold War, the divided city of Berlin.

The Allied western zone was an ideal launch pad for espionage against the communist bloc. This was before the Berlin Wall went up, so there was relatively free movement of citizens between west and east. For the same reason, the western sector was uniquely vulnerable to Soviet infiltration, so US officials had to be constantly on their guard.

The CIA made postwar use of former Nazis to gain intelligence about the Soviets. This practice had begun as soon as World War II ended. US officials looking for information about the Soviet Union quickly realized that the best sources were German prisoners of war.

One ex-Nazi in particular—the former chief of military intelligence on the Eastern Front, Reinhold Gehlen—now made a highly successful second career advising first the US Army and then the CIA, about Iron Curtain countries. The Gehlen Organization—based outside of Munich—employed numerous former Nazis and several known war criminals, and was also heavily penetrated by the KGB.

The CIA kept Gehlen as a junior partner, but valued his expert knowledge. One downside of using his organization was that it undermined the American moral case against the Soviets, who got a lot of propaganda mileage out of it.



Reinhold Gehlen

### **OTHER GERMANS**

Fortunately for the CIA, there was another group of Germans that was ready to help in the spy war on the Soviets. Many ordinary East Berliners hated their Soviet occupiers and were brave enough to do something about it. Bill Harvey and his colleagues particularly wanted information about a compound in the Berlin suburb of Karlshorst that housed the Soviet zonal administration and the largest KGB residency outside the Soviet Union.

Local residents and contract employees obliged. A German worker with a camera in his lunchbox photographed Soviet officials entering and leaving the compound. Electricians hid listening devices in chandeliers. Especially helpful was a clerk in an office that handled Soviet freight shipments between Berlin and Moscow. He identified numerous KGB officers working in Karlshorst before defecting to the West in 1960.

However, Soviet officials were constantly told not to fraternize with locals, so there was little direct contact between the occupiers and the occupied. The Americans truly desired someone inside the enemy camp—that is, a Soviet citizen.

### **FAILURES AND SUCCESSES**

Harvey and his Berlin colleagues worked hard at identifying potential defectors, often using attractive Berlin women for the purpose. The agency's Soviet division had a whole operation for encouraging defections, called Red Cap. Loyalties, however, were murky, as shown by the case of Igor Grigorievich Orlov, known as Sasha.

Sasha was a former Soviet intelligence officer who had been captured by the Germans during World War II. He joined the Gehlen Organization and married a German woman. During the 1950s, he worked for the CIA on Red Cap.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

In 1958, one of Sasha's defectors re-defected to the Soviet Union. This raised questions: Had he been a KGB plant all along? Was Sasha himself a Soviet double agent, using the CIA's defector program to insert Soviet agents into the West?

The CIA sent Sasha to the United States for assessment and terminated his contract in 1960. Two years later, another KGB defector named Anatoliy Golitsyn told the CIA about a double-agent codenamed Sasha. Most of the indications were that he was referring to the same Sasha, but CIA counterintelligence failed to connect the dots.

There was really only one undoubted HUMINT success for the CIA of the 1950s. That was Pyotr Semyonovich Popov, a major in Soviet military intelligence. Popov was that most desirable HUMINT source: a defector in place.

In 1953, he slipped a note to a US diplomat in Vienna, saying that he wanted to sell secret documents to the United States. After moving to East Berlin in 1955, Popov continued to turn over invaluable intelligence about Soviet military operations as well as the Karlshorst compound and KGB efforts to infiltrate so-called illegals into the West. An intimate personal relationship with his CIA controller, George Kisavelter, was crucial. Popov regarded Kisavelter as a father figure.

Eventually, Popov was discovered by the Soviets in 1959, and—for a brief period—run by them as a double agent. He managed to warn the CIA what had happened by passing a message at a Berlin restaurant that he had hidden in a roll of cloth. However, Popov was executed by firing squad in 1960, probably on the direct order of Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev.

### **SIGINT**

Pressure on the CIA increased in 1953, when CIA analysts were unable to predict what was going to happen in the Soviet Union after Stalin's unexpected death. The new president, Dwight Eisenhower, badly wanted

## 7 • U-2 Spy Missions and Battleground Berlin

to know about Soviet military intentions and capabilities. In 1954, Allen Dulles told Ike that the CIA had come up with two new projects to compensate for its lack of HUMINT.

One of those projects was the CIA's initial major venture into signals interception, or SIGINT. One idea called for a tunnel from the US sector in Berlin into the Soviet side, with the goal of tapping underground communication cables there. Bill Harvey of the CIA ran with it.

After planning meetings with MI6 in London, Harvey ordered work on the tunnel—codenamed Operation Gold—to begin in 1954. With the tunnel constructed in March 1955, British engineers inserted communications taps. Now, all the CIA had to do was sit back and listen.

In all, the CIA recorded some 443,000 conversations that revealed details about the locations of Soviet military and nuclear facilities, counterintelligence operations, and the identities of hundreds of intelligence officers. Even more important was what the taps did not detect. None of the cable traffic contained any hint that the Soviets intended on going to war in Germany.

However, the Soviets knew about Operation Gold. A high-level British mole by the name of George Blake had participated in the London planning meetings and informed his controllers in Moscow. Blake was exposed in 1961, at which point the American and British intelligence services faced some awkward questions: Had the Soviets allowed the tunnel to go ahead so that they could insert disinformation into the cable traffic? Were they misleading the West as to their true intentions and capabilities?

Today, most intelligence experts think the information from the tunnel was genuine. The most likely reason for the Soviets not acting right away was that they feared doing so would expose George Blake. In any case, the Soviets did “discover” the tunnel in April 1956, just under a year after it became operational. For the CIA, the pill of losing this valuable source was sweetened by world reaction to the discovery, which was surprisingly favorable.



### TECHINT

Fortunately for the CIA, 1956—the year of the Berlin tunnel discovery—was also when the U-2 spy plane became operational. The CIA had been at work on the project, codename AQUATONE, since the fall of 1954. The impetus for it came from the president's circle of scientific advisers, in particular Edwin Land, the inventor of the Polaroid camera.

Land liked an aircraft design by Lockheed engineer Kelly Johnson. Essentially, it was a glider with a jet engine and a camera in its belly. The Air Force rejected it, at which point Land turned his attention to the CIA. The president authorized AQUATONE in November 1954. As an old soldier, he understood that the secretive, freewheeling CIA would be a better home for this unorthodox project than the military, with its rigid chain of command.

CIA chief Allen Dulles was never in any doubt about who should run AQUATONE: Richard Bissell, a planner of the successful 1954 coup operation in Guatemala. In Washington, he rented separate office space to house the operation's headquarters, effectively making AQUATONE secret even from the rest of the CIA.

Across the country in Burbank, California, Lockheed began construction of Kelly Johnson's plane, in a hangar with blacked-out windows. In less than a year, tests were taking place on a recently acquired stretch of Nevada desert known as Area 51. The new plane was put on Air Force books as a utility craft, hence the name U-2. (There was already a Utility-1.)

The first flight over the Soviet Union took place on July 4, 1956. Four more flights followed in July 1956, producing some extraordinary intelligence. A single mission could yield 4,000 photographs. The cameras and film on board designed by Edwin Land were capable of resolving detail as small as two and half feet.

## 7 • U-2 Spy Missions and Battleground Berlin

By 1958, Bissell calculated that 90 percent of hard US intelligence about the Soviet Union came from the spy-plane flights. Still, the risks were huge. If the Soviets succeeded at intercepting a flight, the damage to superpower relations would be huge. Therefore, President Eisenhower demanded a personal say in authorizing each flight. As the 1950s wore on, those permissions became rarer.

By 1960, with an eye on his presidential legacy, Eisenhower was pursuing peace talks with Nikita Khrushchev, who seemed to be thinking along similar lines. US-Soviet relations appeared to be at a turning point.

### FRANCIS GARY POWERS

On May 1, 1960, pilot Francis Gary Powers was shot down by a Soviet missile. He was in a U-2 reconnaissance aircraft. Powers landed on a Soviet collective farm and was soon captured.

The impact of the shoot-down was disastrous. The CIA produced a feeble cover story, which was soon exposed. Khrushchev paraded Powers and the U-2's remains in Moscow. Eisenhower was now forced to abandon plans for a US-Soviet summit in Paris. The United States had lost what had been easily its best source of intelligence about the Soviet Union. After May 1960, there would be no more U-2 flights in Soviet airspace.



Francis Gary Powers

However, the U-2 program's end shouldn't obscure its achievements. The program revealed that the Soviet Union was far less capable of launching a surprise attack on the United States than the Air Force and other agencies had believed. In turn, this gave Eisenhower more confidence in dealing with Soviet threats and international crises. It also enabled him to fend off calls for more military spending at home. In other words, the CIA helped defuse rather than stoke Cold War tensions.

The ending of the U-2 overflights turned out not to be such a loss after all. Three months later, in August 1960, the CIA succeeded at retrieving images from a CORONA spy satellite that passed over the Soviet Union seven times and captured more imagery than all the previous U-2 flights combined.

As for Powers, in 1962, he was traded for a KGB officer. The American U-2 pilot made it home at last.

---

### Suggested Reading

Murphy, *Battleground Berlin*.

Taubman, *Secret Empire*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 What, if anything, did the CIA gain from its human and signals intelligence efforts in Berlin during the early Cold War era?
- 2 Why did the U-2 program soon trump other CIA efforts to gather intelligence about the Soviet Union?

## LECTURE 8

# THE CIA IN SYRIA, INDONESIA, AND THE CONGO

---

The CIA racked up a string of covert-operations defeats during the late 1950s—the second half of the Eisenhower era—following its Cold War victories in Iran in 1953 and Guatemala in 1954. This lecture discusses several of those. The first were attempts at regime change in Syria that took place in 1956 and 1957. The second was a 1958 attempt to unseat the Indonesian leader Sukarno. The third was an unsuccessful effort in 1960 to eliminate the Congolese prime minister Patrice Lumumba.

### BACKGROUND

In this phase of the Cold War, the main stage of superpower confrontation was certain countries in the developing world. European colonialism was fading fast, leaving vast tracts of the world's surface as potential battlefields in the US-Soviet conflict. Joseph Stalin's successor, Nikita Khrushchev, had made it clear that he was interested in expanding Soviet influence in the former European colonies. American leaders—especially John Foster Dulles, the American secretary of state—made it just as clear that they were going to oppose such ambitions.



John Foster Dulles

Before the late 1940s, the United States had barely any official interest in the Middle East, seeing it as a colonial preserve of the British and French. However, there was a sizable American community in the Arab world: private citizens mainly descended from Protestant missionaries.

Naturally, these foreign-born Americans were knowledgeable about—and friendly toward—Arab culture. They were supportive of the nationalist Arab struggle against European colonialism. When the US government began creating formal intelligence services in the 1940s, it turned to missionary-descended Arabists for expertise about the Middle East.

This had the effect of making the early CIA sympathetic toward Arab nationalism, so much so that even Middle East officers who had not actually grown up in the Arab world tended to support the nationalist movement there. This helps explain an otherwise-puzzling CIA operation of the early 1950s.

## 8 • The CIA in Syria, Indonesia, and the Congo

In 1952, a group of nationalist army colonels in Egypt—the so-called Free Officers—staged a coup against the British puppet king, Farouk. Only a year later, the CIA would help restore the rule of a British-backed king, the young shah, in Iran.

The CIA threw its support behind the Free Officers, in particular the brilliant and charismatic young colonel, Gamal 'Abdel Nasser. CIA Middle East hand Kim Roosevelt befriended Nasser and sent a CIA team to Cairo to help him stabilize the new government. With CIA backing, Nasser consolidated his hold on power and began to emerge as a leader of the wider Arab nationalist movement.

All of this reflected the natural anti-colonialism—and pro-nationalism—of the first generation of CIA Middle East hands like Kim Roosevelt. It also showed that the incoming Eisenhower administration and its new secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, were open to the possibility of working with—rather than against—nationalists in certain developing countries in the Cold War.

However, the friendship with Nasser didn't last. Nasser was not prepared to accept US leadership. Like other leaders of post-colonial nations, Nasser preferred a neutral position that would enable him to deal with each of the superpowers.

In 1955, he starred at a conference of non-aligned nations in Bandung, Indonesia. Later that same year, after it became clear that Kim Roosevelt was not able to deliver on a promise to send arms to Egypt, Nasser turned to the communist bloc instead, accepting a consignment of weapons from Czechoslovakia.



Gamal Abdel Nasser

## 1956: A FAILED COUP

In July of 1956, CIA officer Archie Roosevelt was talking quietly in a hotel room in Damascus, Syria, with a wealthy Syrian: Mikhail Ilyan. Roosevelt was a cousin of Kim Roosevelt. Ilyan was a powerful opponent of the nationalist, left-wing government in Damascus. The two men were plotting another coup.

However, in plotting to overthrow the leftist Syrian government, the two men faced a host of problems they would never overcome. The Christian Ilyan failed to gain traction outside of his native Aleppo. Roosevelt was constantly outmaneuvered by Abd al-Hamid Sarraj, the chief of the Syrian security service. At several key moments, the coup plotters were tripped up by the British, who were running rival plots from neighboring Iraq.

All of these difficulties converged at the end of October 1956, just when the coup was supposed to take place. The British sparked an international crisis by trying to seize control of the Suez Canal from Egypt. As the Suez crisis spread shockwaves, Sarraj rounded up the local plotters and Ilyan was forced to flee across the border to Lebanon. Archie Roosevelt had failed to replicate the earlier success of his cousin Kim in Iran.



Archie Roosevelt



## 8 • The CIA in Syria, Indonesia, and the Congo

John Foster Dulles found the event upsetting. To him, the Cold War was a conflict between good and evil. Neutrality was morally unacceptable: If you dealt with the communists in any way, you might as well be one of them.

In early 1956, the Eisenhower administration abandoned its policy of trying to work with Arab nationalists such as Nasser. It began supporting conservative regimes left over from the days of European colonialism, including the British client monarchy in Jordan. Whereas the CIA had once worked to strengthen Nasser's power, now it set about trying to contain its spread in the Middle East and even overthrow nationalist governments like the one in Syria.

### **1957: THE EISENHOWER DOCTRINE**

In January 1957, the United States announced a commitment to curb communist influence in the Middle East: the so-called Eisenhower Doctrine. By now, Foster Dulles was 69 years old and increasingly rigid in his Cold War worldview. It did not help that his health was declining. Cancer of the colon had begun to spread to other parts of his body.

The scene was set for another round of coup attempts in Syria. Archie Roosevelt and Mikhail Ilyan began plotting again, but with no more success than the previous year. Every time a new plot was uncovered, Sarraj used it as an opportunity to strengthen his position. The CIA found it increasingly difficult to recruit agents in the country.

In late spring 1957, Kim Roosevelt took over the coup planning from Archie. Kim assigned a key member of his 1953 team, Howard Stone, to Damascus. Stone shifted the CIA's focus from conservative politicians to junior officers in the Syrian army. This seemed to pay off when Stone made contact with a charismatic young tank commander, 'Abdullah Atiyyah, who apparently shared the CIA's desire for regime change.



## The Agency: A History of the CIA

Stone—with the help of his wife Ahme—helped arrange secret meetings between the Syrian tank officer and exiled opposition politicians. He also handed over some \$3 million to the conspirators. The only problem was that Atiyah was a government informant. He had told Sarraj as soon as Stone got in touch and also handed over the CIA money.

Sarraj waited until August 12, 1957, before announcing that he'd discovered an American plot. He surrounded the US embassy in Damascus and expelled Stone and several other American officials. Washington was embarrassed once more. The Soviets sent more officials to Damascus. Nasser used the plot's discovery to bolster his image and influence in Syria.

### 1958: INDONESIA

If Egypt's Nasser was the central personality in the CIA's Middle East operations during the 1950s, his equivalent in Southeast Asia was Indonesia's leader Sukarno. The United States was at first a friend of Indonesian independence. For his part, Sukarno admired America and its founding ideals.

However, the romance with America soured. Sukarno had already declared his neutralism on the world stage as host of the 1955 Bandung conference of Asian and African states. Like Nasser, he did not see why he should have to choose sides in the Cold War. Eventually, Sukarno sought a \$100 million credit from Moscow after Washington turned down his request for military assistance.



Sukarno

## 8 • The CIA in Syria, Indonesia, and the Congo

The American response was much as it had been when Nasser cut the Czech arms deal. Covert operations chief Frank Wisner told Al Ulmer, the head of the Far East Division, “It’s time we held Sukarno’s feet to the fire.”

The resulting operation was called Archipelago by Foster Dulles and Project Haik by the CIA. The strategy was similar to the 1954 coup operation in Guatemala. The agency would secretly reach out to Indonesian army officers who were dissatisfied with Sukarno and provide them with arms to carry out a rebellion. Also, as in Guatemala, paramilitary action would be supported by psychological warfare that was intended to turn public opinion against the president.

The CIA was able to exploit the fact that several of Indonesia’s outlying islands were chafing against rule from the nation’s capital of Jakarta, located on Sukarno’s native island of Java. In December 1956, the Indonesian army mutinied on the island Sumatra, spreading to Sulawesi. Some of the officers concerned did not wait to hear from the CIA, but proactively made contact with US officials.

In September 1957, Allen Dulles signed a \$10 million voucher for Project Haik. Over the next three months, CIA teams in Singapore and the Philippines made preparations for the agency’s biggest covert operation yet. It would involve a small navy, air force, and army of some 10,000 rebel fighters. Meanwhile, CIA psychological warriors cooked up schemes for discrediting Sukarno.



In Indonesia, Sukarno appealed to his officers' sense of nationalism by depicting the island rebellions as a threat to the nation's survival. Meanwhile, the rebels themselves proved reluctant to fire on fellow Indonesians. By April 1958, Indonesian government forces had retaken Sumatra. A CIA team on the island fled by commandeering a passing boat and pretending to the puzzled crew to be a party of big game-hunters.

On May 18, a CIA pilot, Allen Lawrence Pope, was shot down while carrying more than 30 identifying documents. Immediately afterward, Allen Dulles ordered Haik personnel to stand down. A victorious Sukarno moved to strengthen his presidential powers. Indonesian communists exploited anti-American feeling to gain votes. The effect was almost precisely the opposite of what the CIA had intended.

### 1960: CONGOLESE OPERATIONS

At the end of 1958, Frank Wisner—suffering from manic depression—was replaced as deputy director of covert ops by Richard Bissell. When Bissell took over, the Cold War was spreading to yet another continent—Africa—at a time when European colonial power was fading fast.

The year 1960 would see the emergence of 17 new African nations. As usual, Americans were glad to see the back of European colonialism, with African Americans showing a particular interest. But there were also fears of the Soviets taking advantage to expand communist influence. Contributing to this fear were semiconscious or unconscious racist attitudes that the Africans were not capable of self-government. These various forces converged on one unfortunate African country, the former Belgian Congo.

The legacy of European colonialism in this huge central African country—which was the size of Western Europe—was particularly ghastly. A period of murderous exploitation by the Belgian King Leopold II during the early 20th century had been followed by decades of neglect. This meant that when the Congolese finally gained their independence in June 1960, the native population had almost no professional elite able to take over.

## 8 • The CIA in Syria, Indonesia, and the Congo

As a result, the new nation began to fall apart almost immediately. Ethnic strongmen took control of provinces such as mineral-rich Katanga. Belgian soldiers returned to the country, effectively re-imposing colonial control.

The 34-year-old Congolese prime minister, Patrice Lumumba, appealed to the United Nations to help him restore order and expel the Belgians. When that failed, he called for Soviet support.

Observers in Washington were dismayed at both the possibility of the Soviets establishing a strategic toehold in the heart of Africa and the presence of the Congo's natural resources, which included the uranium used to build the first US atom bombs.

Lumumba visited Washington in August 1960 and made a bad impression. That same month, President Eisenhower expressed to his advisors that he wanted a resolution the Congo crisis. The next day, Allen Dulles cabled Larry Devlin—the CIA station chief in the Congolese capital Leopoldville—and told him that Lumumba's "removal [was] an urgent and prime objective."



Patrice Lumumba

### ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION

In earlier plots, the CIA had stopped short of assassination. However, by the time that Richard Bissell took over covert ops, this inhibition was fading. As one crisis after another erupted, Bissell considered several foreign leaders for what he euphemistically called “executive action.” One of these was Sukarno. Another was Lumumba.

In September 1960, Bissell instructed Dr. Sidney Gottlieb, the head of the Agency’s Health Alteration Committee, to assemble an assassination kit that included poisons native to Africa. Traveling incognito, Gottlieb flew to Leopoldville and passed the kit to Larry Devlin, with instructions to inject the toxins into Lumumba’s food or toothpaste.

The station chief was torn. He shared Washington’s fear about Congo going communist, but he had been raised Catholic and believed murder was sinful. Some colleagues think he deliberately stalled for time.

Meanwhile, the situation in Leopoldville was degenerating. In September, the 29-year-old colonel Joseph Mobutu moved to depose Lumumba, with US and Belgian backing. The prime minister took refuge in his official residence, where he remained effectively under house arrest.

Washington still considered him dangerous, though, because many Congolese and other African nations refused to recognize Mobutu. The CIA now began to consider ways of getting at Lumumba in his residence, either by sniper fire or a commando raid, but these efforts were fruitless.

At the end of November, Lumumba made a break for freedom. He hoped to reach his home base of Stanleyville, but Mobutu’s forces captured him, thanks partly to CIA aerial surveillance. Ultimately, he was driven to a clearing in the savannah, and machine-gunned to death by a Belgian officer.

## 8 • The CIA in Syria, Indonesia, and the Congo

On hearing the news, Larry Devlin buried the unused CIA toxins in the bank of the Congo River. The CIA did not kill Patrice Lumumba. It did, however, stand by as an agent of European colonialism—a force it once opposed—finished the job.

---

### Suggested Reading

Kinzer, *The Brothers*.

Westad, *The Global Cold War*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 Why was the Eisenhower administration increasingly hostile to nationalism and neutralism in the developing world during the 1950s? Why did it tend to rely on CIA covert operations as antidotes to these phenomena?
- 2 Why did CIA operations to change regimes in Syria and Indonesia in the late 1950s fail after similar actions in Iran and Guatemala during the early 1950s had succeeded?

## LECTURE 9

# UNDER ORDERS: THE AGENCY TARGETS CASTRO

---

Nothing had prepared Pepe San Román for the scene that unfolded around him on Wednesday, April 19, 1961. Three days earlier, he and a band of fellow Cuban exiles had landed off the island nation's southwestern coast and waded ashore.

Their plan was to link up with other Cuban rebels in the countryside and catch the Cuban leader Fidel Castro by surprise. Instead, Castro's military discovered the invading forces almost immediately, and the hoped-for insurrection at the Bay of Pigs was now in the process of failing miserably.

In heavy fighting, the armed rebels were pushed back onto the beach and then into the sea. As Castro's forces closed in, San Román pleaded with his American backers at the CIA for support, but no help came. He had no choice but to make for the woods.

This lecture looks at why the CIA backed the invasion of Cuban exiles at the Bay of Pigs and why the operation was such a disaster.

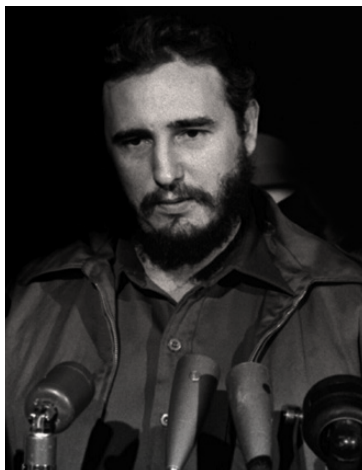
### FIDEL CASTRO

Shortly after taking power in 1959 following a revolution, Castro began thumbing his nose at Cuba's northern neighbor, America. In April 1959, he introduced land reforms that resulted in the confiscation of perhaps a billion dollars' worth of US-owned property. Castro also shut down Havana's vice trade, angering the mob. These actions alienated many wealthy Cubans, who began quitting the country in droves for exile in the US, especially Miami.

Castro wasn't a known communist when he came to power. This situation changed swiftly, however. As the Cuban middle classes deserted the revolution, Castro allied himself with the small but well-organized Cuban communist party. He began reaching out to Moscow, eventually trading Cuban sugar for arms, machinery, and technical advisors. By the end of the year, the initial tolerance of President Dwight Eisenhower's administration toward the Cuban revolution had given way to downright hostility.

In November 1959, the US president approved a State Department recommendation that the United States consider ways of removing the new Cuban government. Over at the CIA, responsibility for planning Castro's removal fell to Richard Bissell, the new deputy director in charge of covert operations.

One of Bissell's first jobs at the CIA had been helping to run the successful 1954 operation to topple Guatemalan President Árbenz. He now reassembled that team, including Tracy Barnes as his point man on political and psychological warfare. Jacob Esterline, another colleague on the Guatemalan operation, would also join him for Cuba.



Fidel Castro



### THE CIA'S APPROACH

Bissell believed that what had worked in Guatemala—bullying President Árbenz out of power—would also work with Castro in Cuba. However, Castro was not Árbenz. Whereas the Guatemalan leader had been a serious, cautious intellectual, the youthful Castro was a man of action, full of swagger and bombast. In other words, he was less likely to suffer a loss of nerve.

In any case, Árbenz had not really been scared out of office. He had made a rational decision to quit when he realized that he no longer had the support of the Guatemalan army. In the case of Cuba, it was far from clear that the army—or any other powerful institution—would desert Castro if put on the spot.

Castro was also getting explicit advice on how to avoid Árbenz's fate from his friend and fellow revolutionary, Che Guevara, who'd been in Guatemala at the time of the 1954 coup. At Che's bidding, Fidel cracked down on dissent and purged his army of opponents.

The CIA faced other problems closer to home. Its director, Allen Dulles, was in declining health and was no longer the force he had once been. As Dulles became detached from day-to-day duties at the agency, deputies such as Bissell took on more and more responsibility.

In succeeding Frank Wisner as covert-ops chief, Bissell had beaten out the longtime intelligence professional Richard Helms for the job. Helms did not approve of the emerging plot to eliminate Castro. Instead, he tacitly advised colleagues to steer clear of it. As a result, staffing the operation—below the level of the planning team—proved to be challenging. Bissell had to give important jobs—such as organizing a Cuban government-in-exile—to officers who did not even speak Spanish. Still, the White House wanted to be rid of Castro, and planning moved ahead.

## 1960: OPERATION PLUTO

In March 1960, President Eisenhower approved Operation PLUTO. The plan included measures to organize opposition elements outside Cuba and to infiltrate small teams of guerilla fighters. It would also establish a covert network on the island to bombard the population with anti-Castro propaganda.

In Washington, Bissell's task force set up shop in a disused barracks just off the National Mall. Elsewhere, CIA officers fanned out across Miami, looking for exile leaders to replace Castro and young recruits for the paramilitary teams. There were also weapons drops to anti-Castro guerilla groups in Cuba and a radio station dubbed Radio Swan, which broadcast from an island off Honduras.

Right from the first, Bissell and Barnes were interested in ways of getting at Castro himself. Some ideas involved drugs. The CIA's Technical Services Staff had been researching the possible effect of hallucinogens in interrogations since the early 1950s. This program—codenamed MKUltra—was run by the biochemist Sidney Gottlieb.

### Sidney Gottlieb's Efforts

Before his involvement in the CIA efforts in Cuba, Sidney Gottlieb had earlier assembled an assassination kit of native African poisons for use against the Congolese prime minister Patrice Lumumba. Lumumba's murder by other enemies obviated the need for poison. Another of Gottlieb's experiments had gone badly some years earlier, when the army scientist Frank Olson was given LSD and died after leaping from a hotel window in New York.

Bissell and Barnes asked Gottlieb to come up with substances to make Castro behave irrationally in public. Their aim was to undermine the revolutionary's popularity with the Cuban people. One proposed scheme involved injecting a box of his favorite cigars with an LSD-like substance that would cause disorientation. Another suggestion was to sprinkle hair-removal products on Castro's shoes to make his beard fall out, supposedly causing him look less virile in the eyes of his fellow Cubans.



Tracy Barnes

As 1960 wore on, their plots took a more sinister turn. In July, Barnes approved a proposal for a CIA agent employed by Air Cubana to ditch an airplane carrying Raul Castro in the Atlantic. The plan fell through, but the plotting carried on. Technical Services came up with a new box of cigars, this time treated not with hair-removal products but instead with a lethal neurotoxin.

### MAFIA INVOLVEMENT

Next, Bissell enlisted the mafia in his scheme. Former FBI agent Robert Maheu, now a contract worker for the CIA, approached the mid-level mobster Johnny Roselli, who formerly had worked for Al Capone in Chicago. In turn, Roselli introduced Maheu to the Chicago boss Sam Giancana, who put him in touch with Santo Trafficante, the man in charge of mafia operations on Cuba.

The mobsters were highly amused that the feds would consider hiring them to take care of official business. They told anyone who would listen. Trafficante's access to Castro turned out to be no better than the CIA's. Plans to drop poison in Castro's drink, first involving a disgruntled government official and then a restaurant waiter, went nowhere.

### THE TRINIDAD PLAN

Bissell faced other setbacks in the summer of 1960. Miami's Cuban-exile community was failing to produce a credible alternative leader to Castro. Operational security was so terrible that US newspapers began to run stories about Operation PLUTO. Furthermore, airdrops to guerilla groups in Cuba weren't working.

There was a change in plan. Whereas the talk before had been of infiltration—and the insertion into Cuba of small bands of guerilla commandos—it now shifted to invasion and landing a larger task force to be supported by air-strikes. This plan was named for the small city of Trinidad on the south-central coast of Cuba, which was identified as the ideal landing site.

Not everyone was on board with the Trinidad operation, however. Jack Esterline, the head of the Washington war room, told Bissell that even if the invasion force consisted of several thousand men, it would not be able to hold a beachhead against Castro's much larger army and in fighting with the Cuban air force.

Bissell had an answer: In the event of a reversal, the men could break for the nearby Escambray Mountains and revert to guerilla warfare. The operation moved ahead.

### JOHN F. KENNEDY

At the same time as Bissell was hatching this plan, Americans were electing John F. Kennedy as president. This might have been an opportune moment for the United States government to consider a change in policy toward Cuba, or at least for the White House to back away from the CIA invasion plan. The Kennedy administration pressed on, but Kennedy was deeply conflicted about the Trinidad operation. Among other reasons, he did not want to anger the Soviet Union, and some people close to him were advising against the CIA plan.

Kennedy's ambivalence proved to be a recipe for disaster. In March 1961, Richard Bissell formally presented the invasion plan to the White House. Kennedy declared it "too spectacular." He wanted something with less "noise." But noise was essential: How else would Cubans know to rally to the rebellion?

### OPERATION ZAPATA

Bissell responded with a fateful decision. He shifted the landing site 80 miles west from Trinidad to a more remote location. This was a set of beaches on the Zapata Peninsula, surrounding the Bay of Pigs. The trouble with this choice was that there was barely any local population capable of assisting or joining with the rebellion.

This recalibration—meaning the project was now known as Operation Zapata—removed the option of a retreat into the mountains, some 80 miles away. The invaders would have to hold the beach or die in the attempt.

Other problems accumulated, as well. Morale among the Cuban exiles at their Guatemalan base was bad due to poor training and boredom. In contrast, Castro's military was in a state of high alert, which was hardly surprising given US press reports about an imminent invasion.

By April 9, the CIA's Jack Esterline had seen enough. Esterline and the chief of paramilitary training, the Marine colonel Jack Hawkins, called on Bissell at his home in northwest Washington. The two men pleaded with him to call off the operation. The covert-ops chief courteously heard the two men out, and then promised that he would persuade the president to authorize the air power necessary to protect the landing force.

This, Bissell failed utterly to do. Instead, he halved the number of planes to bomb Castro's air force on the ground, reducing the deployment from 16 to eight. On the evening of April 16, he remained silent when Kennedy cancelled a second wave of air strikes altogether.



323rd Bomb Group B-26 Maruder

When the operation got underway the following morning, Castro was able to call up enough of his own planes to pick off the 1,500-strong rebel force when it tried to land. The only air cover was made up of a few lumbering CIA-owned B-26s, practically defenseless against Castro's quicker T-33s.

## THE FALLOUT

The CIA had failed to fully explain to President Kennedy the importance of providing air cover for the invasion force. He was never told that the change of landing site ruled out the possibility of the exiles retreating to the mountains.

The more puzzling question is why Richard Bissell failed to see disaster looming. Historians have suggested various explanations.

Perhaps Bissell thought that one of the plots to assassinate Castro might still work, and that he might be able to cancel the invasion at the last minute. Maybe he hoped that Kennedy would authorize more air protection when it became clear that the operation was failing. Perhaps Bissell's earlier success in Guatemala deluded him into thinking that the CIA could change regimes wherever it wanted.

Whatever the reasons for the CIA's debacle at the Bay of Pigs, the consequences were plain to see. It strengthened Castro's rule. He was now able to pose as a heroic resister to imperialism. He also had an excuse to crack down on remaining anti-Castro elements. The exiles who survived the battle were eventually sent back to the US. Among them was Pepe San Román, who later committed suicide in Miami.

The Bay of Pigs disaster also spelled the end of a political era in the United States. The CIA had made mistakes before—most recently in attempts at regime change in Syria, Indonesia, and the Congo. Those failures had largely been concealed from the American public. In contrast, the Bay of Pigs was an obvious and embarrassing defeat. After 1961, Americans would be much less willing to turn a blind eye to the secret doings of their government.

---

### Suggested Reading

Bohning, *The Castro Obsession*.

Jones, *The Bay of Pigs*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 Why did the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations commit themselves to overthrowing Fidel Castro?
- 2 Why did the CIA-organized invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs fail so disastrously?

## LECTURE 10

# MISSILE CRISIS IN CUBA AND AT LANGLEY

---

The Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962 was arguably the defining episode of the Cold War and the moment when the world came closest to a nuclear confrontation. This lecture summarizes some of the more recent scholarship on the event with an eye on the CIA's performance during the crisis.



## FOLLOWING THE BAY OF PIGS

In August 1961, following the Bay of Pigs disaster, President John F. Kennedy dismissed Allen Dulles as CIA director. Next to go was the CIA's deputy director of plans, Richard Bissell, the man most responsible for the Bay of Pigs fiasco. Bissell was offered the agency's new directorate of science and technology. He turned down the offer. It felt like a demotion, and Bissell moved into private consultancy work.

His post was taken up by a longtime rival, the relatively cautious intelligence professional Richard Helms. The departure of Dulles and Bissell signaled a course change at the CIA. Ever since its founding in 1947, the agency had been pulled between the two missions of analysis and covert operations. Under Dulles, the CIA had leaned heavily toward operations. Now, there would be a swing of the pendulum back to traditional intelligence work.

The clearest sign of this was Kennedy's choice of whom to replace Dulles with as director: John A. McCone. McCone made it clear that providing intelligence was going to take precedence over the approach of his predecessor.

In a sense, the Bay of Pigs debacle put the CIA in a better state to respond to a second crisis in Cuba that took place the following year. That is when the Soviet Union tried secretly to place nuclear weapons on the island and was caught in the act by the United States.



John A. McCone

## Operation Mongoose

Operation Mongoose was a project launched by the CIA in Cuba. Thanks to the operation, the CIA had a better espionage network on the island than before the Bay of Pigs. It also involved assassination plots against Fidel Castro that did not come to pass. The only real effect of Operation Mongoose was to make Castro even more suspicious of the Americans and to drive him farther into the arms of the Soviets.

## SOVIET AND CUBAN MOTIVES

The Cuban Missile Crisis raises an important question: Why did Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev try to put missiles on Cuba in the first place? Historians have suggested various reasons for Khrushchev's move.

The United States had just taken a clear lead in the nuclear arms race. Perhaps Khrushchev saw the Soviets' Cuban missile operation—which they called Anadyr—as a way to catch up. He might also have been trying to force America's hand in Berlin, which remained a Cold War flashpoint a year after the Berlin Wall started going up. It is even possible he was using Cuba to impress the Chinese, an emerging rival in the communist bloc.

It is unclear which of these motives might have been uppermost in Khrushchev's mind, or even if he had other considerations. But there is general agreement that he would not have gone through with his gamble of placing nukes in America's backyard had it not been for US hostility to Fidel Castro. Khrushchev placed a lot of importance on being seen as willing—and able—to defend his communist allies. Furthermore, Castro would not have agreed to accept the missiles if he had not felt under continuing threat from the United States.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

In the summer of 1962, Castro decided to go along with Khrushchev on deploying nuclear missiles on Cuba, hoping that doing so might deter the Americans from further aggression. Although the CIA was not the driving force, its anti-Castro operations did contribute to the siege mentality that opened Cuba up to Soviet missiles.



Fidel Castro and Nikita Khrushchev

### EARLY IN THE CRISIS

CIA analysts noted an increase of Soviet shipments to Cuba in July 1962. A U-2 overflight photographed a new surface-to-air missile site that August. At this stage the CIA, along with the rest of the US intelligence community, believed that Soviet weapons on the island were limited to the conventional, defensive kind.

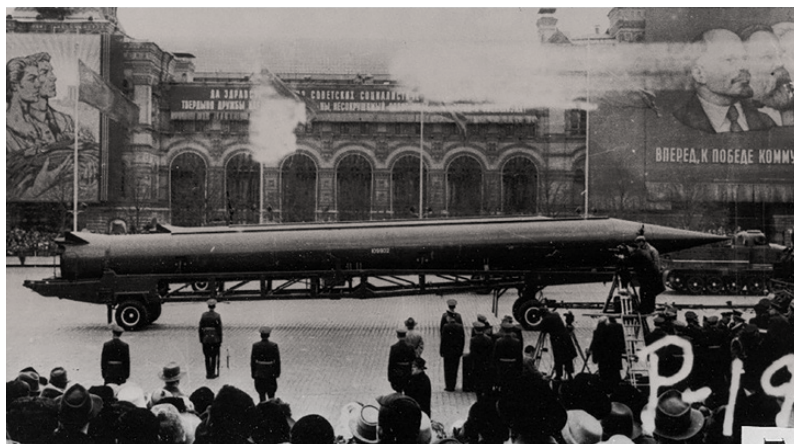
On September 19, 1962, the agency stated that nothing in Khrushchev's previous behavior suggested he would do something as reckless as deploying offensive nukes so close to the United States. Meanwhile, President Kennedy ordered a suspension of U-2 reconnaissance flights over Cuba, fearing another incident like the Soviets shooting down US pilot Gary Powers in May 1960.

## 10 • Missile Crisis in Cuba and at Langley

The CIA was now in something akin to an intelligence shutdown in Cuba. However, one dissenting voice in Washington belonged to CIA director John McCone. That August and September, he repeatedly voiced a hunch that the Soviets were putting offensive weapons on Cuba. Other national security experts were skeptical.

On October 9, Kennedy relented and authorized a resumption of U-2 flights over Cuba. The first reconnaissance mission flew at dawn on October 14, piloted by Richard D. Heyser. The following day, analysts in the CIA's National Photographic Interpretation Center examined the images Heyser had taken. They showed three missile sites around the northwestern Cuban municipality of San Cristobal. Subsequent U-2 flights would reveal three more: a medium-range ballistic missile site near San Cristobal and two intermediate-range ballistic missile sites at Guanajay.

The American analysts compared these missiles with photographs of May Day parades in Moscow and consulted technical manuals provided to them by a spy in Soviet military intelligence named Oleg Penkovsky. By the late afternoon of October 15, they had reached an alarming conclusion. The initial battery consisted of SS-4 medium-range ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads 1,300 miles—as far as Washington. America now had valuable information.



### OCTOBER 1962

On October 16, 1962, President Kennedy assembled the executive committee of the National Security Council. This was the group known as ExComm, consisting of the men of foreign policy who would advise the president on how to respond. Kennedy's first instinct was to order up air strikes on the missile sites. In the course of ExComm discussions, however, the president backed away from the military option, fearing that it might start a full-scale nuclear war.

In a national TV address on October 22, Kennedy demanded that the Soviets withdraw the missiles. He announced that he was imposing a naval quarantine on Cuba to prevent any more Soviet shipments from reaching it. The world held its breath as Soviet ships sailed toward the quarantine line, but on October 24, they began turning back.

Kennedy's strategy was working, but the crisis wasn't over yet. Missiles remained on Cuba.



Executive Committee ("ExComm")

## 10 • Missile Crisis in Cuba and at Langley

The CIA's performance was not perfect during this time. Agency analysts substantially underestimated the number of Soviet troops in Cuba, reckoning a total of 8,000 to 10,000 when the true figure was nearer to 43,000. They also missed evidence of tactical nuclear weapons being on the island, including some ballistic missiles aimed at the US naval base in Guantanamo Bay.

Overall, though, the CIA performed well. McCone's daily briefings to ExComm on the latest intelligence developments were effective. He was ably supported by the head of the National Photographic Interpretation Center, a man named Art Lundahl. Further, agency analysts provided two updated estimates on October 20 about possible US actions and likely Soviet responses. These structured much of ExComm's subsequent debate.

### **TENSIONS RISE**

Recent historical scholarship argues that the Cuban Missile Crisis was more dangerous than the world knew at the time. Even as American and Soviet leaders worked over the weekend of October 27 and 28 toward a resolution that would bring the 13-day crisis to an end, a new series of incidents could have tipped the superpowers into full-scale conflict.

First, on the night of October 26–27, a U-2 plane based in Alaska strayed into Soviet airspace. The pilot, Captain Chuck Maultsby, was on a routine mission collecting air samples to monitor Soviet nuclear tests. However, he became confused by the aurora borealis while navigating by the stars, and he drifted off course.

Soviet MIGs scrambled to intercept the U-2, and US fighters took off to rescue it. US forces were in a state of DEFCON-2 nuclear alert. American planes were carrying air-to-air missiles with low-yield nuclear warheads and no electronic locks. Fortunately, US authorities guided Maultsby back to base before the opposing fighter planes engaged.

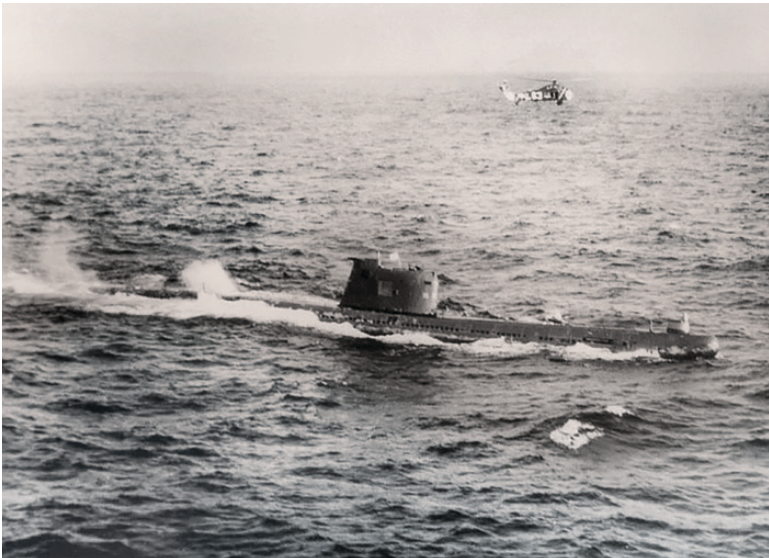


## The Agency: A History of the CIA

Then, on October 27—Black Saturday, as it became known—another U-2 was shot down by a Soviet surface-to-air missile while overflying Cuba. The pilot, Major Rudolf Anderson, had returned from previous U-2 missions with some of the earliest photographs of the Cuban missile sites. Now, it would be photographs of his three children that the Cubans recovered next to his dead body.

The White House considered bombing the surface-to-air missile battery that had launched the attack. However, the decision had been that of a local Soviet commander acting on his own initiative and not a Kremlin order. Still, as the tension of Black Saturday mounted, there was a growing sense that events were spinning out of control.

The most dangerous incident took place not in the sky but in the ocean. The US Navy was pursuing four Soviet submarines off Cuba, dropping hand grenades and depth charges to get them to surface. The Navy did not know that in addition to conventional armaments, each submarine was carrying a nuclear torpedo with a yield equal to the bomb dropped on Hiroshima.



## 10 • Missile Crisis in Cuba and at Langley

Several of the Soviet submarine captains interpreted the detonations as attacks rather than warnings. Conditions were particularly desperate aboard Submarine B-59, where rising temperatures and carbon dioxide levels caused men to faint. Captain Valentin Savitsky ordered his crew to arm the nuclear torpedo. Other officers managed to calm him and persuaded him to surface. Of all the incidents on Black Saturday, perhaps this one came closest to starting World War III.

### RESOLUTION

October 27—the most dangerous day of the Cuban Missile Crisis—was also crucial to its resolution. Khrushchev sent Kennedy an impassioned letter voicing his fear of nuclear war and offering to withdraw the missiles in return for a pledge that the United States would not invade Cuba.

Only hours later, the Soviet premier followed up with a second letter demanding that the United States remove some of its nuclear armory near the Soviet Union. These were the Jupiter missiles in Turkey. Khrushchev's offer was the subject of heated debate at ExComm, whose members were exhausted after nearly two weeks of high stress.

John McCone—who'd generally taken a hard line in dealing with the Soviets—now advised accepting the offer, pointing out that the Jupiter missiles were technologically obsolescent anyway. That evening, Bobby Kennedy met secretly with the Soviet ambassador Antoly Dobrynin and agreed to the terms. In return for the Soviets dismantling their missiles on the island, the United States would promise publicly to not invade Cuba and secretly remove its own Jupiter missiles.

All of this was done without consulting Fidel Castro, who was furious with the Soviets as well as with the Americans. The following morning, Radio Moscow announced that the Cuban missiles were being returned to the Soviet Union.



Even now, the Kennedys could not give up their Castro obsession. In June 1963, the National Security Council approved a new program of sabotage after the Cuban leader returned from a trip to Moscow. The assassination plotting resumed as well, this time under the charge of the Far East hand Desmond FitzGerald.

The planning now focused on a disaffected Cuban government official named Rolando Cubela. On November 22, CIA officers met with Cubela in Paris and provided him with a ballpoint pen rigged with a poisonous hypodermic needle to use on Fidel Castro.

This was also the day of John Kennedy's assassination in Dallas. Conspiracy theories—that there was a direct connection between the repeated CIA attempts to kill Castro and President Kennedy's death—have never been proven. However, the suspicions would haunt the agency for years to come and tarnish its reputation in Washington.

---

### Suggested Reading

Dobbs, *One Minute to Midnight*.

Scott, "The 'Incredible Wrongness' of Nikita Khrushchev."

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 How effective was the CIA's performance during the Cuban Missile Crisis?
- 2 Does the history of the Cuban Missile Crisis contain any lessons for our own age of nuclear danger?

## LECTURE 11

# UNQUIET AMERICAN: EDWARD LANSDALE IN VIETNAM

---

This lecture's main aim is to examine how the CIA tried to win the Vietnam War by unconventional means: nation building and counterinsurgency. The lecture focuses on the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s. Another theme is the CIA's other mission besides covert action: gathering and analyzing intelligence.

## BACKGROUND ON VIETNAM

Vietnam displayed what became a familiar pattern throughout the Middle and Far East during this period. The first generation of CIA officers naturally tended to sympathize—and identify with—anti-colonialism and nationalism while being pulled in an opposite direction by the logic of US Cold War foreign policy.

The nationalist struggle in Vietnam against outside control had been going on for centuries, first against the Chinese and then the French. By the time of World War II—when the country was occupied by Japan—leadership of the nationalist movement was in the hands of communists like Ho Chi Minh. This did not stop the CIA's World War II-era predecessor, the Office of Strategic Services, from sending officers to help the communist Viet Minh fight the Japanese.

Ho Chi Minh, for his part, admired certain aspects of the United States. When he proclaimed independence from France in 1945, following the defeat of Japan, he quoted words from the American Declaration of Independence: “All men are created equal.”

However, it was not long before the United States was backing the colonial French rather than the Viet Minh. France was an important ally in the emerging Cold War. After revolution in China and the war in Korea, Washington was determined to stop any more dominoes from falling to communism in Asia. The CIA now found itself running operations against the Viet Minh.

The Vietnamese eventually defeated the French, but still faced an unsettled future. For instance, the accords arising from the 1954 Geneva Conference—attended by representatives of the United States, the Soviet Union, China, France, Laos, the United Kingdom, the Viet Minh, and South Vietnam—divided the country at the 17th parallel into a northern and a southern half, pending national elections that were to reunify Vietnam in 1956.

By this time, Ho Chi Minh led an openly communist government in the northern capital of Hanoi, while in the south, power was in the hands of the anti-communist Ngo Dinh Diem. He was the prime minister of the absentee French puppet emperor Bao Dai.



## Ngo Dinh Diem

Ngo Dinh Diem was a sincere nationalist, but also a Catholic figure in a majority-Buddhist society. He was an austere, remote man who deliberately avoided contact with ordinary Vietnamese people. He literally hated to be touched.

## EDWARD LANSDALE

One important challenge for Washington was how to turn the South Vietnamese leader into someone who could rival the popularity of the charismatic Ho Chi Minh. As was often the case during this era, the White House turned to CIA director Allen Dulles. Dulles, in turn, sent for one of his best case officers: Edward Lansdale.

Lansdale arrived as part of a hand-picked CIA task force known as the Saigon Military Mission. Operating outside regular CIA channels, he reported directly to Dulles.



Edward Lansdale

Part of Lansdale's mission was to run political warfare operations against the northern government of Ho Chi Minh. His deputy for that objective was the French-American Lucien Conein, a covert operative. Conein undertook various sabotage missions over the 17th parallel, from commando raids to contaminating the fuel in Hanoi buses.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

Meanwhile, Lansdale mounted a psychological warfare campaign to frighten Catholics in the north into fleeing south. This included posters picturing the Viet Minh ransacking a Catholic cathedral and forcing worshippers to pray to a portrait of Ho Chi Minh.

However, the main focus of Lansdale's operation was not overthrowing Ho Chi Minh. It was shoring up Diem's government in Saigon. After nearly a century of French colonialism in Vietnam, Diem was sensitive to any hint of foreign interference. Lansdale succeeded at winning his confidence through a combination of native charm and the usefulness of the secret services at his disposal.

The French, despite having lost formal control, still lingered in the country, using the Vietnamese army along with criminal gangs and powerful religious sects in the countryside to undermine the Diem regime. Lansdale bought off the gangs and sects with millions of dollars in bribes and succeeded at averting a military coup.

By the fall of 1955, Diem felt confident enough to stage a referendum pitting himself against the absentee emperor Bao Dai. Shortly after his landslide victory, Diem declared South Vietnam a republic and himself its president.



## 11 • Unquiet American: Edward Lansdale in Vietnam

By now, it was clear that the national elections scheduled for 1956 were not going to take place. The temporary partition of Vietnam into communist North and non-communist South was frozen in place.

### **BUILDING SUPPORT**

Lansdale also built US support for the Diem government during its shaky early days. This was important because not all Americans were persuaded that Diem was the country's ideal leader. For example, Lansdale arranged for CIA-friendly publications such as *LIFE* magazine and *Reader's Digest* to run human-interest stories to generate public support for South Vietnam. He also helped to launch a pro-Diem lobby group—the American Friends of Vietnam—headed by prominent American Catholics.

Lansdale's biggest challenge lay in Vietnam itself and in making Diem truly popular with the South Vietnamese people. Lansdale wrote memos urging Diem to loosen up and to wave at the crowds as he passed them in his motorcade.

Lansdale also wanted to build South Vietnam as a nation and make its government a real presence in the lives of Vietnamese citizens. He organized Operation Brotherhood, a program that brought hundreds of Filipino doctors and nurses to Vietnam to fill its void of health services after the official French withdrawal. He also urged Diem to undertake land reforms to give Vietnamese peasants an economic stake in the nation's future. This was how to win hearts and minds, Lansdale thought.

The trouble was that Diem did not buy it. For all of his avowed nationalism, he was unmoved by the fate of the peasants. While Lansdale talked about governing with love, Diem's instinct was to rule with fear.

Lansdale, too, deserves some of the blame. He was culturally insensitive, basing much of his program on the assumption that what had worked in one Asian nation, the Philippines, was bound to work in another. Ultimately, Lansdale failed to understand that he could not simply conjure up a true sense of national identity in South Vietnam.

### AFTER LANSDALE

In most Vietnamese people's eyes, the true heir to the country's centuries-long struggle for nationhood was not President Diem in Saigon. It was Ho Chi Minh in Hanoi. The situation in South Vietnam deteriorated rapidly after Lansdale's tour ended in December 1956. Diem's attempts at land reform were half-hearted, at best. He showed more interest in building up his secret police and in terrorizing Viet Minh sympathizers.

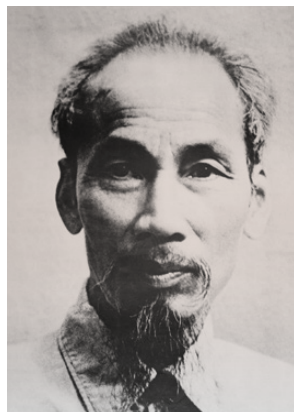
By 1960, Diem's harsh repression had thoroughly alienated the South Vietnamese peasantry, creating ideal conditions for Hanoi to launch a communist insurgency in the southern countryside. In December 1960, an alliance of Diem's opponents created the National Liberation Front to lead an armed revolt. This group was also known as the Viet Cong.

This was the situation when John F. Kennedy became US president in 1961. The Kennedy administration carried on Lansdale's efforts to build a new nation in South Vietnam, plowing millions of dollars into public works.

However, because of the growing Viet Cong insurgency, nation building took on a defensive character. The emphasis became less on developing the countryside than on pacifying it. The new theory—borrowed from British colonial strategy—was called counterinsurgency, or COIN for short.

### COIN

Under COIN, the Americans uprooted Vietnamese peasants from their traditional villages and relocated them to so-called strategic hamlets that were defended by moats and wooden stakes. Meanwhile, CIA operations became increasingly paramilitary. There were also renewed efforts to infiltrate commandos into North Vietnam itself, in Project Tiger.



Ho Chi Minh.

## 11 • Unquiet American: Edward Lansdale in Vietnam

These programs met with little success. Like earlier US intelligence efforts to insert émigré agents into Eastern Europe, Project Tiger was compromised by poor planning and communist penetration. The deputy chief of the project, Captain Dao Van, was a North Vietnamese mole. He fed Hanoi information about exactly where—and when—the South Vietnamese agents were being dropped.

Attempts to stem the Viet Cong insurgency in the South didn't work, either. The rebellion grew, instead, fed by the anger of South Vietnamese peasants about being forcibly moved to the strategic hamlets.

President Diem responded predictably with another savage crackdown. In 1963, South Vietnam's large community of Buddhist monks joined in the anti-government rebellion, some burning themselves to death in the streets of Saigon. Diem's brother Nhu ordered Vietnamese special forces to attack Buddhist pagodas.

### CHANGES TO THE US APPROACH

By now, the Kennedy administration had seen enough. When word reached the White House that generals in the South Vietnamese army were planning a coup, some American officials indicated that they would not stand in the way. In another ominous sign, Kennedy replaced the pro-Diem US ambassador, Frederick Nolting, with the imperious Henry Cabot Lodge Jr.

While some CIA officers remained loyal to the existing South Vietnamese government, Lodge began using Conein as his channel to the generals plotting Diem's downfall.



Henry Cabot Lodge Jr.



## The Agency: A History of the CIA

John McCone was now the agency's director, having succeeded Allen Dulles in 1961. He stated his opposition to regime change, as did the Saigon station chief John Richardson.

However, Ambassador Lodge felt that the CIA was overreaching, and he blew Richardson's cover. The station chief was forced to leave the country.

As coup plotting reached a climax in October 1963, the White House got the jitters and let the generals know that whatever happened, it did not want Diem and his family assassinated. The generals moved ahead anyway, seizing military and communications sites on November 1, and then attacking the presidential palace. Diem phoned Lodge, asking what the official US position was. Lodge replied that he didn't know. The South Vietnamese president was on his own.

Diem and his brother Nhu sought refuge at a nearby Catholic church, where they received word that the generals had promised them safe passage out of Vietnam. This was a lie. Shortly after leaving the church, they were knifed and shot to death. (Kennedy himself was shot to death later that same year.)

### LATER NATION BUILDING

Diem's death did not mean a complete end to Lansdale-like nation building in South Vietnam. The American impulse was revived a few years later, in the shape of the counterinsurgency program known as CORDS.

Lansdale himself returned to Saigon in 1965 for one last stab at winning hearts and minds. However, in truth, the CIA and its political approach to Vietnam subsequently played second fiddle to the US military strategy in the country.

## THE CIA'S RECORD IN VIETNAM

The CIA covert operation from the Vietnam War era that tends to be remembered had nothing to do with nation building. It was called Phoenix, an intelligence initiative that the CIA and Army command in Vietnam ran against the Viet Cong beginning in 1967, and which eventually degenerated into a bloodbath of assassination and torture.

Perhaps surprisingly, CIA analysts largely performed well in Vietnam during the war. In terms of tactical intelligence—estimates of enemy troop strength, for example—the agency provided US military commanders with generally accurate information.

Better still was the agency's strategic intelligence performance. At a time when US political and military leaders were locked into a state of optimistic groupthink about American prospects in Vietnam, the CIA consistently provided negative estimates of US progress to date and the likelihood of eventual victory.

The problem was that the White House, now under President Lyndon B. Johnson, did not want to hear this message. Johnson was wary of the CIA. He could never shake the suspicion that CIA covert operations had something to do with the Kennedy assassination.

After Johnson ordered combat troops to Vietnam in early 1965, McCone warned the president that his military strategy risked heading toward “a situation where victory would be dubious and from which we could not extricate ourselves.” McCone also resigned.



Lyndon B. Johnson

While much of the CIA's contribution to the war in Vietnam is now forgotten, Vietnam shaped the subsequent history of the CIA and US foreign relations in profound ways. Nation building and counterinsurgency deeply influenced US strategy later in Iraq and Afghanistan. The politicization of intelligence analysis during the Vietnam War—and policy makers' unwillingness to listen to advice—would also haunt the CIA in the War on Terror.

---

### Suggested Reading

Ahern, *Vietnam Declassified*.

Woods, *Shadow Warrior*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 What were nation building and counterinsurgency, and why did the CIA prioritize them in its Vietnamese operations? Why did they ultimately fail in Vietnam?
- 2 Was the Vietnam War an intelligence-gathering and analysis failure for the CIA?

## LECTURE 12

# CIA FRONTS AND THE *RAMPARTS* EXPOSÉ

---

In February 1967, *The New York Times*—following up on an investigation by a radical West Coast magazine, *Ramparts*—published a series of reports exposing the CIA's secret sponsorship of the National Student Association and numerous other apparently private American citizen groups. Among those receiving CIA patronage were labor officials, intellectuals, and even artists.

## REASONS FOR PATRONAGE

There were several reasons the CIA turned to covertly sponsoring groups. The US government did not openly fund anti-communist citizen groups. One cause was that government officials believed that overt support would greatly reduce the appeal of these groups to foreign audiences. Pro-American, anti-communist statements would be more persuasive coming from the mouths of private US citizens.

Second, several of the anti-communist groups were surprisingly liberal, and some were even socialist. Overt public funding would require direct congressional approval. Congress in the early 1950s was home to some very conservative politicians, such as Wisconsin Senator Joe McCarthy, who would have opposed such a move.

Finally, there was an ideological reason. American officials contrasted the freedom enjoyed by US citizens with the totalitarianism of the Soviet-led communist model. American artists and intellectuals had the right to express themselves freely while their Soviet counterparts were told what to think and say. It did not make any sense for the US government to be seen to be as supporting—and even managing—freedom-loving American citizens.

## THE NON-COMMUNIST LEFT

The problem the CIA faced in the 1960s was how to stop the left in Western Europe from turning communist. The CIA's solution was possibly its cleverest covert operation of the entire Cold War. Rather than bombard Europeans with crude Cold War propaganda, the agency opted for a subtle strategy. It relied on liberal—and even socialist—elements in American society, which leadership in Washington called the non-communist left, to win over their European counterparts.



This was why, for example, secret subsidies found their way to US labor officials in the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations—today’s AFL-CIO. This is also why the CIA covertly funded the international program of the nation’s main student organization, the National Student Association.

Another part of this operation was what would later prove to be among the CIA’s most controversial moves in the Cold War: its covert funding of US writers and artists. The aim was to confront Europeans with evidence that American culture was not all movies and TV. In 1951, the CIA set up the Congress for Cultural Freedom, or CCF, in Paris, which was the citadel of European anti-Americanism.

Over the next several years, the CCF spent millions of dollars exporting highbrow American culture overseas, from canvases by the Abstract Expressionist painter Jackson Pollock to concert performances by the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

### OTHER ARENAS

The main target in the opening phase of the CIA campaign was Europe. However, by the mid-1950s, the focus of the Cold War was shifting elsewhere, to post-colonial countries and other poor nations in the developing world. Here, the challenge was to persuade these countries that they were better off aligning themselves with the capitalist West than with the communist East. This was not easy, however, because the Soviets were very skilful at tailoring their propaganda to audiences in the developing world.

In this phase of the operation, the CIA recruited a bewildering variety of US citizens groups. For example, there was the Committee of Correspondence, an organization of upper-class American women who reached out to other women in the developing world with the message that they would be better off and happier living in a capitalist than a communist society.

Another group, the American Society for African Culture, appealed to intellectuals on the African continent. The message of this organization was that despite the Jim Crow laws and racial segregation that persisted in the US South, race relations in America were improving, and African Americans were able to achieve great things.

### FUNDING METHODS

Early on, when the US government was scrambling to respond to Soviet Cold War propaganda, CIA operations had a distinctly cobbled-together feel. Sometimes, in order to distribute the secret subsidies, intelligence officers would resort to simply meeting with representatives of anti-communist groups on country roads in the middle of the night and handing them bags full of cash.

After a few years, the agency began using more subtle methods of distributing funds. This began with wealthy individuals who posed as private donors. In the case of the Paris-based Congress for Cultural Freedom, the role was performed by Julius Fleischmann, the heir to a Cincinnati gin fortune. As part of the cover story, Fleischmann entertained writers and artists aboard his luxurious yacht.

## 12 • CIA Fronts and the *Ramparts* Exposé

Later, the CIA set up dummy foundations to act as funding conduits. The Congress for Cultural Freedom's main apparent source of money now became a CIA front known as the Farfield Foundation, ostensibly headed by Fleischmann.

Meanwhile, the agency's apparatus for managing a growing number of front groups grew more elaborate. Allen Dulles, shortly after joining the CIA in 1951, approved a special unit for running the fronts known as the International Organizations Division. He placed it under the command of Tom Braden.

The International Organizations Division inserted undercover intelligence officers as executives in the front groups. The CIA informed some private-citizen members of the groups about its role in their affairs and swore them to secrecy.

This was known as being made "witting." Witting members of front groups had to keep the CIA connection secret from group members who were "unwitting." Precisely who was witting and who was unwitting would later become a major source of controversy. For the most part, however, these arrangements ran smoothly.

### **STUMBLING BLOCKS**

No matter how smart the CIA officers involved were, the operation was inherently prone to problems, not least of which were posed by the front groups themselves. At the beginning, the biggest issue was, ironically, the zealous anti-communism of many of the private citizens involved.

For example, the CIA experienced constant difficulties with an official at the American Federation of Labor who ran operations for it in international labor politics. His name was Jay Lovestone. He was a fanatical anti-Stalinist—and shadowy conspirator—who thought he knew much better than the US government how to fight the Cold War.



## The Agency: A History of the CIA



Joe McCarthy

The CIA ran into similar problems with some American intellectuals in the circle of the Congress for Culture Freedom. Like Lovestone, these were ideological zealots who thought that liberals lacked the stomach for the Cold War.

Several even declared their support for the disreputable red-baiter Joe McCarthy. For intelligence officers trying to win over foreign intellectuals, this was a huge headache. McCarthy was widely hated overseas, and the last thing the CIA wanted was to see their fronts associated with him.

### Erratic Behavior

In the CIA's front groups, one danger was temperamental artists and writers going off the rails altogether. For instance, the American poet Robert Lowell—on a Congress for Cultural Freedom tour of South America—stopped taking his medication for depression, stripped naked, and mounted an equestrian statue in one of the main squares of Buenos Aires, where he declared himself the Caesar of Argentina.



## THE 1960s: DIFFICULTIES INCREASE

It was just possible to keep a lid on the front groups in the early years of the Cold War. That was a period of unusual patriotism and political conformity in American history. In the 1960s, however, the job would grow much harder.

One reason for that was the whole operation became so big and sprawling that keeping it secret was nearly impossible. Unwitting members of the groups were asking awkward questions. Outsiders were becoming suspicious. The agency's cover arrangements were stretching thin.

None of this would have mattered if American citizens were prepared to keep on turning a blind eye, as they had during the 1950s—but they were not. The Vietnam War was undermining the anti-communist consensus of the early Cold War. Young people, in particular, were growing less likely to trust their government. Additionally, the CIA's reputation fell into decline after the 1961 Bay of Pigs fiasco.

These popular attitudes were reflected in Washington politics, too. During the 1950s, Congress had, by and large, given the CIA a free ride. In the 1960s, congressmen such as the senators Mike Mansfield and Eugene McCarthy were demanding more accountability.

## THE MEDIA TURNS

The decisive moment came when the US media turned on the CIA. In 1966, *Ramparts* published an article revealing that the CIA had secretly funded research programs related to the Vietnam War at Michigan State University. Shortly afterward, the magazine learned from a disgruntled former officer of the National Student Association that the agency had also been bankrolling student organizations like it. The editors assembled a team of reporters to investigate.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

Realizing that the exposure of its front network was imminent, the CIA tried to discredit *Ramparts* before it could publish its findings. When that effort failed, the agency instructed leaders of the student association, among them a man named Eugene Groves, to call a press conference in February 1967 and admit to the secret funding. The hope was this would take the sting out of the *Ramparts* story, which was scheduled for publication in March.

It was too late. By this point, *The New York Times* had also deserted the CIA's cause. It scuppered the agency's planned press conference by printing a full-page advertisement for the March 1967 issue of *Ramparts*. Then it assigned its own reporters to the story. Within a few weeks, they had exposed numerous other front operations—from the Congress for Cultural Freedom to the women's group, the Committee of Correspondence.

### CONCLUSION

The fallout was immediate. The CIA itself was forced to abandon organizations it had spent decades and millions of dollars building up. However, some operations, such as the radio stations Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, carried on—and do so to the present day—because officials considered them too valuable to let go. Others were handed over to private funders, or, alternatively, to overt government agencies.

Some historians argue that the *Ramparts* revelations actually gave the CIA an opportunity to kill off unwanted fronts while ensuring that others survived. In more recent years, some proponents have called for a return to the tactic of the fronts in support of the global War on Terror and in democracy-promotion efforts.

However, the whole point of the American cause in the Cold War was that it stood for democracy and transparency. This was what made it better than the Soviet system. Hidden subsidies and secrecy oaths contradicted these values.

## 12 • CIA Fronts and the *Ramparts* Exposé

Ultimately, the biggest loser from the *Ramparts* episode was the CIA itself. For two decades, the persistent tension between secrecy and democracy at the core of the agency's existence had been submerged by the anti-communist consensus of Cold War America. Now, thanks to some excesses of the CIA's covert operations staff, that contradiction surfaced and became impossible to ignore. The pendulum was swinging back from secrecy to democracy.

---

### Suggested Reading

Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*.

Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 Why did the CIA secretly subsidize US citizen groups in the Cold War?
- 2 How successful were the CIA's front operations?

## LECTURE 13

# SPIES IN HOLLYWOOD: ROMANCE AND THRILLER

---

Ever since the first years of its existence, the CIA has, for purposes of its own, deliberately tried to influence the purveyors of American culture. This lecture begins by talking about such efforts, starting at the time of the CIA's founding up to the early 1970s. Later, the lecture discusses the reverse process by looking at how culture shaped the CIA.

## THE CULTURAL FRONT

The Cold War featured a cultural front, which involved the CIA trying to win the hearts and minds of foreign intellectuals. It was undertaken by presenting the United States as a source of cultural tradition rivaling that of communist Russia. In the process, the CIA became a secret patron of American musicians, artists, and writers. It concealed its role behind international front organizations and fake philanthropic foundations.

For example, in 1953, Peter Matthiessen, a brilliant young American novelist who was living the life of an expatriate writer in Paris, launched a sophisticated—and seemingly apolitical—magazine called the *Paris Review*. Years later, he admitted in a television interview with Charlie Rose that this was a cover for his real job as a CIA officer.

Even so, the *Paris Review* became a literary force, known for its in-depth interviews with world-famous writers. This made it eligible for additional CIA support from the Congress for Cultural Freedom. That was the agency's main front organization in the cultural Cold War. The Congress for Cultural Freedom subsidized the magazine by buying hundreds of copies and paying for syndication rights to its interviews. This money came via another CIA front, the Fairfield Foundation.

### The Iowa Writers' Workshop

Farfield Foundation money found its way to an unlikely recipient in the American heartland: the Iowa Writers' Workshop. Launched in the 1930s, the Iowa workshop was the best-known graduate creative writing program in the United States. During the 1940s and 1950s, its second director, Paul Engle, pitched it as a weapon in the cultural Cold War, nurturing young literary talent in an archetypally American setting.

### HOLLYWOOD

When it came to other popular cultural forms like movies, the CIA's path was less clear. Hollywood was lucrative enough never to depend on secret patronage. Additionally, American films already reached overseas audiences. For that matter, the CIA was more concerned with influencing elite opinion, rather than popular society, in foreign markets.

Still, scattered evidence indicates that the CIA was a player in the American movie industry even during the early years of the Cold War. Its activities fell into three broad categories: creating its own productions, influencing the movies being made, and keeping its influence secret.

### ANIMAL FARM

The best-documented case of the CIA making a movie is the 1954 animated version of the British writer George Orwell's novella *Animal Farm*. It is, on the surface, a children's story about a group of farmyard animals that revolt against their brutal owner only to fall under an even more repressive regime ruled by pigs and dogs.

The original *Animal Farm* was more than just a children's book. Orwell, although a leftist, was a fierce critic of the Soviet Union. His story could be read as a satirical allegory about the Russian revolution and Stalinism.



George Orwell

In 1950, the CIA's Office of Policy Coordination recruited the American documentary maker Louis de Rochemont to produce a movie version of *Animal Farm*. The project took four years and \$500,000 to complete. This was due, in part, to the labor-intensive nature of frame-by-frame animation.

## 13 • Spies in Hollywood: Romance and Thriller

Another reason was a series of interventions by the CIA over concerns that certain socialist elements in Orwell's allegory might detract from the movie's value as anti-communist propaganda.

Most significantly, the agency wanted a new ending to the story, which—in the original—finished on an ambiguous note that seemed to condemn capitalism as well as communism. The CIA wanted *Animal Farm* to conclude with a liberation-style uprising by the other animals against the pigs and dogs. Of course, the agency was—at the same time—also sponsoring a rollback of communism behind the Iron Curtain.



The British animators Halas and Batchelor resisted the agency's proposed changes, but the resulting movie remained a subtly skewed version of the book. Audiences, including generations of school children, had no idea they were watching the fruits of a CIA covert operation.

## ONGOING PRODUCTIONS

Direct CIA involvement in movie production at this early stage of the agency's history was rare. A more common approach for CIA officials was to intervene discreetly in ongoing productions. This was usually with the aim of inserting a few lines that might show the United States in a positive light to foreign audiences or the deletion of material that did not reflect well on America.



## The Agency: A History of the CIA

A rare glimpse of this process is provided in 1950s correspondence between Paramount Pictures executive Luigi G. Luraschi and an unidentified CIA officer. Luraschi, an immigrant of Italian descent, specialized in international work for Paramount and ran its censorship department. In one letter, he can be found telling his CIA contact that he had successfully removed images of drunk Americans from five Paramount pictures.

In another, he described an idea for countering communist propaganda about US race relations by inserting black spectators into a crowd watching a golf game, in a Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis comedy called *The Caddy*. However, the filmmakers rejected this suggestion for fear of upsetting white moviegoers in the US South.

### SECRETIVE INFLUENCE

The CIA's reluctance to be portrayed on the cinema or TV screen during the 1950s is surprising. Around the same time, J. Edgar Hoover's Federal Bureau of Investigation was rarely off the screen, large or small. That is because Hoover deliberately used Hollywood productions as a form of public relations for the bureau. One probable explanation for the CIA's camera shyness is that it felt it already could count on American support.

Whatever the reason, the CIA was remarkably successful at keeping its name off TV and cinema screens during the 1950s. The first explicit reference to it in a Hollywood film did not occur until 1959, in the Alfred Hitchcock spy thriller *North by Northwest*.



Alfred Hitchcock

## 13 • Spies in Hollywood: Romance and Thriller

The CIA's success in keeping itself out of the movies during the 1950s shows how much it could count on Hollywood's cooperation. Even so, Luigi Luraschi's failed attempts to influence some productions showed that there were limits to what the CIA could count on from the film studios.

### **CULTURE'S IMPACT ON THE CIA**

While the CIA actively sought to shape culture, culture also shaped the CIA. For example, the secret relationship between the CIA and highbrow literary intellectuals, as at the *Paris Review*, was not so artificial as it might first appear. Many of the young intelligence officers who ran the CIA's front organizations in the cultural Cold War—men like Tom Braden and Cord Meyer—were themselves closely involved in the literary world.

This points to a deeper truth: Spying and fiction have always gone together. Intelligence services older than the CIA—like Britain's—were often peopled by writers such as Graham Greene, John le Carré, and Ian Fleming, all of whom had worked for the British secret state at some point in their careers. There seemed to be some basic link between the two professions of spying and writing. Both, after all, involved going beneath surfaces, teasing out hidden secrets, and making up cover stories.

### **JAMES BOND AND THE CIA**

In these circumstances, it is not surprising that—in the case of the CIA—life sometimes imitated art. In other words, ideas that first cropped up in spy fiction ended up crossing over into the real cloak-and-dagger world of Cold War spies. One celebrated example is provided by Ian Fleming's James Bond novels, 14 of which were published between 1953 and 1966.

Bond and the CIA had an interesting relationship. Fleming, being British, did not face the same constraints on depicting the agency in his work as American artists perhaps did. The CIA shows up in no fewer than six

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

Bond novels in the person of Bond's American friend and counterpart, Felix Leiter. Leiter was the first glimpse that many Americans had of a CIA officer. On the whole, it was a flattering portrayal.

Fleming's positive take on the CIA reflected his own belief that the Anglo-American alliance was essential to winning the Cold War. It was also based on personal experience. Fleming had traveled to Washington several times during World War II to liaise between British naval intelligence and the CIA predecessor agency, the Office of Strategic Services. Felix Leiter bears more than a passing resemblance to that agency's founding director, Bill Donovan.

In 1959, Fleming befriended CIA Director Allen Dulles at a specially arranged meeting in London. Fleming was a famously witty conversationalist. As he expounded on the gadgets that Bond's quartermaster, Q, provides to Bond before he sets off on his adventures, Dulles sat spellbound.

Fleming claimed that Q's inventions were based on ideas concocted by British scientists during World War II, including a steel shoelace that doubled as a garrote and a golf ball that contained a compass. This was the point at which life and art began to merge.

After Dulles returned to CIA headquarters, he instructed agency researchers to begin reproducing Bond's gadgets. He later revealed in a magazine interview that agency technicians managed to replicate the spring-loaded poison knife shoe in *From Russia with Love*. However, copying the homing beacon placed on a car in *Goldfinger* proved too much for the agency.

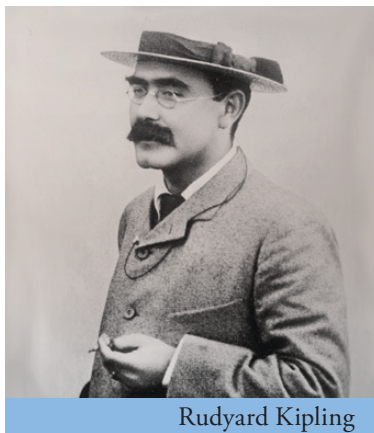
### SUBCONSCIOUS INFLUENCE

There were also instances of literature influencing CIA operations at more of a subconscious level. The clearest case of this is found in the CIA role leading up to the 1953 government coup in Iran.

## 13 • Spies in Hollywood: Romance and Thriller

To recap, this operation originated after Iran's prime minister, Mohammed Mosaddeq, nationalized the country's oil industry, thereby depriving the British of its controlling stake. The Americans joined the British in plotting against Mosaddeq because of their fears that Iran, under him, was in danger of becoming a Soviet satellite. A CIA-led coup—directed on the ground by head of the agency's Middle East division, Kermit “Kim” Roosevelt—helped topple Mosaddeq and restore the rule of the young Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

Kim Roosevelt, like Allen Dulles and so many of their agency colleagues, had devoured classic stories of imperial British agents spying in exotic locations. These included the semi-fictional memoirs of T. E. Lawrence about his role in the Arab Revolt during World War I. Roosevelt had also been deeply influenced by the stories of Rudyard Kipling, so much so that he was nicknamed for Kipling's boy-spy hero Kim.



Roosevelt was basically living out the literary adventures of his childhood when he led the Iran operation. Contemporary documents and Roosevelt's later memoir *Countercoup* are shot through with references to Lawrence and Kipling.

## CONCLUSION

Even as culture shaped the actions of the CIA, the CIA could not entirely control how American culture represented it. The CIA's reputation declined after the Bay of Pigs fiasco in 1961 as more and more references to the CIA began to appear in popular culture.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

At first, these tended to be irreverent but light-hearted, like the campy TV spy show *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* However, the dominant mode of spy literature was changing, too, from the romanticized thrillers of Kipling and Fleming to the darker, grittier realism of John le Carré.

In film, camp came to be replaced by conspiracy, with the CIA mutating into a darker, even murderous organization, as in the 1975 movie *Three Days of the Condor* starring Robert Redford.

Eventually, the agency would arrest this decline in its image by putting in place public-relations arrangements. For example, such an arrangement would lead to its positive portrayal in the 2012 film *Zero Dark Thirty*.

---

### Suggested Reading

Jenkins, *The CIA in Hollywood*.

Willmetts, *In Secrecy's Shadow*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 Why, how, and with what effects did the CIA attempt to utilize American culture during the early Cold War era?
- 2 In what ways could culture be said to have shaped the CIA?

## LECTURE 14

# NIXON, KISSINGER, AND THE COUP IN CHILE

---

On September 21, 1976, a car bomb went off in Washington DC, killing Orlando Letelier, a Chilean economist and diplomat, and a colleague. Just a few years earlier, Letelier had served in the socialist government of Chile's late president Salvador Allende. Allende died in a September 1973 military coup. Letelier had since emerged as a critic of the dictator who'd replaced him, the Chilean general Augusto Pinochet.

Much later, US government reports declassified in 2016 would confirm what was long suspected: Pinochet personally ordered Letelier's murder. Pinochet's role was revealed in the form of excerpts from a CIA internal investigation of what has gone down as one of the darkest chapters in the agency's history.

For years, the CIA has been widely regarded as responsible for the coup that toppled Allende—and brought Pinochet to power in 1973—as well as for colluding in Pinochet's international hunt for Chilean dissidents, subsequently. The CIA did have Chilean blood on its hands. However, this lecture challenges the dominant narrative of the CIA's involvement in the Chilean coup itself.

## OTHER PLAYERS IN THE COUP

The CIA was less responsible for what happened in Chile than other US players, particularly President Richard Nixon and his chief foreign policy aide, Henry Kissinger, who just two days after the assassination would be elevated from national security advisor to secretary of state.

Additionally, local actors in Chile played a more important role than has often been acknowledged. Indeed, the CIA barely participated in the coup events. The intrigue and coup in Chile in 1973 show not the height of the CIA's clandestine powers, as some have argued, but rather the agency's decline during the 1970s as the US government's chief weapon abroad in the Cold War.



Henry Kissinger

## THE CIA'S STATUS

On the eve of Salvador Allende coming to power in Chile in 1970, the director of the CIA was Richard Helms, a shrewd intelligence professional. Helms became director in 1966 after the brief and unhappy reign of William Raborn.

Helms was a rare bright spot for the CIA during the late 1960s. President Lyndon Johnson had largely ignored the agency's generally sensible advice about the Vietnam War, and it had gotten the blame, unfairly, for the surprise North Vietnamese Tet Offensive of January 1968—an event that effectively ended the Johnson presidency.



William Raborn

## 14 • Nixon, Kissinger, and the Coup in Chile

Meanwhile, the CIA was having to deal with a new mood of congressional and media inquiry following the exposure of its secret funding of US citizen groups by *Ramparts* magazine in 1967. The Anglo-American East Coast elites who had run the CIA since its founding 20 years earlier were starting to look less powerful.

Lyndon Johnson's successor, Nixon, hated the CIA. Having grown up in a small town in Southern California as the product of working-class parents, the conservative Nixon was suspicious of the agency's roots in eastern, upper social castes. He claimed that the agency was "a refuge for Ivy League intellectuals" and the "liberal Georgetown social set."

Nixon also blamed the CIA for his loss of the 1960 presidential election to John F. Kennedy.

It was no surprise, therefore, when Nixon—after becoming president—ordered a restructuring of the agency. The CIA's old analytic architecture now gave way to a new Office of Political Research and 12 national intelligence officers.

New powers of oversight were granted to an interdepartmental government body known as the 40 Committee, which was responsible for approving the agency's covert operations. In back of these reforms was the new administration's desire to place greater control of the CIA in the hands of the White House, and, in particular, Henry Kissinger. In practice, Nixon and Kissinger ignored much of the analysis the CIA provided them even after the agency was overhauled.

### **NIXON MAKES USE OF THE CIA**

Nixon did not ignore the CIA altogether. Nixon, in the first year of his presidency, ordered the agency into action in a variety of Cold War hotspots, especially in Southeast Asia, where the CIA carried on operations in Vietnam and launched new ones in Thailand and Cambodia.





Nixon's enthusiasm for covert operations did not initially extend to Latin America, however. This hands-off posture changed in 1970 with the seismic election of a Marxist socialist as president of Chile: Salvador Allende.

Allende's politics and his plans to expropriate US companies in Chile dismayed American elites. Earlier, when Allende ran for president in 1964, the CIA mounted a huge influence campaign against him consisting of radio ads, posters, and letters.

In one important respect, the US strategy for defeating Allende in 1964 was different from what it had been in Guatemala a decade earlier. Rather than backing a conservative opponent of Allende, Washington threw its support, instead, behind the center-left Christian Democrat party and its candidate, Eduardo Frei Montalva. This choice reflected a tendency of the US government during the Kennedy era to look for progressive rather than conservative allies in Latin America.

The approach worked. Eduardo Frei won 56 percent of the Chilean vote in the 1964 election, defeating Allende, who nonetheless earned a respectable 39 percent of the vote.

## ALLENDE IN 1970

Six years later, in 1970, Allende again ran for the Chilean presidency. This time, the circumstances were different. Eduardo Frei, despite achieving some progressive reforms, had been unable to fix Chile's economic problems. Chileans were starting to seek solutions outside of the constitutional order. A year earlier, the nation had seen a failed military coup led by the ultra-conservative army officer Roberto Viaux Marambio.

The situation had changed in Washington, as well. Nixon, unlike Kennedy, was more sympathetic to military dictatorships than to progressive politicians, reflecting his belief that Latins were incapable of self-government.

Distracted by the Vietnam War, the Nixon administration failed to plan for the possibility of an Allende victory. The State Department advised a hands-off approach anyway, mainly because it feared the damage that could result to the US image from a CIA intervention being exposed.

Despite such doubts, the White House ordered the CIA into action. Rather than support a particular candidate, the CIA focused instead on spoiling Allende's chances, a strategy that one CIA officer described as "trying to beat somebody with nobody." Additionally, much less funding was available.

At the polls in September 1970, Allende received a smaller share of the vote than he had in 1964: less than 37 percent. However, opponents split the remaining votes into even smaller fractions, so this share represented a plurality. Under the Chilean constitution, Allende would become president if the country's congress approved his victory within 50 days.

## NIXON'S REACTION

In Washington, Nixon was now furious. Historians think there were several reasons for his attitude toward Chile. All echoed earlier US interventions in Cold War-era Latin America.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

One was the influence of American businesses fearful of the economic consequences of an Allende victory. Nixon was also concerned about the strategic implications to the United States of an Allende presidency: What would it look like if the US president stood by and allowed another country in the Western Hemisphere to go socialist?

The result was a mad rush in Washington to prevent Allende's confirmation as president by the Chilean congress, with the CIA in the middle of it. On September 15, 1970, Nixon informed CIA director Helms that \$10 million was available to "save Chile!" The next day, Helms and his senior covert action staff developed a plan codenamed FUBELT, with two tracks to it.

The first was intended to prevent Allende from becoming president while preserving the Chilean constitution. This would use methods such as buying the votes of Chilean senators. The second track was kept extremely secret. Assuming the failure of the first track, the second track's objective was to provoke a military coup.

The CIA officers involved were almost all deeply skeptical about the prospects for FUBELT, including the normally activist station chief Henry Heckscher, an intelligence veteran. Declassified documents reveal the agency carrying out the president's directions with gloomy resignation.



President Nixon and National Security Advisor Dr. Henry Kissinger

## PROBLEMS FOR THE CIA

CIA officers assigned to the first track simply could not buy the support they needed to avert Allende's confirmation. Meanwhile, the CIA lost control of the second track. Roberto Viaux—the retired Chilean army general who had attempted to lead a military coup in 1969—was now plotting to kidnap the commander-in-chief of the Chilean army, General René Schneider, a principled constitutionalist who was resisting calls for the country's armed forces to enter politics.

Initially, the CIA supported Viaux. However, Heckscher developed reservations and transferred his allegiance to another Chilean officer, General Camilo Valenzuela. The CIA supplied Valenzuela with submachine guns, tear gas, and \$50,000 in cash.

Meanwhile, Viaux moved ahead with his own plot. On October 22—two days before the Chilean congress was due to meet and vote on Allende's election—Viaux's men ambushed General Schneider. Schneider was gunned down in his car while on his way to work. He died a few days later.

This was Chile's first political assassination in 130 years. The country's political class was appalled. Two days later, the Chilean congress voted overwhelmingly to confirm Allende's election as president. Meanwhile, the CIA scrambled to distance itself from the plotting that had led to Schneider's murder. The rival plotter, General Valenzuela, was forced to hand back the \$50,000 he'd been given and toss the submachine guns in the sea.

## A NEW APPROACH

Schneider's assassination—and Allende's accession to the presidency—sobered the mood in the White House. Nixon abandoned his previous approach of confronting Chile. Now, the Nixon administration would work to destabilize the Allende government mainly by economic means: cutting aid to Chile, pressurizing international institutions to not loan it any money, and isolating the country from its Latin American neighbors.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

The CIA was given new marching orders, taking on a quieter, subtler approach. Agency officers would continue to cultivate contacts in the Chilean military, but these would be geared more to gathering intelligence than fomenting coup plots.

It is hard to say precisely what effect the CIA action had on Allende's Chile. The Nixon administration's overt economic policies probably did more damage to the Allende government.

Still, it seems likely that the constant drip of CIA covert action did have some effect. If there was one single event that fatally weakened Allende's domestic standing, it was a Chilean truck driver strike in fall 1972. Another brief strike followed in August 1973. It is not clear if the CIA directly supported these actions, but some covert US assistance—passing through opposition elements and labor groups—probably did reach the truckers.

### THE 1973 COUP

Still, this is not the same as saying that the CIA carried out the coup of September 11, 1973. Indeed, the CIA station in Santiago did not know the coup was coming until a few days ahead of time. Station officers were entirely surprised to learn that the plot's leader was the army's top officer and former commander of the Santiago army garrison, Augusto Pinochet. They had pegged Pinochet as a career soldier with no political imagination or ambition.

The initiative for the September coup came squarely from within the Chilean military. The generals were dismayed by the economic crisis engulfing their country. They strongly disliked the Cuban and Soviet ties of the Allende government, and they felt that their honor was at stake. Eventually, these various motives trumped the army's long-standing constitutionalism.

The coup, when it came, had all the hallmarks of an expertly planned military operation. Involving all three of the armed services—the army, navy, and air force—it lasted less than 12 hours. Allende never stood a chance. Tanks and warplanes attacked the presidential palace, La Moneda. Allende, facing certain capture, chose to end his own life.

## CONCLUSION

The CIA had certainly contributed to the downfall of Salvador Allende, but compared with earlier coups in which it had been involved, its role looks marginal. Other players had acted more decisively: the Chilean military and, in Washington, Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger.

This was not any consolation to the Chileans themselves. The Pinochet regime would go on to murder at least 3,000 fellow countrymen. Tens of thousands were detained and tortured, and more than 200,000 fled abroad.

Among the exiles, several would fall victim to a coordinated effort by the military governments of Latin America known as Operation Condor to hunt down their political opponents. Not even those who sought refuge in the United States would be safe, as shown by the gruesome fate of Orlando Letelier when he and a colleague were blown up in the US capital in September 1976.

---

## Suggested Reading

Gustafson, *Hostile Intent*.

Harmer, *Allende's Chile*.

---

## Questions to Consider

- 1 Despite his natural tendency toward the secret and conspiratorial, Richard Nixon hated the CIA. Why?
- 2 In a conversation at the end of 1973, Henry Kissinger remarked that the world had given the United States “too much credit” for the coup that overthrew Salvador Allende. Is this an accurate assessment?

## LECTURE 15

# WATERGATE, NIXON, AND THE FAMILY JEWELS

---

The investigative reporter Seymour Hersh chased down several CIA-related stories in the fall of 1974. That September, he revealed in *The New York Times* that the CIA had misled Congress about US efforts to overthrow Chilean President Salvador Allende just a year earlier. His biggest story was yet to come, however.

## BACKGROUND

American society had been held tightly together since the 1940s by a Cold War consensus that was now coming apart thanks to Vietnam. As a result, the US media and Congress were becoming increasingly assertive.

In 1971, *The Washington Post* defied the wishes of the Richard Nixon White House by publishing secret government documents known as the Pentagon Papers, revealing a pattern of deliberate deception by past administrations about the progress of the war in Vietnam. Then in 1972, *Washington Post* reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein—under the leadership of editor Ben Bradlee—began unraveling the Nixon administration’s links to a botched break-in at the Democratic National Committee’s office at the Watergate complex in the nation’s capital.

### Seymour Hersh

Seymour Hersh seemed to be fearless, and he appeared to take delight in going after powerful men and institutions of government. Best known for having exposed the 1968 murder of Vietnamese civilians by US troops—known as the My Lai Massacre—he had subsequently scooped the Nixon administration’s secret bombing of Cambodia and Henry Kissinger’s wiretapping of phones belonging to other White House aides. After Nixon’s resignation as president in August 1974, it was the CIA’s turn.





## The Agency: A History of the CIA

Later, a huge story from Hersh broke on the front page on Sunday, December 22, 1974, under the headline, “Huge C.I.A. Operation Reported in U.S. Against Antiwar Forces.” In the columns that followed, Hersh reported that a special CIA unit had conducted a “massive, illegal domestic intelligence operation” during the Nixon years against domestic US antiwar and other dissident elements.

The campaign included wiretaps, break-ins, penetration by agents of political groups, and various other methods of surveillance and disruption. The activities violated the CIA’s charter, which forbade the agency from carrying out domestic police functions. That was the FBI’s job. Elsewhere in the article, Hersh explained that the abuses had come to light in the course of an internal CIA review of past illegalities.

### **EARLIER DOMESTIC SURVEILLANCE**

The CIA was in the business of domestic surveillance long before Nixon entered the White House in January 1969. One of its most controversial operations can be traced as far back as 1953. HTLINGUAL, as this program was codenamed, involved the CIA monitoring personal mail. It struck at Americans’ deepest sense of personal privacy and trust in the government.

As HTLINGUAL grew, it developed many features characteristic of CIA domestic surveillance. One was mission creep, with a program expanding as it acquired bureaucratic momentum. Another was illegality. US law prohibits anyone from tampering with the mail, let alone the CIA with its exclusion from the domestic sphere.

A third typical feature of CIA domestic surveillance was secrecy and compartmentalization, so that only those immediately involved in the operation knew about it. Apparently, the director of Central Intelligence, John McCone, was never informed of HTLINGUAL’s existence.

## 15 • Watergate, Nixon, and the Family Jewels

Finally, something else that all these operations had in common was the stamp of the intelligence professional Richard Helms, CIA director during the Nixon era. Helms never got as carried away with covert ops as other members of the CIA's founding generation. Still, his fingerprints were all over the agency's surveillance programs, from his spell as chief of operations during the 1950s to when he became director in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

CIA domestic ops really got going in 1967, the year when the enterprising West Coast magazine *Ramparts* published an exposé of secret funding by the CIA of ostensibly independent student, labor, and intellectual groups. While the agency responded by trying to dig up embarrassing information about the magazine, the initiative failed because *Ramparts* expressed authentic homegrown American dissent.

Still, Lyndon Johnson's White House encouraged the CIA to widen its probes of the New Left and anti-war movements. President Johnson was furious at liberal and leftist critics of the Vietnam War and was convinced that foreign communists must be pulling their strings. Ironically, the CIA went from covertly funding student groups to watching and harassing them.

### 1967 OPERATIONS

Two domestic CIA programs launched in 1967 operated out of the same division that opened the mail: the Office of Security. One of these, Operation Resistance, focused on student protestors who might jeopardize CIA recruitment efforts on campus. Another, Project Merrimac, was supposed to investigate possible threats to CIA facilities such as protest marches.

However, the biggest of these operations was lodged not in the Office of Security but in the most secret of all CIA compartments, the counterintelligence staff. Operation MHCHAOS grew directly out of the effort to hobble *Ramparts* magazine.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

It began in August 1967 when the CIA director Helms—responding to President Johnson’s anger about antiwar protests—ordered a wider probe into possible foreign connections of US dissidents. Helms entrusted this task to Richard Ober, the agency man who had run the operation against *Ramparts*.

MHCHAOS focused on two main groups of US dissidents. One consisted of campus leftists. The other was the black nationalist movement, which the Lyndon Johnson White House viewed as representing its own growing radical threat. For elite white men like the counterintelligence officer Richard Ober, reporting on organizations such as the Black Panther Party was not easy. The branch chief responsible got most of his early information from *Jet* and *Ebony* magazines.

MHCHAOS soon branched out. Whenever black nationalists such as Eldridge Cleaver or Stokely Carmichael traveled elsewhere in the world, as in Europe or Africa, CIA field stations and agents tracked their movements and reported back to Langley. The actress and peace activist Jane Fonda received similar attention when she traveled.

Not all the surveillance occurred overseas. One of Richard Ober’s agents—a young Chicagoan named Salvatore Ferrera—penetrated the countercultural, antiwar newspaper *Quicksilver Times* in Washington. Ferrera won the trust of the radical journalists working at the paper, and was soon taking photographs and writing columns for it.

Using his cover as a reporter, he was able to interview leaders of the peace movement, including the social radical Abbie Hoffman and some of those who would become Hoffman’s fellow defendants in the notorious Chicago Seven trial. The CIA used the intelligence gathered by agents such as Ferrera to compile files on American dissenters and write reports to the FBI. In other words, MHCHAOS was crossing the line between foreign intelligence and domestic policing.

## 15 • Watergate, Nixon, and the Family Jewels

Despite all this, MHCHAOS never found any evidence of significant foreign control of the New Left or black activists. Instead, successive reports by the agency's special operations group concluded that domestic radicalism was the product of political and social alienation in the United States.

### **THE CIA AND WATERGATE**

After the secret Pentagon Papers were published in the summer of 1971, the Nixon White House created a new covert unit to plug government leaks. These were the Plumbers. Looking for material to discredit Daniel Ellsberg, the man who had leaked the Pentagon Papers, the Plumbers broke into his psychiatrist's office in California in September 1971.

They failed to find any useful material and bungled the subsequent cover-up. This did not stop them from staging another criminal break-in on Saturday, June 17, 1972. This operation at the Watergate complex in Washington was just as inept, and five Plumbers were arrested by the DC police.



## The Agency: A History of the CIA

The Plumbers were headed by the retired CIA officer E. Howard Hunt. He was a veteran of the 1954 Guatemala and 1961 Bay of Pigs operations. He recruited most of the other Plumbers from the ranks of Cuban émigrés who had been involved in the Bay of Pigs fiasco.

Despite having retired from the CIA in 1970, Hunt kept in touch with his former colleagues even after his hiring by the Nixon White House. In the lead-up to burgling Ellsberg's psychiatrist, he had asked for—and was given—CIA cameras and disguise materials. At Hunt's request, agency scientists prepared a psychological evaluation of Ellsberg, who was a former US military analyst and Vietnam War opponent. The CIA even developed photographs Hunt's team took as it scouted the psychiatrist's office in Los Angeles.

Given all this, and other evidence of CIA complicity in Hunt's murky operations, it is not surprising that the Nixon White House thought to involve the agency again when it began covering up its links to the Watergate break-in. Six days after the arrest of the Plumbers, Nixon's chief of staff, H. R. Haldeman, summoned Helms and his deputy Vernon Walters to the White House to ask the CIA men to head off the FBI from investigating the break-in. Justifying the request, Haldeman cited national security concerns.

### FRACTURES

The CIA went along with the White House directive at first. However, this pact did not last for long. A few days later, White House counsel John Dean ordered Walters to come up with \$1 million of untraceable money to buy the silence of the jailed Plumbers. For Helms, this was a bridge too far. The CIA withdrew its cooperation, and the FBI investigation went ahead. The cover-up was starting to unravel.

In the months that followed, James McCord—the other ex-CIA Plumber beside Howard Hunt—testified that the Watergate break-in had nothing to do with the agency. His obvious implication was that it was a White

## 15 • Watergate, Nixon, and the Family Jewels

House job, from start to finish. Back at Langley, Helms and his deputies dragged their feet when dealing with Watergate investigators, and they ordered the destruction of records connecting the CIA to the Plumbers.

The outcome of the Watergate affair was hardly positive for the agency. The scandal contributed to growing public mistrust. It left Nixon even madder with the CIA than before. Shortly after his reelection in November 1972, Nixon fired Helms—who left Washington for an ambassadorship in Iran—and inserted his own choice, James R. Schlesinger.

Nixon gave Schlesinger orders to turn the agency inside out. He obliged, firing—or forcing into early retirement—some 1,500 employees. He redirected, or terminated, its domestic surveillance programs like MHCHAOS.

Schlesinger went further yet when he learned of the CIA's support for Howard Hunt's antics. He ordered an internal review of past practices. The resulting document was far from complete, but at 693 pages, it was enough. The "Family Jewels," as it became known, contained details of assassination plots, mind-control experiments, and MHCHAOS.

The agency tried to keep this potentially explosive document secret. But with growing numbers of younger officers inclined to blow the whistle on the previous generation, it did not take long for word to get out. Seymour Hersh had clearly been briefed on the Family Jewels when he wrote his game-changing piece about CHAOS for *The New York Times* in December 1974.



James R. Schlesinger.

The end of the Nixon era found the CIA at its lowest ebb: purged from within and reviled from without. The CIA's excesses and errors were enough to revive a deep sense of unease that Americans traditionally harbored about secretive government.

---

### Suggested Reading

Powers, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets*.

Prados, *The Family Jewels*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 Why did the CIA, a foreign-intelligence agency, engage in extensive domestic surveillance operations during the late 1960s and early 1970s?
- 2 Which bears more responsibility for the secret government abuses of the Nixon era: the White House or the CIA?

## LECTURE 16

# JAMES ANGLETON AND THE GREAT CIA MOLEHUNT

---

James Angleton was a long-serving chief of CIA counterintelligence. This lecture focuses on one particular aspect of James Angleton's career: his hunt for Soviet moles inside the CIA. It is a story full of deception, betrayal, and tragedy.



### ANGLETON BEGINS WITH THE CIA

In September 1947, the Office of Strategic Services was reborn as the Central Intelligence Agency, and US sights were shifting to Joseph Stalin's Russia. In spring 1948, Angleton helped lead the new agency's first major covert operation, which was to defeat Italian communists in crucial elections. Historians have since disputed the importance of the CIA's contribution to the outcome, but at the time, the victory of anti-communist forces burnished Angleton's growing legend within the agency.



James Angleton

At agency headquarters, Angleton was put in charge of CIA liaison with foreign intelligence services. British intelligence agent Kim Philby, who had earlier befriended Angleton, moved to Washington in 1949 as Angleton's British counterpart.

Around this time, the newly created state of Israel's secret service, Mossad, was keen to work with the CIA—but not with the agency's Near East division, which had a pro-Arab tilt. Angleton saw Israel as a potentially valuable intelligence partner for the United States, and he shouldered the relationship, which quickly paid dividends. In 1956, the Israelis handed him a major intelligence coup in the shape of a copy of Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev's secret speech denouncing his predecessor Stalin.

### COUNTERINTELLIGENCE

Despite his affection for Israel, Angleton's passion remained counterintelligence, and he became increasingly concerned that the CIA was falling down on the job. He felt the agency was already at a disadvantage because of Americans' dislike of government secrecy. The Soviets had no such scruples. Instead, they maintained a track record of successful

## 16 • James Angleton and the Great CIA Molehunt

deceptions dating to the 1920s, when the KGB's predecessor agency, the Cheka, ran a fake anti-Bolshevik organization, the Trust, to lure opponents of the Soviet government and arrest them.

In 1951, a supposed anti-communist resistance movement in Poland known as WiN was revealed to have been a communist deception operation, like the 1920s Trust. Afterward, Angleton led a movement within the agency to strengthen its counterintelligence capability. He got some of what he wanted in 1954: a separate compartment under his command known as the Counterintelligence Staff, or CIS, specifically dedicated to fighting Soviet deception and penetration.

Angleton came into his own during the second half of the 1950s. The CIS commanded extraordinary powers within the CIA, and Angleton's staff used these powers to the maximum. Angleton also took control of some surveillance operations outside the agency, including the legally questionable program of opening domestic mail, known as HTLINGUAL.

During this time, Angleton forged an alliance with J. Edgar Hoover's FBI and with influential anti-communists in the private sector, such as the anti-Stalinist labor official Jay Lovestone. He enjoyed the support of successive directors of Central Intelligence. He was especially close to Allen Dulles.

### Angleton in Books and Film

Among CIA contemporaries, Angleton is a highly compelling personality. He has been the subject of at least four biographies and several works of fiction, as well as the 2006 spy film *The Good Shepherd*, directed by Robert De Niro and starring De Niro, Matt Damon, and Angelina Jolie.

### THE MOLEHUNT BEGINS

Angleton's obsession with finding a mole in the CIA probably began around 1960. This is when the Soviets executed one of their military intelligence officers named Pyotr Popov, who was a CIA asset. Angleton wondered how the Soviets had discovered Popov: Had someone in the CIA told them?

Shortly afterward, in January 1961, a Polish defector unmasked the British mole, George Blake. Earlier, Blake had participated in planning meetings for Operation Gold, the construction of a tunnel from the US sector in Berlin into the Soviet sector in order to tap underground communication cables there. His exposure as a Soviet agent raised some uncomfortable questions about the CIA's tunnel operation, which had been deemed a great success. Had the Soviets known about it all along thanks to Blake and used the tunnel to feed false intelligence to the Americans?

Angleton was beginning to see strategic deception everywhere. Then came a Soviet defector named Anatoli Golitsyn. Golitsyn was a mid-level KGB officer stationed in Finland who had supposedly clashed with his boss, but his motivation for defecting was never clear. In December 1961, he turned up on the doorstep of the CIA station chief in Helsinki with a cache of KGB documents.

Spirited away to the United States, Golitsyn explained to agency officers that the CIA had a mole in its ranks. Golitsyn had seen the agent's KGB file, he said, and could recall that he had a Slavic-sounding name that began with the letter "K" and ended in "ski."

Golitsyn provided the CIA with some reasonably good intelligence. However, he combined it with some ludicrous claims. For example, the future prime minister of Israel, Golda Meir, was a KGB agent, he said. He also made a series of grandiose demands: \$10 million to create a new security service for NATO, by way of example, and requests for personal meetings with President John F. Kennedy.



Golda Meir

By 1963, his CIA handlers were fed up with Golitsyn and agreed to loan him out to the British government. However, Angleton wanted Golitsyn back. Given what Angleton knew about British operations during World War II—and the history of Soviet penetrations and such recent events as the Popov execution—Golitsyn’s theories struck him as all too believable.

Angleton had one other reason for suspecting the worst. Kim Philby, his friend of 20 years, suddenly defected to the Soviet Union in 1963. All the time that Angleton had known him, Philby had been passing secrets to the KGB, wrecking numerous CIA operations in the process.

### **THE MOLEHUNT INTENSIFIES**

In August 1963, Golitsyn returned to the United States from England, and Angleton took over his supervision. Now, Golitsyn’s claims grew even more outlandish. Angleton believed him. When the defector asked for access to CIA files on officers working on Soviet operations so that he could identify other moles, Angleton agreed.

The two men were starting to talk of a Soviet “master plot.” Meanwhile, the search for Sasha—the purported mole whom Golitsyn had mentioned immediately after arriving in the United States—claimed its first victim. Upon being shown a list of CIA staff with Slavic names, Golitsyn pointed to one beginning with “K” and ending in “ski”: Klibanski. This was the birth name of Peter Karlow, an officer in the agency’s technical services division, who had an unblemished CIA record and a Bronze Star for his World War II service.

Karlow now suffered the ordeal of a full investigation by the FBI without any inkling of the offense he was suspected of committing. Eventually, the bureau concluded that Karlow was not Sasha, but he was forced to resign from the CIA anyway.

### YURI NOSENKO

In January 1964, another KGB officer—Yuri Nosenko—contacted the CIA while on a visit to Geneva, Switzerland. Nosenko had also gotten in touch during an earlier trip outside the Soviet Union in 1962, offering to sell state secrets for a few hundred dollars. Now, he wanted to defect.

The CIA agreed to assist him, and he was whisked away to the United States. Angleton told Golitsyn about this latest defector, and Golitsyn declared him a Soviet provocation, sent to wreck the CIA's molehunt. (Golitsyn said similar things about every defector who followed his passage west.)

Nosenko might not have gotten in the trouble he did had it not been for a startling fact about his past. While working for the section of the KGB that monitored Western travelers in the Soviet Union, he had been case officer for an American who had lived in Russia between 1959 and 1962: Lee Harvey Oswald. Nosenko told his American handlers that the KGB—deeming Oswald unstable—had made no attempt to recruit him.

In other words, Nosenko was vouching that the Soviet Union had no hand in JFK's assassination a few months earlier. Nosenko might well have been telling the truth, but after Golitsyn fingered him as a KGB plant, the statements about Lee Harvey Oswald sounded suspicious: Why would Nosenko say that Oswald was not a KGB agent unless Oswald was a KGB agent, and the Kennedy assassination was a Soviet operation? Suddenly, his defection assumed massive significance.

The CIA had to find out if Nosenko was telling the truth. Nosenko's handlers confined him to a safehouse in Maryland and then a windowless cell in a remote house on the grounds of the CIA's training facility at Camp Peary, Virginia.

His living conditions were worse than had he been a prison inmate. He was subjected to more than three years of hostile interrogations. In fairness to Angleton, the agency's Soviet Division handled the interrogations. Angleton's counterintelligence staff was busy pressing ahead with the Sasha molehunt, which in November 1964 became a joint operation with the FBI.

## THE MOLEHUNT GOES ABROAD

Early on, a plausible candidate for Sasha presented himself in the form of Igor Orlov, a Berlin-based CIA contract agent who had specialized in developing female German agents to seduce potential defectors. Orlov was even known as Sasha and had used the name Kopatski.

However, he was not high-level enough to satisfy Angleton or Golitsyn. The hunt carried on, claiming increasingly senior CIA officers, including the chief of the Soviet Division, David Murphy. In all, 40 officers were put on a suspect list and 14 were investigated. None were guilty, but all suffered career damage.

Meanwhile, thanks to Angleton's liaisons with foreign intelligence services, the hunt spread abroad. For example, a secretary in Norway's military intelligence service was imprisoned. In Canada, the top counterintelligence official in the Mounties was hounded out of his job.

In the United States, the CIA's Soviet Division was so badly incapacitated that some began to wonder if the molehunt were itself a Soviet deception. J. Edgar Hoover watched as two high-yield FBI sources were burned by Golitsyn. He speculated that the Soviet defector might be a provocateur. Another agency officer concluded that Angleton himself was the mole.

## ANGLETON FALLS

A rebellion against Angleton started in the Soviet Division and spread. Several internal investigations concluded that the molehunt had reached the point of absurdity. Angleton's appearance grew more ravaged as he succumbed to alcoholism and insomnia. Yuri Nosenko, after five years of detention, was freed, paid a settlement, and retained as a CIA consultant.

When Angleton's CIA career ended, it was surprisingly swift. Successive CIA directors had supported him because of his substantial counterintelligence expertise. Then, William Colby succeeded James Schlesinger as the director of Central Intelligence in September 1973.

Colby and Angleton had a history of professional and personal conflict going back to the 1950s. Now, Colby resolved to get rid of Angleton. A report from journalist Seymour Hersh on domestic spying in *The New York Times* was the perfect opportunity to force the issue, even though Angleton had had relatively little to do with the agency's history of domestic spying abuses—the hook on which Hersh hung his story. Angleton's resignation was announced immediately after Hersh's article published.

---

### Suggested Reading

Mangold, *Cold Warrior*.

Robarge, “Moles, Defectors, and Deceptions.”

Wise, *Molehunt*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 Why has James Angleton exercised such a strong hold on the imaginations of biographers, novelists, and filmmakers?
- 2 Why did James Angleton believe Anatoli Golitsyn's claim that there was a KGB mole high up in the CIA?

## LECTURE 17

# COLBY, CHURCH, AND THE CIA CRISIS OF 1975

---

On September 16, 1975, Senator Frank Church—a 51-year-old Democrat from Idaho—opened the first in a series of public hearings on US intelligence errors and abuses. Church presided over a powerful body known as the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities. It was more commonly referred to as the Church Committee. On this day in September 1975, seated across from him was the director of the CIA, William Egan Colby.

Church and Colby stood for two different conceptions of the place of secret government in a democracy: One emphasized openness, oversight, restraint; the other affirmed the need for secrecy and covert action. This lecture covers how that public hearing came to be and other CIA-related events of the mid-1970s.



### BACKGROUND

The White House of the new administration of President Gerald Ford was caught unawares by a December 1974 exposé of alleged CIA abuses published in *The New York Times*. It was by the investigative reporter Seymour Hersh. Subsequently, the agency was subjected to a series of high-profile investigations: first by a presidential commission and then by special committees in both houses of Congress. All of them were accompanied by the steady drip of journalistic reporting.

Part of the problem was that Colby had not informed the new administration about the so-called Family Jewels: a list of past intelligence abuses his own people had compiled during a recent in-house investigation. As a result, the president and his advisers learned about some of the excesses not from the agency but in Hersh's published work. Belatedly, Colby briefed Secretary of State Henry Kissinger on Christmas Eve. Kissinger warned Ford to expect more "horrors" from the Family Jewels.

Ford was stunned. Still, Ford's response was not to go after the CIA. His instinct, as president, was to preserve—not undermine—the prestige and power of the executive branch.



President Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger

## 17 • Colby, Church, and the CIA Crisis of 1975

President Ford's closest advisors agreed with him. These included Kissinger, who already believed that Colby had aired too many secrets. Another confidante was Ford's chief of staff Donald Rumsfeld and his deputy chief of staff Richard Cheney.

With Cheney managing the White House response, President Ford commissioned a blue-ribbon panel to investigate the alleged CIA abuses to be chaired by Vice President Nelson Rockefeller. It was fairly obvious from the first that the Rockefeller Commission was intended to assuage public anxieties about the agency without actually producing meaningful reforms.



Nelson Rockefeller

Colby, compared with many of his colleagues, favored a policy of relative openness. Still, while he was prepared to talk at length about some CIA secrets, others—like the internal Family Jewels report—he tried to keep back from investigators, even the friendly ones on the Rockefeller Commission.

Meanwhile, the Rockefeller panel wrapped up its inquiry and released its final report in June 1975—after Cheney edited it and after a section on CIA assassination plots was deleted. Even then, the study made hair-raising reading. For example, it confirmed Seymour Hersh's claim that the CIA had exceeded its legal authority by engaging in domestic surveillance of the anti-Vietnam War movement. The report also included shocking new revelations about a CIA program that tested mind-altering drugs on unwitting subjects, a program known as MKUltra.

The Rockefeller Commission recommended the formation of a congressional joint-oversight committee to prevent future intelligence abuses. In other words, the report was not a complete cover-up. However, it failed to appease forces pushing for more investigation and stronger reforms. If anything, by omitting the issue of plots to assassinate foreign leaders, the report gave impetus to a growing movement against the CIA.

### DANIEL SCHORR

In January 1975, just after learning about the agency's in-house Family Jewels inquiry, President Ford had been lunching with senior editors of *The New York Times* when the conversation turned to the Hersh story. The president responded that he did not want Congress looking further into certain CIA actions. "Like what?" asked an editor. "Like assassinations!" Ford blurted out. Then, the president added, "That's off the record!"

The *Times* agreed not to publish the president's slip. However, someone at the meeting let the CBS reporter Daniel Schorr know, and he decided to investigate further. Schorr, during an interview with Bill Colby, asked casually, "Has the CIA ever killed anyone?" Colby responded, "Not in this country," implying that the agency might have abroad.

Now, Schorr knew he had a story. On February 28, he appeared on *CBS Evening News* with a report about CIA murder plots against foreign leaders. Americans were understandably sensitive about assassinations following the murders of Martin Luther King Jr. and the Kennedys during the 1960s. Schorr's report struck a nerve.



JFK assassination

Newspapers began investigating rumors of CIA attempts to do away with Fidel Castro and other leaders. The syndicated columnist Jack Anderson chose this moment to publish a story about a joint effort by the CIA and the billionaire Howard Hughes to raise a sunken Soviet submarine. Anderson's decision might have been influenced by the fact that he had earlier been the victim of a particularly obvious attempt at CIA surveillance.

### Schorr and Hersh's Approach

Daniel Schorr and Seymour Hersh were unusually aggressive reporters, neither of them popular with colleagues. Many journalists even in the post-Watergate era still favored the don't-rock-the-boat attitude that had prevailed previously. However, in the spring of 1975, Watergate-style investigative journalism was still to the fore.

### WHISTLEBLOWERS

In addition to executive branch gaffes and investigative journalism, there was a third force at work against the CIA, and it came from within the agency itself: whistleblowers. Some former intelligence officers had grown disillusioned with the CIA, and they set out to expose its mistakes.

The CIA's Richard Helms and President Richard Nixon had teamed up against the first high-profile agency whistle-blower, Victor Marchetti. However, they had failed to prevent the eventual publication of his book *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence* in June 1974. If anything, official attempts to silence Marchetti had drawn attention to him.

Now came the biggest CIA whistleblower of them all, Philip Agee. A young field officer in Latin America with a wayward personal life, Agee had quit the agency in 1968. During a spell in Mexico, he had established contact with Soviet and Cuban intelligence, then moved to Paris and began work on a tell-all book about the CIA's Latin American operations.



Philip Agee

When agency officials got wind of this, they dispatched agent Sal Ferrera to befriend Agee and keep an eye on him. Ferrera introduced Agee to another agent posing as a wealthy patroness of left-wing causes. She donated the former CIA man a typewriter on which to write his book. Agee's exposé, *Inside the Company*, was published in April 1975. Its cover featured a photograph of the typewriter, which Agee had discovered was rigged with monitoring devices. The appearance of *Inside the Company* completed a miserable spring for the CIA.

Abroad, the American position in Vietnam had finally collapsed with the fall of Saigon. Meanwhile, the steady leak of secrets was creating the impression of a spy agency out of control. America's post-Watergate culture reflected this image. The CIA was depicted as a villain in the movie *Three Days of the Condor*, starring Robert Redford and released in September 1975.

### CONGRESSIONAL MOVES

Congress was the perfect forum for the anti-CIA mood of the times. The strongest intelligence-oversight measure ever enacted—the Hughes-Ryan amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act—was passed into law. It required the CIA to brief no fewer than six congressional committees before undertaking covert operations.

## 17 • Colby, Church, and the CIA Crisis of 1975

Midterm elections just months earlier had ushered to Washington a new class of national leaders known as the Watergate babies. Capitol Hill was abuzz with talk of writing a new charter for the CIA or abolishing the agency altogether.

In January 1975, the Senate created the Church Committee, with a budget of \$750,000 and a brief to investigate intelligence abuses. It would pay particular attention to a topic omitted from the Rockefeller report—assassinations—as well as the recent coup against President Salvador Allende in Chile, where the CIA had been active politically.

The following month, the House followed the Senate's example and established the Select Committee on Intelligence, later known as the Pike Committee for its chair, the New York Democrat Otis Pike. The Pike Committee took a wider approach, looking at the CIA's intelligence performance as well as covert ops.

### **THE CHURCH COMMITTEE HEARING**

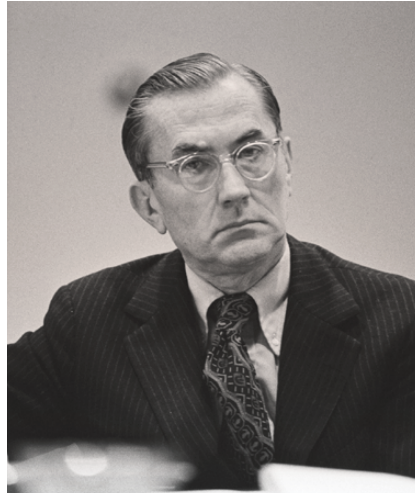
In the months that followed, the Senate and House committees interviewed hundreds of intelligence professionals and held public hearings. The Church Committee convened in the same caucus room where the Watergate inquiry had taken place.

For the important confrontation between Frank Church and Bill Colby on September 16, 1975, the committee chairman chose to focus on an obscure but nonetheless lurid CIA abuse. Agency scientists had failed to obey an earlier presidential order to destroy all biological and chemical weapons in their possession. Specifically, they had hung on to a small but highly lethal cache of rare shellfish toxins and cobra venom.

Church pressed Colby about this lapse, using it to build his case that the CIA was a rogue elephant. The director responded with his usual coolness, but on this occasion, Colby made a mistake. Church had requested that he bring with him an electric pistol the agency had designed to fire miniature darts that contained poison.

Colby produced the weapon, and committee members took turns to inspect it as cameras clicked furiously. The next day, the image was emblazoned on the front pages of many of the nation's newspapers, and Colby realized that he had handed Church a huge assist.

Another CIA bumble followed in a later hearing. The focus this time was on the agency's domestic-spying operations. Church opened the proceeding by listing the prominent citizens whose mail the agency had opened. His own name was among them.



William Colby

The first witness was the legendary CIA counterintelligence chief James Angleton. He managed to confound the investigators with a statement that achieved instant notoriety: "It is inconceivable that a secret intelligence arm of the government has to comply with all the overt orders of government." Church was gleeful. He ended his cross-examination of Angleton by reasserting the rogue-elephant thesis.

### THE PIKE COMMITTEE'S FINDINGS

Of the two congressional committees that investigated the CIA in 1975, the one that produced the most accurate overall analysis was the Pike Committee in the House. Pike's committee found new things to fault about its performance, including financial waste and intelligence failures in the Middle East and elsewhere. The combined onslaught of the Pike and Church committees took its toll.

## CONSEQUENCES FOR THE CIA

CIA morale was at an all-time low. Officers returned home at night to face difficult questions from wives and children, who by day had watched hearings about assassinations and mail opening.

President Ford fired Colby in November 1975, bringing in career politician George H. W. Bush as his replacement. Yet the firing marked the beginning of an upturn in CIA fortunes.

A group of veteran officers led by psychological-warfare expert David Atlee Phillips decided that they should wage a public relations campaign to improve the agency's image. Phillips founded what became known as the Association of Former Intelligence Officers to act as the nucleus of this effort, and he published his own memoirs as a riposte to the whistleblowers.

Just before Christmas 1975, a tragedy played into the CIA's hands. Richard Welch, the agency's station chief in Greece, was murdered by gunmen outside of his home in Athens. Welch's employment by the CIA had been revealed years earlier, and his home was known as the station chief's residence. These facts did not stop the CIA and some of its allies in the American media from blaming Welch's death on agency critics.

## THE TIDE TURNS

As 1976 and America's bicentennial year dawned, press and public opinion began to turn against the congressional committees and their supporters. Otis Pike became embroiled in a feud with Henry Kissinger, and the House voted against releasing his committee's report.

However, the *Village Voice* obtained a copy via CBS reporter Daniel Schorr and published it in February 1976. In turn, the House Ethics Committee started legal proceedings against Schorr, and he was effectively fired from his job at CBS. As for the Church Committee, there was a definite sense of anticlimax when its final report was published in April 1976.



The outcome of the events was far from straightforward. Yes, the CIA was reined in, and congressional oversight improved. In 1976, the Senate established a permanent select intelligence committee, and, the following year, the House did the same. Then, in 1978, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act—FISA—mandated strict procedures for authorizing surveillance.

These and other reforms were important steps in making the US intelligence community more accountable, but they fell short of overhauling the CIA's charter, or even abolishing it altogether, as some had demanded. Meanwhile, under the directorship of Bush, the agency pushback that had begun under Colby gathered steam. The CIA put in place new measures to guard against future leaks and whistleblowers.

---

### Suggested Reading

Johnson, *A Season of Inquiry Revisited*.

Olmsted, *Challenging the Secret Government*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 How accurate was Senator Frank Church's characterization of the CIA as a "rogue elephant"?
- 2 Who won the intelligence battles of 1975: critics or supporters of the CIA?

## LECTURE 18

# THE CIA, CARTER, AND THE HOSTAGE CRISIS IN IRAN

---

On November 4, 1979, 52 Americans were captured and held hostage after Iranian militants broke into the US Embassy in Tehran. This lecture covers the background of the Tehran hostage crisis, focusing in particular on the CIA's failure to anticipate Iran's Islamic revolution. This lecture also discuss the successful rescue of six US diplomats who avoided capture during the events of 1979.

### **BILL DAUGHERTY**

Among the captured was the CIA's Bill Daugherty. Daugherty's captors were skeptical of his State Department cover and interrogated him several times. But the tough young spy—a former Marine aviator—did not reveal his true identity.

Then, during a grilling in early December, Daugherty noticed a change in his captors' mood. The lead interrogator produced a CIA cable that had been discovered in the embassy safe. It explicitly identified Daugherty and another hostage as undercover intelligence officers. He decided to come clean, revealing that he was with the CIA. His Iranian captors became incensed.

Part of the problem Daugherty faced was the gap between Iranian perceptions of the CIA presence in Iran and the reality. For the Iranians, the agency was a malign, all-powerful force. Three decades earlier, the CIA and British intelligence had toppled the democratically elected Iranian premier Mohammad Mosaddeq and restored the dynastic rule of the pro-Western shah, after Mosaddeq nationalized the country's oil fields.

Continuing anger about the 1953 coup—and subsequent US meddling in Iran—were driving forces behind the Iranian Revolution of 1979 that forced the shah into exile and lifted Ayatollah Khomeini to power. The CIA station inside the US Embassy was referred to as “a nest of spies,” and Khomeini actively encouraged the young radicals who had invaded the compound.

However, the reality was different than the CIA image, as Daugherty tried to explain. For years, the agency's presence in Tehran had been minimal, he said. The United States relied mainly on the shah to provide intelligence on the country. The CIA station shrank even more after the shah fled. It consisted of just four officers, one of whom was on home leave when the embassy was seized. His interrogators were not convinced and beat him.

## CONTEXT ON IRAN

The larger context in which the CIA was operating at the time of the Iran crisis involved American foreign policy during Jimmy Carter's presidency in the late 1970s. In the presidential election of 1976, he ran against the political establishment, including the CIA, which was then at a low point after a series of scandals, investigations, and reorganizations.

Carter's vice president, Walter Mondale, took part in one of those investigations as a member of a select Senate committee—the Church Committee—in 1975 and 1976. Furthermore, the Carter administration had promised a more open, ethical, and positive kind of foreign policy. At the center of the president's vision was a cause he held deeply: human rights.



Jimmy Carter



Walter Mondale

During the Carter era, the CIA faced criticism from both the left and right. The American right was protesting détente, the recent easing of Cold War tensions with the Soviet Union. Some conservatives claimed that the CIA was to blame; that the agency was underestimating the Soviet threat.

This was the background to what became known as the Team B exercise of 1976. Hardline anti-communists on the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board called for a team of independent experts outside the CIA to come up with a competitive analysis of Soviet intentions and capabilities.

## THE TEAM B REPORT AND A NEW DIRECTOR

The Team B report was completed in October 1976 and promptly leaked to the press. It grossly exaggerated the Soviet Union's military strength, especially its nuclear arsenal. It also presented a view of Soviet intentions much like that of the agency counterintelligence chief, James Angleton: Moscow was bent on world domination, and any move suggesting otherwise was a deception to lull the US into submission.

The Team B report contributed to a process that had been underway since the Vietnam War, and would intensify in years to come: the politicization of intelligence. The Team B episode also hurt CIA morale. By now, the agency was used to criticism of its covert operations, but it was unfamiliar with having its intelligence analysis challenged in public.

Then came Jimmy Carter's move to replace George Bush as CIA director. Although Bush had opened the door to Team B, agency insiders held him in high regard, seeing him as a loyal defender. In contrast, Carter's pick, Admiral Stansfield Turner, was perceived as a throwback to Nixon's choice of directors: James Schlesinger, a political appointee brought in by a hostile president to wield the hatchet.

Turner made unpopular staffing moves, with many poorly handled firings on the covert operations side. But the analysts had reason to feel aggrieved as well. Turner brought in another outsider, the Harvard professor Robert R. Bowie, to run the Directorate of Intelligence, now renamed the National Foreign Assessment Center. Veterans saw Bowie's appointment as a slap in the face.



Stansfield Turner

## 18 • The CIA, Carter, and the Hostage Crisis in Iran

Turner also offended espionage traditionalists by downplaying the CIA's human sources—HUMINT—in favor of signals and image intelligence from outside agencies. For many CIA officers, their dissatisfaction with Turner crystallized in the fall of 1977. This was when the popular former director, Richard Helms, was criminally charged with having lied to Congress four years earlier.

The flap was over the agency's involvement in plots against the Chilean president, Salvador Allende, who had been ousted in a coup in 1973. Helms pleaded no contest and received a suspended two-year jail sentence and a \$2,000 fine.

CIA officers were dismayed by Helms's treatment. His conviction was not Turner's fault, but its timing added to the sense of the new director being an unwelcome interloper in an agency that was under siege.

### **CARTER'S FOREIGN POLICY**

President Carter's Polish-born national security advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, was a hardliner who put beating the Soviets above all other aims. Opposite him, Cyrus Vance, Carter's secretary of state, favored détente and arms control. As the 1970s wore on, Brzezinski's brand of muscular anti-communism gradually won out over Vance's more cautious approach.

Nowhere in the world was this more apparent than in Iran. Despite his shaky human-rights record, the Iranian king, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, was a huge US strategic asset. He allowed Western access to Iran's oil fields, guarded his country against communism, and cooperated with Israel—the Americans' other main ally in the Middle East. He also provided the United States with a military toehold right on the border of the Soviet Union.

With so much at stake, it was perhaps predictable which way Carter would lean on Iran. He and Vance did put some diplomatic pressure on the shah to liberalize the regime. However, in public appearances, Carter expressed full support for Iran and its leader.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

With American backing, the shah was carrying out a program of rapid modernization called the White Revolution. These efforts brought some benefits to ordinary Iranians, but they also caused widespread social upheaval. Meanwhile, rising economic expectations bred a new sense of frustration—and opposition—among the country’s middle class.

Eventually, Iran became a powder keg. With political repression, American imperialism, and economic suffering providing ample combustible material, the spark came from an obscure, elderly cleric named Ruhollah Khomeini. Having been exiled by the shah to Iraq in 1964, he spoke powerfully to the growing belief of many Iranian Muslims that the shah’s secular regime had trampled on their faith. He also embodied the spirit of Iranian nationalism.

In January 1978, an Iranian demonstration against the shah ended in the death of at least six protestors, and further protests and killings. Next door in Iraq, the regime was pressured into deporting the exile Khomeini. This was a mistake, as the cleric subsequently moved to Paris, where he gained access to Western media and direct phone lines back home.

Meanwhile, in September 1978, the shah declared martial law but hesitated before ordering a full military crackdown. He feared that his soldiers would defect to the opposition rather than fire on their fellow citizens.

### EVENTS OF 1979

Meanwhile, in Washington, President Carter vacillated between the advice of Vance and Brzezinski. Vance wanted to explore a transition of Iranian power to the country’s moderates. Brzezinski advised urging the shah to use force against his opponents.

By the time the American president sided with Brzezinski, it was too late. In January 1979, the shah fled the country. On February 1, Khomeini returned home, greeted by millions of cheering supporters. Within weeks, he was proclaimed the grand ayatollah of the Islamic Republic of Iran.



Brzezinski with Secretary of State Cyrus Vance

Now, in addition to being a major diplomatic defeat for the Carter administration, the Iranian Revolution of 1978–1979 was a big embarrassment to the CIA. Put simply, the agency failed to see the revolution coming.

The agency failed to see it for several reasons: The CIA presence in Tehran was very small, personnel cuts had decimated the ranks of specialists, and CIA leadership was preoccupied with other concerns, such as President Carter's efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. Finally, Washington leadership failed to question its own perception of the shah as a dependable ally with an effective intelligence service of his own.

These intelligence lapses also reflected a larger deficit of imagination in Washington. American officials tended to view the developing world through the lens of the Cold War. The enemy was always communism and the means to defeat it Western-style modernization. This view failed to take into account the growing power in the Muslim world of a form of nationalism that rejected both the communist and Western versions of modernity in favor of religion.



Regardless, the cost of Washington's complacency was massive. At a stroke, the revolution deprived the US of a crucial strategic and military asset, and access to a critical oil supplier.

### THE HOSTAGE CRISIS

Then, matters became worse. During the summer of 1979, US-Iranian relations briefly showed signs of improving, and the Carter administration put out feelers to moderates in Tehran. However, the American president was coming under pressure from some of his advisors, especially Brzezinski, to allow the shah into the United States so that he could receive treatment for his cancer. Carter did so in October.

Next came fury in Tehran and the takeover of the US Embassy by militants who feared that Washington would restore the shah to the throne, as it had done in 1953. Bill Daugherty's ordeal had begun.

However, there was one bright spot for the CIA amid the gloom. On January 27, 1980—almost three months after the hostage crisis began—the CIA succeeded at rescuing six US Embassy workers who had avoided capture by hiding in the Tehran homes of the Canadian ambassador, Ken Taylor, and a colleague.

CIA officer Antonio J. Mendez came up with an elaborate cover story for the operation. US officials pretended to be a Canadian film crew scouting locations for a fictitious Hollywood movie production, *Argo*. This later became the title of a real Hollywood movie about the operation, starring and directed by Ben Affleck.

The Hollywood version celebrates the heroism of the CIA and downplays the contributions of officials from other countries: Britain, New Zealand, and, especially Canada. However, it was the Canadian ambassador, Taylor, who first had the idea of disguising his American guests as Canadians. His prime minister and secretary of state also supported the plan.

## 18 • The CIA, Carter, and the Hostage Crisis in Iran

The rescue succeeded, with the six embassy workers passing through security at Tehran airport and safely boarding a commercial flight to Europe. They returned to a happy reception in the United States.

Unfortunately, the caper was the last successful rescue attempt of the hostage crisis. In April 1980, President Jimmy Carter authorized Brzezinski to plan a military extraction after exhausting the diplomatic options urged by Vance to free the remaining Americans. This was Operation Eagle Claw, which ended in the deaths of eight American servicemen when a helicopter and transport plane collided in a desert sandstorm. Vance resigned in disgust.

For once, the CIA did not get the blame. The Oval Office did. In the November presidential election, Jimmy Carter lost in a landslide to the Republican candidate Ronald Reagan, who promised to restore American power in the world.

On January 20, 1981—444 days after the crisis began and minutes after Reagan took the oath of office—the hostages were released. In a final humiliation for Carter, Ayatollah Khomeini delayed the plane's departure until the US transition was official.



Among those on board were Bill Daugherty, the young CIA officer who had spent his last months in Iran under solitary confinement at Tehran's notorious Evin jail. His tall frame had dropped to 133 pounds, but he was alive and free.

---

### Suggested Reading

Farber, *Taken Hostage*.

Jones and Silberzahn, *Constructing Cassandra*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 What was Jimmy Carter's foreign policy, and where did the CIA fit into it?
- 2 Why did the CIA fail to predict the Iranian Revolution of 1978–1979?

## LECTURE 19

# REAGAN, CASEY, AND THE IRAN- CONTRA SCANDAL

---

This lecture discusses the origins of the CIA's Contra and Iranian operations, and how they merged into one. These events culminated in criminal charges against 14 persons. Those, in turn, produced 11 convictions, two of which were overturned on appeal. There were also two pre-trial pardons and three dismissals. This lecture also examines the impact of these covert programs on Central America, the Middle East, and the United States.

### TWO EVENTS

It was just past noon on October 5, 1986, when a 14-year-old Nicaraguan soldier spotted an unidentified cargo plane approaching his position. The boy raised his Soviet-made surface-to-air missile launcher to his shoulder. He fired, and scored a rare hit.

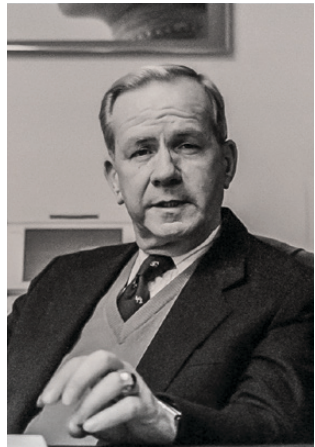
Only one of the cargo plane's four crewmembers survived the crash. That was Eugene Hasenfus, a former US Marine from Wisconsin. He told reporters that he had been ferrying weapons to Nicaragua's Contras: rebels fighting the leftist Sandinista government. He was working for the CIA.

A month later—on November 3, 1986—a little-known news-magazine in Lebanon printed another story that gained international attention. A senior US official had secretly visited the Middle East earlier that same year to negotiate the release of American hostages held in Beirut.

The envoy was Robert “Bud” McFarlane, a former national security advisor to President Ronald Reagan. McFarlane's destination had been the site of a previous hostage crisis, Tehran. The Iranian speaker of the parliament confirmed the story, adding some juicy details.

McFarlane and his team went to Iran offering US-made military spare parts in exchange for the hostages' release, along with gifts of pistols, a bible, and a cake baked in the shape of a key. The revelations were deeply embarrassing for the Reagan administration.

The hostage talks contradicted the president's repeated statements that he would never negotiate with terrorists or with the revolutionary Iranian government. And the disclosure that the CIA was engaged in arms running in Nicaragua violated an explicit congressional ban on such operations.



Robert McFarlane



Soon, it emerged that the two events—despite occurring more than 8,000 miles apart—were closely linked. On November 25, 1986, Attorney General Edwin Meese set aside weeks of denials and partial admissions by the administration. He declared during a press conference at the White House that profits from the military sales to Iran were being used to arm the Contra rebels in Nicaragua.

Iran-Contra—as the scandal became known—dominated headlines for the next year. The Reagan administration appointed a blue-ribbon commission to investigate, followed by televised congressional hearings that made Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North—a staff officer in the president’s National Security Council—into a polarizing celebrity figure.

## **POLITICAL BACKGROUND**

The 1980s witnessed a temporary revival in the CIA’s fortunes after the scandals and intelligence reforms of the 1970s. Ronald Reagan had campaigned for the presidency with the pledge to restore American power and prestige in the world. He meant it, and the CIA was part of those plans.

After winning the election in November 1980, Reagan appointed his campaign manager, William J. Casey, as the new director of the CIA. Casey was about to turn 68 when the Reagan administration took office in January 1981. Still, he brought with him to CIA headquarters a new, younger generation of agency officers.

### Casey's Recruits

William J. Casey's new CIA recruits tended to be from less elite backgrounds than many of their Ivy League predecessors. As one journalist put it, they were likely to prefer bowling to tennis. They also tended to be more conservative politically.



Casey had more clout in Washington than any CIA director since Allen Dulles held the office from 1953 to 1961. Reagan awarded him cabinet rank, alongside the secretaries of state and defense. The Pentagon and State Department were often at loggerheads during the Reagan administration. Casey was able to exploit this division to improve the CIA's standing.

Some of the checks on government secrecy that Congress had imposed during the late 1960s and 1970s were now rolled back. The Freedom of Information Act, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, and whistleblower protections—which were negligible anyway—were all watered down. Barry Goldwater, the Arizona Republican running the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, was particularly friendly to the CIA.

## **COVERT ACTION IN CENTRAL AMERICA**

Under Reagan, covert operations intensified and were joined by entirely new ones in Africa, Southeast Asia, the Eastern Bloc, and, above all, Central America. In 1979, left-wing Sandinista rebels in Nicaragua had deposed the corrupt, US-supported regime of the long-ruling Somoza family.

The Sandinistas were named for a radical guerilla leader who had been killed by the Somoza government years earlier. Upon taking power, they instituted a program of nationalization and land reform. Meanwhile, another left-wing insurgency was underway in nearby El Salvador.

Initially, the Reagan administration was concerned mainly with halting the Nicaraguan conduit of Cuban supplies to El Salvadoran rebels. Soon, though, this aim changed to getting rid of the Sandinistas altogether. In late 1981, President Regan authorized an \$18 million operation to support anti-Sandinista forces—the Contras—who mainly consisted of former members of the Somozan National Guard, now based in Honduras.

At the CIA, Bill Casey handed management of the operation to Duane Clarridge, a veteran covert operator. The Contra operation wasn't just paramilitary. It also included economic aid, psychological warfare, and secret support for domestic opponents of the Sandinista government. Confronted by these challenges, Sandinista rule grew more repressive, while the Contras disingenuously claimed they were the true face of democracy in Nicaragua.

## **THE BOLAND AMENDMENTS**

In June 1982, the CIA assigned an agency propaganda expert named Walter Raymond to come up with ways of winning American public support for the Contras' war against the Sandinistas. He established a new office in the State Department for this purpose.



## The Agency: A History of the CIA

Meanwhile, Ronald Reagan began describing the Contras as “freedom fighters” and “the moral equal of our Founding Fathers.” However, after training in Honduras with Argentinian army officers, the Contras launched attacks deep into Nicaragua, where they assassinated government officials, terrorized villages, and raped Sandinista literacy teachers.

Details of these atrocities seeped into the US media. In December 1982, Congress explicitly prohibited the CIA from funding the Contras with the Boland Amendment to the Defense Appropriations Act for 1983.

This did not stop Casey and Clarridge. Over the course of the next two years, the CIA deployed attack boats and helicopter gunships against targets on the Nicaraguan coast. By this point, relations between the CIA and Congress had reverted to 1970s-like hostility.

Congress now enacted a second Boland Amendment prohibiting any government agency involved in intelligence from supporting the Contras. Casey was ready for this. Over the course of 1984, he had been gradually turning over the Contra-supply operation from the CIA to the White House’s National Security Council (NSC).

The NSC had no business running covert ops, but this did not stop McFarlane from agreeing to Casey’s plan. McFarlane delegated day-to-day management of the operation to his deputy, the decorated Vietnam veteran Oliver North.

### 1984 IN NICARAGUA

As 1984 progressed, Clarridge initiated North in the Nicaragua operation, introducing him to the Contra leadership. North then began reaching outside of the federal government to potential donors in the corporate world and overseas. Among these were the beer magnate Joseph Coors and the sultan of Brunei.

Next, North brought in former government personnel to staff the operation.

## 19 • Reagan, Casey, and the Iran-Contra Scandal

Retired Air Force officer Richard Secord sorted out the Contra supply lines while ex-CIA officer Felix Rodriguez took charge of the receiving end in El Salvador. Soon, North had constructed a semi-private, standalone entity. Secord—employing the corporate lingo of the time—dubbed it the Enterprise.

Despite the CIA's clandestine support, North remained in need of money to fund the war in Nicaragua. Late in 1985, he had the idea to combine the Contra operation with the other main project he'd been asked to handle for the White House. At this point, the Iran component of the Iran-Contra scandal came into play.

### IRAN-CONTRA

Ronald Reagan had won the US presidency partly on the back of Jimmy Carter's humiliation over the Tehran embassy hostages. The Iranians' release of US hostages immediately after Reagan's inauguration was among the last good news the president would receive from Tehran.

The Iranian religious leader and ultimate authority, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, had since supported the creation of Hezbollah—a Shia Islamist group in Israeli-occupied south Lebanon—among other provocations. In 1983, Hezbollah bombed the US Embassy in Beirut, wiping out the CIA station there, and the US barracks at Beirut international airport, where 241 Marines and other servicemen died. Kidnappers also seized American hostages in Beirut, including, in March 1984, the new chief of the CIA station there, William Buckley.

The kidnappings placed Reagan in a bind. On one hand, he had publicly vowed not to negotiate with terrorists. Privately, he was terribly concerned by the hostages' plight, especially after Casey played him a tape of Buckley being tortured.



Ronald Reagan

Then, a solution seemed to present itself. An Israeli ex-spy contacted McFarlane and explained that he knew an Iranian businessman named Manucher Ghorbanifar who was influential with moderates in Tehran. Ghorbanifar had a proposal.

Iran needed arms to win its war with Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Israel was interested in helping the Iranians defeat the Iraqis. What if the Americans provided the arms Iran needed via Israel? In return, the Iranians would use their influence with Hezbollah to obtain the release of the American hostages.

For Reagan, this plan was a glimmer of hope for the hostages and possibly an opening to improved relations with Iran. However, because the American president had ruled out negotiating with terrorists—and pledged to prevent arms sales to Iran—any deal would have to be done covertly. There was no hope of the CIA gaining congressional approval, as the law now required.

Casey went outside the agency again. The first two arms shipments took place in August and September 1985, and were managed by Israel. The delivery led to the freeing of one American hostage, on September 14.

Next, in November and December 1985, came a push to trade a battery of anti-aircraft missiles for the remaining hostages. This time, Casey relied on two men in the Contra operation: Oliver North and Richard Secord. Money generated by the Iranian arms deals now began to mingle in the same accounts as funds intended for the Contras.

Meanwhile, as in Nicaragua, the CIA became directly involved. North turned to Clarridge to procure air transport for the missiles. The Reagan administration crossed a line here. Due to Clarridge's involvement as a CIA officer, the operation required a presidential finding and congressional authorization. It had neither.

## 19 • Reagan, Casey, and the Iran-Contra Scandal

Casey's deputy, John McMahon, protested. Reagan signed a finding in January 1986 that retroactively approved the CIA's participation and instructed the agency to not inform Congress. This allowed Casey and the others to press on. By this point, North was directly diverting the profits from the arms sales to Iran to buy materiel for the Contras in Nicaragua.

However, North was reckless. Amateurish errors about protocol wrecked several meetings with the Iranians. The wheels came off entirely during McFarlane's visit to Tehran in May 1986—the trip that became notorious for its fake passports, bible, and oddly shaped cake. The result was exposure of the Iran and Contra operations, the White House's admission of the link between the two, and the subsequent investigations by a presidential commission, Congress, and a special counsel.

### THE FALLOUT

This lecture now turns to the impact of the Iran-Contra affair on the various parties involved, starting with Nicaragua. In 1990, Nicaraguans voted the Sandinistas out of office.

The impact of the war on the country was devastating. Nicaragua's economy was ruined and an estimated 30,000 people died. Additionally, the Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega would be reelected president in 2006.

Turning to the Middle East, a total of five arms deals led to the release of three hostages (but not the CIA station chief William Buckley, who died under torture). Then, Hezbollah seized two more Americans. By 1988, there were more American hostages in Lebanon than before the arms deals. Some feared the trades had incentivized kidnapping.

Other unintended consequences also rippled across the Middle East. The Iraqis were particularly angry, especially when it was revealed that the arms-for-hostages exchanges had included battlefield intelligence in the Iran-Iraq war.

It is even possible that the Nicaraguan supply operation generated unexpected consequences in American society. Some Contra leaders used planes provided by the CIA to fly cocaine from Central America to Los Angeles and other US cities, raising funds for their war while fueling the crack-cocaine epidemic in America's African American community.

The Reagan White House was deeply embarrassed but not derailed. North, McFarlane, and McFarlane's successor as national security advisor, John Poindexter, were all convicted of crimes related to the Iran-Contra affair. North and Poindexter later had their convictions vacated, and McFarlane was pardoned by Reagan's successor, President George H. W. Bush.

The CIA, too, was hurt by the Iran-Contra scandal—but not terribly. The four CIA officers who faced charges for their roles in the scandal were all pardoned by President Bush or had their cases dismissed. Casey died of a brain tumor in May 1987, before any action might have been taken against him.

---

### Suggested Reading

Byrne, *Iran-Contra*.

Friedman, *Covert Capital*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 Why and with what consequences did the CIA's reputation revive during the Reagan years?
- 2 What role did the CIA play in the Iran-Contra scandal?

## LECTURE 20

# AFGHANISTAN, THE SOVIETS, AND THE CIA

---

This lecture focuses on the last years of the Cold War by looking at the CIA's record in Afghanistan during the 1980s. It also discusses the CIA's intelligence about Moscow's decision to invade Afghanistan as well as the collapse of the Eastern Bloc—and the Soviet Union itself—a decade later.

### BACKGROUND

The Soviets' decision to send troops across the border into Afghanistan on Christmas Eve 1979 was problematic for a number of reasons. The country was notoriously difficult to subdue. Its harsh, mountainous terrain was one reason. Another was the fierce sense of independence among its ethnic groups and clans.

In April 1978, Afghan communists seized control of Kabul, the capital. They were determined to impose socialism on the fractious nation. The new government quickly succumbed to infighting. Large parts of the countryside rose in revolt. Many of the rebels were Muslim fundamentalists who were dismayed by what they saw as an effort to trample on the Islamic religion and their countrymen's traditional ways of life. They called themselves mujahideen—that is, warriors in a holy war.

The Soviet Union didn't express much concern or empathy for the Afghan communists, but the mujahideen were killing Soviet advisors and their families. Moscow also feared the possibility of a holy war spreading elsewhere in the region. If all this were not enough, the KGB suspected that its old foe, the CIA, was contributing to the unrest.

### CIA ANALYSIS

If the concerns motivating Moscow seem reasonably clear now, they were not to CIA analysts at the time. The agency did detect signs of Soviet military preparations on the border with Afghanistan, and the CIA provided Washington with sound intelligence about the Red Army buildup, its state of alert, and even the ethnic composition of its forces. However, the agency erred in its assessment of Soviet intentions.

Agency headquarters assumed that Red Army deployments were intended to reinforce the increasingly weak and demoralized Afghan army rather than prepare the way for a full-scale invasion. A direct intervention seemed like it would be disastrous.

## 20 • Afghanistan, the Soviets, and the CIA

Even so, the CIA's assumption that any intervention would be a disaster was eventually proven correct. Soviet forces entered Afghanistan and murdered the head of the government, replacing him with the more pliable Babrak Karmal.

Karmal was soon beset by the same factionalism that had plagued his predecessor. Meanwhile, the invasion fanned the flames of religious revolt. As the Muslim insurgency grew, the Soviets dug in and sent more troops, bringing the number to 52,000 in 1980.

### WASHINGTON'S RESPONSE

In Washington, President Jimmy Carter was furious at what he perceived as naked Soviet aggression. His hawkish national security advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, interpreted the invasion as a Russian thrust toward the oil fields of the Persian Gulf. Carter responded with tough overt measures against the Soviet action, such as the US boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games.

In July 1979, the president approved a proposal from Brzezinski to channel a small amount of support to the mujahideen rebels who were fighting the communist regime in Kabul. Just before the Soviet troops arrived in December, Carter authorized an increase in that support. In other words, the Kremlin suspicion that the Americans were contributing to the unrest in Afghanistan was correct.

In January 1980, President Carter signed a new presidential finding expanding Afghan operations. Immediately afterward, Brzezinski traveled to the region to meet with the leaders of neighboring Muslim countries about assisting the Afghan rebels.



Zbigniew Brzezinski



## The Agency: A History of the CIA

Ronald Reagan entered the White House in January 1981, and American enthusiasm for the Afghan rebel cause increased further still. The new president was looking for ways to carry the Cold War fight to the Soviets. Reagan and his activist director of the CIA, Bill Casey, saw the Afghan mujahideen as they did the Nicaraguan Contras—that is, freedom fighters.

Still, at this stage, there was little US appetite for direct involvement in the Afghan conflict. This is why the CIA turned to regional proxies. The most important of these was Pakistan and its spy agency, Inter-Services Intelligence, or ISI.

### PAKISTANI INVOLVEMENT

Pakistani president Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq was interested in winning American patronage. He was also aware of the dual threats posed by a Soviet-controlled Afghanistan and Pakistan's traditional rival, India. For these reasons, President Zia made the ISI available to the Americans as a channel for CIA funding, arms, and training for the mujahideen.

Soon, Howard Hart, the CIA station chief in the Pakistani capital of Islamabad, was meeting regularly with ISI officers to coordinate the transfers. While the CIA provided the money and materiel, it was the Pakistanis who decided where to allocate it. In practice, this meant a focus on Islamic extremists as opposed to more moderate Afghan insurgents.

At the time, Zia was seeking to Islamize Pakistan as it completed the transition from a former British ward of colonial India. Consequently, many young Afghans who fled to Pakistan were indoctrinated by Islamist elements there. After training by the ISI, they then returned to the Afghanistan as mujahideen.

Pakistan's favorite Afghan rebel leader was the former exile Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. He reportedly encouraged his followers to spray acid in the faces of Muslim women who had not covered themselves.



## **SAUDI INVOLVEMENT**

The tendency toward strengthening the Islamist element of the Afghan resistance was reinforced by the involvement of another local proxy in the CIA's Afghan operation: Saudi Arabia.

Brzezinski visited the Saudis and obtained a pledge that they would match US financial aid for the rebels. The US-educated head of intelligence in Saudi Arabia, Prince Turki al-Faisal, was keen on cooperating with the Americans, and Saudi Muslim leaders wanted to build support for fundamentalist Sunnis in Afghanistan.

This impulse was shared by a number of private Saudi citizens, some of whom traveled to Pakistan to join the Afghan resistance. These were the so-called Afghan Arabs. Among them was a wealthy young Saudi named Osama bin Laden.

From the beginning, there were those among the Americans like John McMahon who worried about the possible long-term consequences of funding Islamic fundamentalists. However, such voices were drowned out by those advocating for the mujahideen.

### CIA INVOLVEMENT

Ever since the days of T. E. Lawrence in Arabia, Western spies had felt a powerful call to adventure in the Muslim world. Now it was the turn of the spies working under Bill Casey. Casey told Howard Hart, the CIA officer overseeing Afghan rebel supplies from Pakistan: “You’re a young man; here’s your bag of money, go raise hell.”

Another notable American figure was a Democratic US representative from Texas, Charles Nesbitt Wilson. As a senior Democrat on the House of Representatives’ Defense Appropriations Committee, Wilson succeeded at persuading many of his fellow congressmen that—as he said—“the mujahideen were a cause only slightly below Christianity.” In 1984, congressional funding for the Afghan war surged to about \$250 million.

Wilson’s interest in the mujahideen cause coincided with a White House rethink of the overall Afghan operation. By now, it was clear that the Afghan freedom fighters were not just a nuisance for the Soviets; they were a serious threat. Bill Casey told President Reagan in January 1984 that the Afghan rebels had killed or wounded about 17,000 Soviet troops and controlled around 60 percent of the countryside. Meanwhile, the Soviet puppet government in Kabul had utterly failed to win the support of ordinary Afghans.

Casey now allowed himself to think in terms of actually defeating the Soviets in Afghanistan. In March 1985, Reagan approved National Security Decision Directive 166, which formalized a change in US strategy from merely harassing the Soviets to the aim of driving them out of Afghanistan.

The CIA now began to make unilateral payments to Afghan agents, sidestepping the Pakistanis and setting up training programs for the mujahideen in the United States. Casey even approved propaganda and sabotage missions across the border in the Soviet Union.

In fiscal year 1986, US funding increased further to \$470 million (before the matching Saudi funds). Additionally, a new CIA station chief now arrived in Pakistan, the swaggering Milt Bearden.

## Attack on Soviet Helicopters

In Afghanistan in September 1986, mujahideen rebels used US-made, CIA-shipped Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to shoot down Soviet helicopters. The rebel unit also had a CIA-supplied video camera. CIA Director Bill Casey showed footage of the event to President Ronald Reagan.

## THE SOVIET UNRAVELING

The new Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, believed that his country had become badly overextended abroad, including in Eastern Europe, and that it needed to focus instead on domestic reform. After a brief attempt to shore up the occupation of Afghanistan, Gorbachev cut his losses and withdrew as part of a broader Soviet retreat from the developing world. The retreat was completed in February 1989.

Then came the unraveling of the Soviet Union itself. A tidal wave of unrest swept across Eastern Europe, culminating in the destruction of the Berlin Wall in November 1989. Soviet socialist republics began declaring their independence from Moscow.

In August 1991, communist hardliners launched a coup against Gorbachev. Coming to Gorbachev's aid, the Russian president Boris Yeltsin successfully faced down the plotters, and the coup collapsed. Still, the Soviet Union officially dissolved on December 26, 1991.



Mikhail Gorbachev

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

This was the moment that successive generations of CIA leaders had planned and prayed for since shortly after World War II. It is an irony, then, that the collapse of the Soviet Union is remembered today as marking one of the agency's greatest failures.

CIA analysts made many accurate predictions about the Soviet Union during the 1980s. They identified key Soviet problems, such as aging leadership, structural weaknesses in the economy, and breakaway movements in the republics. They recognized the seriousness of Gorbachev's efforts to address these problems and reduce international tensions. They realized that Gorbachev's reform efforts were unleashing forces that he might ultimately be unable to control.

However, the CIA failed to follow these insights to their logical conclusion: the collapse of the Soviet bloc. The breaching of the Berlin Wall, for example, came as a surprise to agency officials.

Also, US analysis suggesting that Gorbachev was completely rethinking Soviet foreign policy was drowned out by more hawkish voices, including Casey and his deputy, Robert Gates. Casey and Gates suspected that Gorbachev's peaceful overtures to the West were a ruse to create breathing space for his domestic reforms. When that was accomplished, the men believed, the Soviet Union would return to its traditionally aggressive stance.

One notable problem was America's paltry human-intelligence sources in the Soviet Union. If anything, this deficit had worsened in recent years, as Soviet moles in the American intelligence community succeeded at betraying US assets in the Eastern Bloc.

### THE CIA'S EFFECT

CIA analysts did not anticipate the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, though there were other factors, their covert operatives do deserve some credit for bringing these events about.

## 20 • Afghanistan, the Soviets, and the CIA

Their successful efforts included psychological warfare operations launched during the Carter administration, which stimulated dissent within the communist bloc, as well as CIA operations in Afghanistan. In 1982, Reagan and Casey built on Carter's efforts by arranging with Pope John Paul II to channel secret subsidies to the Solidarity movement in Poland via the Catholic Church.

In short, the CIA played an important part in the internal crisis of legitimacy that engulfed the Soviet empire during the late 1980s. However, if the final unraveling began anywhere, it was outside Soviet borders: in Afghanistan.

There, the CIA helped sustain and strengthen an insurgency that first undermined and then demolished the Soviet occupation. The rollback of Soviet power carried on all the way to Moscow.

---

### Suggested Reading

Bearden and Risen, *The Main Enemy*.

Coll, *Ghost Wars*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 Why did the CIA fail to provide clear predictions of both the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the collapse of the Soviet bloc?
- 2 How much credit does the CIA deserve for the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union?

## LECTURE 21

# INTELLIGENCE FAILURE: THE ROAD TO 9/11

---

The main threat that the CIA and the United States would confront in the immediate post-Cold War world was radical Islamism. Afghanistan became the breeding ground of a particularly virulent strain of opposition to the West: al-Qaeda, the transnational terror network created by the wealthy young Saudi, Osama bin Laden. This lecture discusses the rise of Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda during the final decades of the 20th century. It also attempts to address the question of why the CIA failed to arrest the terrorist network's development and prevent the tragic attacks of September 11, 2001.

## AFTER THE SOVIETS

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the CIA needed a new mission, but it was not clear what that was. The Reagan-era director of the CIA, William Casey, had died in 1987. A series of directors subsequently came and went without offering a firm direction: William Webster, Robert Gates, then James Woolsey from 1993 until early 1995, and John Deutch until the end of 1996. That was five different directors in fewer than 10 years.

Accompanying the high turnover in agency leadership was a steady decline in funding and more mistakes. There were inaccurate predictions about the length of the 1990–1991 Gulf War. Poor intelligence contributed to the 1993 Black Hawk Down incident in Somalia, when 18 US servicemen died in the battle of Mogadishu. Covert operations directed at Saddam Hussein in Iraq and Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia all failed.

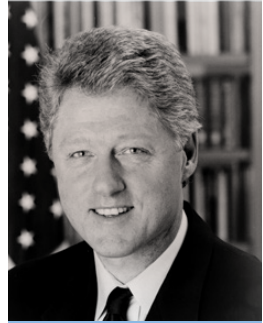
The greatest embarrassment came in 1994. This was the exposure of the long-serving counterintelligence officer Aldrich Ames as a Russian mole. His treachery compromised numerous US operations behind the Iron Curtain, and resulted in the execution of at least 10 American agents. His activities went undetected for years.



Battle of Mogadishu



Such setbacks at the CIA took place against a backdrop of drift in US foreign policy. George H. W. Bush's successor as president, Bill Clinton, had little experience in foreign affairs. He came to office in 1993 promising Americans that he would concentrate on the US economy. He did show a commitment to intervening in humanitarian crises, but even this was dampened by America's ghastly experience in Somalia in 1993.



Bill Clinton

### THE STORY OF BIN LADEN

Like other Muslims of his generation, Osama bin Laden was dismayed by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and was soon drawn into the effort to support the Afghan rebels.

In 1984, he helped found the Services Office in the Pakistani city of Peshawar, a logistical hub for other Arabs coming to fight alongside the mujahideen. He supported it with about \$25,000 a month from his inheritance. Later, he established a camp in Afghanistan for foreign jihadists, the Lion's Den, and joined in the fighting.

By this stage, word of bin Laden had spread across the Arab world. In 1988, he founded a new organization at his residence in Peshawar. Al-Qaeda would function as the nerve center of an international network of Arab jihadists. Now, view of the enemy was expanded to include so-called apostates in the Middle East. These were secular regimes that kowtowed to the West.

In 1990, Saudi Arabia joined the ranks of apostates when it invited US troops to deploy on the Arabian Peninsula to fight Iraq in the Gulf War. In 1992, bin Laden publicly denounced the Saudi government for seeking American protection and was banished from the kingdom.

He ended up in Sudan, an emerging haven for international terrorists. While there, he was further angered by the US intervention in nearby Somalia. After the Clinton administration's rapid withdrawal of US forces from Somalia following the 1993 Battle of Mogadishu, bin Laden concluded that Americans were weak and could be influenced by strategic acts of terror.



By 1996, Sudan was under pressure from the United States and Saudi Arabia both to expel bin Laden. He was forced to move again, back to Afghanistan. This expulsion added to his rage. Three months later, in August 1996, he issued an 11-page tract: “Declaration of Jihad against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places.” Al-Qaeda was now at war with the United States.

## **SUPPORT FOR BIN LADEN**

Bin Laden’s rise brings up his question: Why did his cause resonate among other young Arabs to the extent that they were prepared to sacrifice their lives? A popular explanation at the time was that the conflict resulted from a clash of civilizations between the Islamic world and the secular, modern, democratic West. One problem with this notion is that it overlooks the extent to which, until fairly recently, many Arabs had admired—and wished to imitate—aspects of the United States.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

The clash-of-civilizations thesis also overlooks an American tradition of respect for Islam and Arab culture. This was particularly true at the CIA, which was ready to support the Afghanistan mujahideen in the 1980s.

That brings up another common explanation of the rise of al-Qaeda and the 9/11 attacks. This was said to be blowback from the CIA's support of the Afghan jihad during the 1980s and abandonment of Afghanistan after the Soviets' withdrawal.

The Afghan war did help radicalize a generation of Arab Islamists. The lawless conditions in Afghanistan after the Soviets pulled out also enabled the rise of the Taliban, and the return of bin Laden. CIA officers and US foreign-policy makers should have given more thought to the long-term consequences of their support for the mujahideen in the 1980s.

However, the wealthy bin Laden had independent sources of support. Additionally, the Pakistani ISI—not the CIA—was responsible for operations on the ground.

Other factors are also important in explaining the growth of al-Qaeda. These include:

Cumulative Arab anger over US foreign policy in the Middle East, especially American support for Israel.

The influence of Islamist thinkers like the Muslim Brotherhood leader Sayyid Qutb, who insisted on jihad against apostates and infidels as a religious obligation.

A common pattern of experience among bin Laden's followers, such as past imprisonment by one of the Middle East's secular governments or a spell in the West during which an individual might have felt discriminated against or otherwise alienated.

Bin Laden was also a skillful leader of men. Many of the young Arab men who flocked to bin Laden's side revered him. In their presence, he was courteous, sympathetic, and even seemingly humble. At the same time, of course, bin Laden expressed hatred for Muslim apostates, Jews, and Americans.

## AMERICAN RESPONSE

The US government and the CIA were not doing much to protect Americans from this new threat—at least not before 1996. The CIA did have a counterterrorist center, but it concentrated on state-sponsored terrorism rather than transnational threats such as al-Qaeda. Meanwhile, the Clinton administration focused chiefly on domestic terrorism, such as the 1995 bombing of the federal building in downtown Oklahoma City and the 1996 capture of the Unabomber.

The Clinton administration's attitude toward al-Qaeda began to change in 1996, when bin Laden returned to Afghanistan. The CIA counterterrorist center established a special unit exclusively devoted to watching bin Laden in cooperation with the FBI.

The counterterrorism cause received another boost when George Tenet was confirmed as director of the CIA in 1997. Tenet understood the need to redefine the agency's mission in the post-Cold War environment. In his view, this should include a more aggressive approach to combatting unconventional threats such as terrorism.

However, the CIA's bin Laden unit—codenamed Alec Station—struggled to win acceptance within the CIA. Alec Station also failed to develop a good working relationship with the FBI.

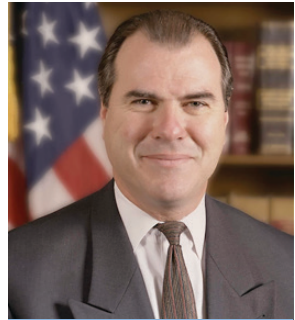


George Tenet

After the exposure of domestic spying by the CIA in the 1970s, legal barriers were erected between foreign intelligence work and US criminal investigations. Within the intelligence community, these barriers were referred to as the wall, and they made collaboration between the CIA and FBI extremely difficult.

Personality differences added to the mix. Alec Station's chief, Michael Scheuer, was an abrasive intellectual whose dedication to hunting bin Laden verged on the obsessive.

The chief FBI official responsible for investigating bin Laden was an agent named John O'Neill, who shared Michael Scheuer's obsessive tendencies but little else. The two men clashed frequently.



John O'Neill

### THE LATE 1990S

In early 1998, Scheuer proposed a plan to snatch bin Laden from an al-Qaeda compound near Kandahar, in southern Afghanistan, and spirit him out of the country. However, Scheuer and his FBI opposite number, O'Neill, disagreed about what to do with bin Laden once in their custody.

Scheuer, the intelligence officer, proposed dropping him in Egypt for interrogation and execution by the Egyptian government. O'Neill, the lawman, wanted bin Laden arrested and put on trial in the United States. Faced with this difference—and concerned about the reliability of the Afghan tribesmen tasked with carrying out the kidnapping—Tenet decided to cancel the operation.

This would become a recurring pattern. Although committed to waging war on al-Qaeda, Tenet was distracted by other concerns, such as renewed efforts to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict and the possible political damage to the CIA of covert-operation failures.

Tenet's caution would prove costly. In August 1998, the nearly simultaneous truck bombings of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania killed more than 200 people and wounded thousands more, the great majority of them local citizens.

## 21 • Intelligence Failure: The Road to 9/11

The Clinton administration retaliated, but the resulting military operation—Infinite Reach—backfired. Cruise missiles fired into eastern Afghanistan missed bin Laden and killed several Pakistanis instead, provoking protests. Another attack on a supposed chemical weapons factory in Sudan was condemned when the facility turned out to have been a pharmaceutical plant. Again, bin Laden noted the feebleness of the American response.

In 1999, the Clinton White House tried to beef up its counterterrorism efforts, and the president signed a secret memorandum authorizing the CIA to kill bin Laden. However, successive requests by the agency's Alec Station to target sites in Afghanistan—where it had located bin Laden—were denied due to concerns about collateral damage and political embarrassment.

### 2000 AND 2001

In October 2000, two al-Qaeda operatives drove a small boat packed with explosives into the port side of the USS *Cole* in the Yemeni harbor of Aden. Seventeen American crewmen died. The Clinton White House weighed several possible responses, but did nothing. Bin Laden, newly emboldened, focused on another plot that he'd approved the previous year. This one involved hijacked planes targeting the US itself.



USS Cole

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

The US government failed to predict and prevent the attacks of September 2001. The CIA does not deserve all the blame for this failure. The CIA did gather enough intelligence to know that an attack was coming.



In the spring and summer of 2001, the CIA repeatedly briefed the new president, George W. Bush, about the al-Qaeda threat. However, the Bush White House was not listening. The president's national security team paid even less attention to terrorism than the Clinton administration initially had.

Still, the CIA failed to detect a clear signal as to the timing and target of an attack. For example, their August 6, 2001, briefing—titled “Bin Laden Determined to Strike in U.S.”—was mainly historical in nature and contained no actionable warnings.

The CIA also missed a number of opportunities to disrupt the plot. Most glaring was its failure in 2000 to inform the State Department and FBI about two known al-Qaeda operatives with US visas. These were Nawaf al-Hazmi and Khalid al-Mihdhar, who traveled to the United States and settled in San Diego. Both men would be on the hijacked American Airlines flight that flew into the Pentagon.

### REASONS FOR FAILURE

The precise reason why CIA officers did not alert other agencies about the al-Qaeda operatives Mihdhar and Hazmi is unclear. They might have feared bumbling FBI agents damaging their relations with foreign intelligence agencies. Alternatively, it might simply have been that they did not like the bureau's John O'Neill. In any case, a more joined-up approach might have enabled the FBI to arrest the two men and break up the plot leading to the attacks on September 11, 2001.

## 21 • Intelligence Failure: The Road to 9/11

The budget cuts of the early 1990s had also deprived the agency of a great deal of personnel experience and expertise. Its ranks consisted of few Muslims and Arabic speakers. No officers spoke Pashto, the dominant language of the Taliban.

The CIA did still retain the services of some Afghan tribesmen left over from the 1980s. However, the agency failed utterly to penetrate al-Qaeda itself. This was partly a legacy of the Cold War, which had placed increasing importance on technological rather than human intelligence.

Most field officers during the Cold War had operated under embassy cover, recruiting agents at diplomatic functions. This was hardly the sort of event likely to be attended by a member of al-Qaeda. As a result, analysis became shallower. The scene was set for the deepest shock the United States had experienced since Pearl Harbor—the very sort of shock that the CIA had been created to prevent.

---

### Suggested Reading

Wright, *The Looming Tower*.

Zegart, *Spying Blind*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 Why did Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda target the United States for a terrorist attack?
- 2 Why did the CIA fail to avert the attacks of September 11, 2001?



## LECTURE 22

# CIA ADVANCE IN AFGHANISTAN, RETREAT IN IRAQ

---

In April 2005, there occurred a drastic restructuring of the US intelligence community in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. Previously, the director of the CIA had been in nominal command of the entire US intelligence community, with its 16 distinct agencies. Now, a new official—the director of national intelligence—would be tasked with formal oversight. The CIA director at the time, Porter Goss, had suffered an effective demotion.

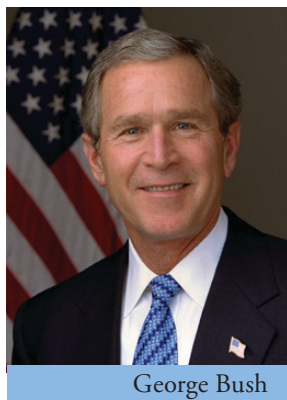
This lecture traces the events between September 2001 and the 2005 restructuring. During this period, Osama bin Laden avoided capture in the mountains of Afghanistan, the United States went to war in Iraq on the basis of faulty intelligence that was provided by the CIA, and the agency lost its status as first among equals in the US intelligence community.

## AFTER 9/11

The CIA had actually made quite a good start to the post-9/11 era. In the immediate aftermath of the al-Qaeda attacks, the nation was united in shock and grief. President George Bush had inherited his father's high regard for the CIA and got along well with George Tenet, then the director of the CIA. Early in his presidency, Bush was inclined to protect the agency, and Tenet was grateful.

Meanwhile, over at the CIA's Langley headquarters, CIA officers were grimly determined to make up for their failure to prevent the 9/11 attacks. A few days after the attacks, President Bush secretly gave the agency unprecedented authority to pursue terrorist suspects.

The counterterrorist center now experienced a surge of funding. The center's ranks grew rapidly from 300 personnel to 2,000. The unit's chief, J. Cofer Black, reveled in its new standing.



On September 13, 2001, Black and George Tenet briefed President Bush on the CIA's plan for destroying the terrorist network. The idea was for a small force of not more than 100 agency officers to venture into Afghanistan to track down al-Qaeda elements sheltered under the protection of the Taliban government.

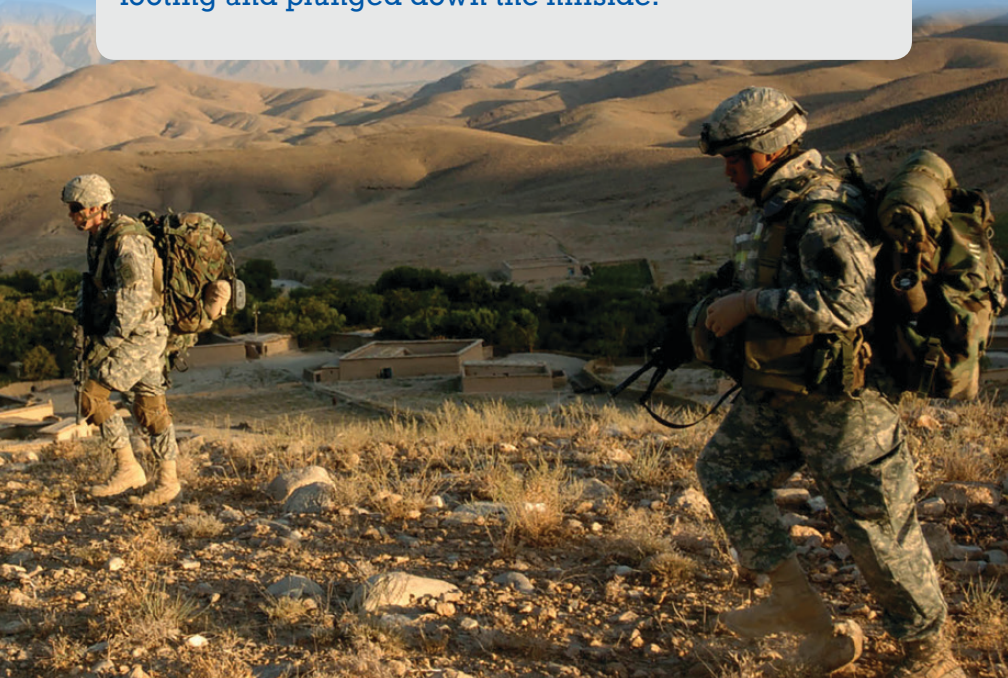
The CIA operatives would use laser-targeting equipment to guide US missiles against Taliban and terrorist targets. They would also link up with anti-Taliban tribal warlords who would provide the manpower required to engage government and terrorist forces on the ground.

## ENDURING FREEDOM

The resulting operation, Enduring Freedom, was a stunning success. In late September, a seven-man CIA team—codenamed Jawbreaker—landed in northern Afghanistan. Led by veteran covert operative Gary Schroen, Jawbreaker purchased the support of Afghan tribal leaders with millions of dollars in boxed cash. Soon, native militia forces known as the Northern Alliance were fighting the Taliban in the mountains near the city of Mazar-e-Sharif.

### Treacherous Footing

The Jawbreaker team navigated Afghanistan's narrow mountain trails on horseback. They kept one boot out of the stirrup to dismount quickly if a horse missed its footing and plunged down the hillside.



## 22 • CIA Advance in Afghanistan, Retreat in Iraq

Joined by other CIA teams and small units of elite Special Forces fighters, Gary Schroen's men guided the Northern Alliance to victory at the battle of Mazar-e-Sharif.

Other Taliban defeats followed in short order. The capital of Kabul fell in November, and the government stronghold of Kandahar, in the south, submitted in early December.

The Taliban was helpless in the face of the CIA's laser-targeting technology, which enabled US fighter-bombers to pick off enemy convoys as they rode into battle. Between the precision deployment of American airpower and coordinating with the Northern Alliance, the CIA helped overthrow the Taliban in little over two months.

### **OTHER DEVELOPMENTS**

The immediate aftermath of 9/11 was remarkable for the CIA in two other respects, both related to the sweeping new powers just given to it by the Bush administration.

One was the agency's first successful use of armed Predator drones in a targeted killing. In mid-November 2001, a Predator blew up an al-Qaeda safe house south of Kabul, assassinating the group's military chief Mohammed Atef and seven others.

The other development was the start of the CIA's RDI program, standing for rendition, detention, and interrogation. This involved capturing terrorist suspects and removing them to secret prisons, or black sites, in foreign countries. There, they would be questioned, using what were referred to as "enhanced interrogation techniques." The CIA's counterterrorist center carried out 39 renditions between 9/11 and mid-2002.

Drone-directed assassinations—and Rendition, Detention, and Interrogation—represented major additions to CIA powers. Later, serious questions would arise about their legality and morality. For the time being, however, they were considered necessary in the War on Terror.

### A SETBACK

The CIA's first major setback in the War on Terror came shortly after its brilliant victory over the Taliban, and it too occurred in the mountains of Afghanistan. Osama bin Laden and about 1,000 al-Qaeda fighters had retreated to a Soviet-era hideout along the Afghan-Pakistani border, near the village of Tora Bora. To smoke them out, the agency used the same tactics it employed against the Taliban: precision bombing from the air and ground attacks by local fighters.

This time, however, the approach didn't work. Bin Laden and some of his followers hid in a cave complex constructed during the 1980s—partly with CIA money—to withstand Soviet bombardment. Meanwhile, the native Afghan warriors showed less enthusiasm going after bin Laden than they had shown in the fight against the Taliban.

CIA officers asked the US military for reinforcements to fight al-Qaeda, or at least seal the border with Pakistan. The request was not granted. Around December 15, bin Laden and a group of al-Qaeda fighters left Tora Bora and trekked north through the snow before crossing into Pakistan. Vanishing into loosely regulated tribal areas, the man most responsible for the 9/11 attacks had gotten away.



## SADDAM HUSSEIN

The Bush administration had already pivoted to attacking another target in the Middle East: Iraq's Saddam Hussein. The CIA was skeptical of the administration's focus on Hussein. In its daily brief to the president on September 21, the agency advised that there was "no evidence" tying Iraq to 9/11 and pointed out that Saddam viewed al-Qaeda as a threat to his own regime.

The agency was also dubious about White House claims that Saddam had revived a nuclear-weapons program that he was supposed to have dismantled in the 1990s. The CIA had not ruled out the possibility of Saddam Hussein hiding weapons of mass destruction (WMD), but this was the same as stating definitively that Saddam possessed WMD. There was no conclusive evidence that this was the case, and the CIA told the White House so.

Then, during the second half of 2002—as it became increasingly obvious that the Bush administration was bent on war with Iraq—the CIA's position began to change. Responding to a demand from Congress for a clear steer about WMD in Iraq, the CIA spent just three weeks cobbling together a National Intelligence Estimate in September 2002.

The resulting document, dated October 2002, was a shoddy piece of work that stated dubious assumptions as facts and relied on questionable sources, including a defector known as Curveball. The National Intelligence Estimate concluded that Baghdad had chemical and biological weapons, and "probably [would] have a nuclear weapon by the end of the decade."

In December 2002, a White House meeting reviewed the intelligence for going to war against Iraq. George Tenet reassured the sports-fan president, "It's a slam dunk." In February 2003, Tenet sat at the shoulder of Secretary of State Colin Powell while the retired four-star general set out to persuade the UN Security Council that Iraq had such weapons. Powell was also at pains to stress that his statements were "facts and conclusions based on solid intelligence."



### THE IRAQ DEBACLE

The coming war in Iraq would cost more than 4,000 US battlefield deaths. In a sense, it was a worse intelligence failure than 9/11.

There are broadly two schools of thought about the causes of the Iraq debacle. One, popular with the White House and congressmen who voted to support the war, blames the CIA. The other view, advocated by the intelligence community and most national security scholars, stresses the political pressure on the CIA to deliver the estimates that the White House wanted—that is, politicization.

The CIA did make intelligence errors in the buildup to the Iraq War. For example, they had limited human sources in Iraq. In the absence of good sources, CIA analysts resorted to what seemed the safest option, which was assuming the worst. Another problem for the CIA was that while agency director George Tenet clearly had many fine qualities, his desire to stay on the right side of the president proved overriding.

There is even more compelling evidence to support the view that the Bush administration was bent on war regardless. Vice President Dick Cheney visited Langley perhaps a dozen times in 2002, asking about the agency's intelligence on Iraq. Junior analysts, in particular, felt intimidated.

There was also indirect pressure. Shortly after 9/11, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld began setting up new military intelligence units to provide him with what he might have believed were more definitive estimates about Iraqi WMD. Noting that one of these bodies reported to Under Secretary of Defense Douglas Feith, CIA officers complained about “Feith-based analysis.”



Donald Rumsfeld

## 22 • CIA Advance in Afghanistan, Retreat in Iraq

Rumsfeld's tactics were reminiscent of a 1970s-era practice of pitting non-CIA analysts against CIA experts to assess which group produced better information faster. The CIA internalized these pressures, both direct and indirect. Senior analysts who continued to express doubt about the evidence for weapons of mass destruction were met with resistance. Junior colleagues who took a stronger line on Iraq found it easier to gain the ear of the director. Others, realizing that war was inevitable, decided there was no point in speaking up.

To sum up, the CIA's analysis was deficient, and agency leadership gave into political pressure too easily. However, the Bush administration was bent on invading Iraq regardless, making the quality of the CIA's intelligence beside the point. Politicization, not analytical error, was the most important cause of the WMD intelligence failure.

### WAR IN 2003

When war came in March 2003, it followed a pattern similar to the earlier Afghan operation: a quick military victory followed by a fruitless search for the weapons rather than al-Qaeda. The CIA's contribution to combat operations in Iraq was mediocre compared with its essential contribution in Afghanistan. Efforts to target US airstrikes against Iraqi leaders, including Saddam, succeeded only in killing innocent civilians.

Small teams of CIA and Special Forces operatives provided useful tactical intelligence for the advancing invasion force. However, the CIA failed to predict the scale of attacks on coalition troops by irregular Iraqi fighters, known as the fedayeen.

As military operations concluded in May 2003, the search for Iraqi WMD—supposedly the cause of the war—got underway in earnest. Some suspicious objects came to light, and then proved to be harmless. Meanwhile, counterattacks against US forces by the fedayeen escalated into a full-scale insurgency.





Several CIA reports prior to the war had predicted that an invasion would create big problems in Iraq, including a rise in Islamist radicalism. During the US occupation, CIA officers truthfully reported the facts about the insurgency even though Washington didn't want to hear them.

### **CIA BLAME**

As during the Vietnam War, politicians deflected attention from their own errors of judgment onto the CIA. The CIA was blamed even for the problems it was uncovering.

2004 began with former CIA weapons inspector David Kay denouncing the agency's intelligence record on weapons of mass destruction. Kay's criticisms were echoed in a searing report by the Republican-dominated Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Then came the long-awaited Kean Commission's report on 9/11, which was deeply wounding to the CIA.

## 22 • CIA Advance in Afghanistan, Retreat in Iraq

In response, Congress passed the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004. It created the office of the Director of National Intelligence, thereby ending the director of Central Intelligence's half-century leadership of the American intelligence community.

George Tenet had resigned by this point. He was a decent and able man undone by politics. His successor, the considerably less popular Porter Goss, inherited the CIA at the lowest point in its history.

Meanwhile, at the Pentagon, Rumsfeld had built up the special operations command so that the military could carry out its own future covert ops in the War on Terror. Even the private sector was taking over basic intelligence functions from the CIA.

---

### Suggested Reading

Coll, *Directorate S*.

Rovner, *Fixing the Facts*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 Why, as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, did the CIA succeed in defeating the Taliban but fail to catch Osama bin Laden?
- 2 What caused the CIA's intelligence failure with regard to Iraqi weapons of mass destruction: poor tradecraft or political pressure? If the latter, why did the CIA get the blame for the failure?

## LECTURE 23

# CIA RENDITIONS, INTERROGATIONS, AND DRONES

---

The May 2011 killing of Osama bin Laden in Pakistan was a triumph for the CIA. The agency provided the intelligence that led the successful Navy SEALs to the very floor where the al-Qaeda leader was hiding. It had also been closely involved in the operational side of the mission, codenamed Neptune Spear.

The killing of bin Laden represented part of a return to favor by the CIA, but it was not the only factor. The CIA had been creeping back into favor since at least the beginning of President Barack Obama's administration in January 2009.

This lecture discusses the revival of the CIA by examining its role in two main phases of the War on Terror. The first of these began during the administration of Obama's predecessor, President George W. Bush, and involved the capture and interrogation of suspected terrorists. The second came after the interrogation program was discredited, and the CIA shifted from capturing terrorists to killing them.

The final section of the lecture looks at the costs of the CIA's involvement in the War on Terror.

## **AUTHORITY OVER TERRORISTS**

The CIA gained authority over captured terrorists a few days after 9/11, in the same presidential finding that gave it the power to use “lethal force.” Handing terrorists over to a domestic law enforcement agency such as the FBI would have meant treating them as criminal suspects with legal protections. Allowing the CIA to maintain custody provided the Bush administration with greater flexibility in dealing with them.

However, expanded authority also dealt the CIA several problems. The agency did not have any prisons of its own, and its direct experience in interrogating detainees was minimal. This explains its policy of rendition, detention, and interrogation, or RDI. Rendition involved secretly moving captured terrorists to other countries for interrogation by their intelligence services, often with poor human-rights records.

### **Sheep Dipping**

Because the United States was not at war with Pakistan during the Neptune Spear operation, the US military could not legally use force there. In their mission to kill Osama bin Laden, Navy SEALs had been “sheep dipped”—that is, temporarily designated CIA personnel for the duration of the mission.

### **EITs**

Meanwhile, the CIA was scrambling to develop its own capability to detain and interrogate suspected terrorists. The result was enhanced interrogation techniques, or EITs for short. EITs were developed by two US Air Force psychologists named James Mitchell and Bruce Jessen. Mitchell and Jessen previously had trained American special forces on how to resist hostile interrogations. They now took the techniques used in these simulations and repurposed them as interrogation methods.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

These included sleep deprivation, stress positions, and waterboarding: strapping the captive to a board, covering his face with cloth, and pouring water on the cloth so that he experienced the sensation of drowning. A number of authorities considered waterboarding a form of torture.

The first detainee to undergo an enhanced interrogation was Abu Zubaydah, a terrorist-network recruiter—and trainer—with longstanding ties to al-Qaeda. He was shot and captured by Pakistani officials in March 2002 during an operation coordinated with US officials.

From Pakistan, Zubaydah was flown to Thailand and held at a CIA secret prison, known as a black site. FBI agents conducted the initial interrogations, employing conventional questioning methods. Then, the consultant psychologists Mitchell and Jessen took over and began using enhanced interrogation. The FBI agents left, reportedly in disgust. Zubaydah, over the course of his detention, would be waterboarded repeatedly.

After Thailand, the CIA created additional black sites, including the notorious Salt Pit prison in Afghanistan. More detainees were subjected to enhanced interrogations, including waterboarding.

The main reason the CIA used such measures was desperation. Immediately after 9/11, it was widely assumed that another assault on the United States was imminent, perhaps this time involving a nuclear weapon. The CIA—lacking human intelligence sources in the al-Qaeda leadership—felt it had to wring all the information possible from the detainees. Failure to do so might mean more loss of American life.

Other factors contributed. The CIA workforce was disproportionately young and inexperienced after recent purges of senior officers, and a surge in entry-level recruitment. The black sites tended to be staffed by junior officers or private contractors, often just retired from military or law enforcement jobs.

Meanwhile, agency leaders failed to question the program, and some pressed for even harsher methods. One example was Jose A. Rodriguez. He argued that enhanced interrogation was necessary to protect Americans from further terrorist attacks.

## 23 • CIA Renditions, Interrogations, and Drones

In April 2004, shocking details emerged of prisoner abuse by US military guards at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. Intelligence officers worried that the CIA's interrogation program might suffer similar exposure, especially after an internal report by the agency's inspector general proved highly critical.

### THE RDI PROGRAM'S RECORD

One of the most hotly debated questions about the CIA's program is this: Did information gained from enhanced interrogation lead to the discovery of Osama bin Laden? Top Bush administration officials such as Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld have said it did. CIA officers such as Rodriguez have, too.

Others, however—including the Senate Intelligence Committee in its 2012 report—challenged this version of events. In this view, finding the courier who led the agency to bin Laden's hideout in Pakistan was the crucial break. It came not from enhanced interrogations but from other sources, including foreign intelligence services, cell phone intercepts, and an alert Pakistani agent who spotted the courier and followed him to the compound.

### THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION

In 2008, the Democrat Barack Obama was elected president in part based on his pledges to preside over a new era of openness, transparency, and accountability. One of the first things Obama did on entering the White House in January 2009 was to sign an executive order banning enhanced interrogation—or torture, as he explicitly called it.



Barack Obama

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

However, President Obama did not really follow through. Yes, the enhanced interrogations stopped, but the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay stayed open, and no CIA officer was ever brought to account for abuses of the program.

The CIA actually fared quite well under Obama. The new Office of the Director of National Intelligence—created in the wake of 9/11—was supposed to oversee the entire US intelligence community, of which the CIA was now only a component part. However, the office was unable to assert its authority, especially over the CIA.

President Obama picked a well-respected US Navy admiral named Dennis Blair—who had excellent intelligence credentials—as the first director of national intelligence. His choice as CIA director was perhaps less obvious: the eight-term Democratic congressman Leon Panetta, who possessed charm and smarts but almost no intelligence experience.

Dennis Blair, a military man, was used to giving orders and having them obeyed. In the federal government bureaucracy, he was surprised by the pushback he experienced when he tried to assert his authority over the CIA. Meanwhile, Panetta proved a surprisingly popular and effective director, beating Blair in a series of bureaucratic turf wars.



Dennis Blair

In December 2009, Blair was deeply damaged by an intelligence system failure of the sort his office was supposed to prevent. A Nigerian terrorist wearing explosives hidden in his underwear was allowed to board a Northwest Airlines flight from Amsterdam to Detroit. The terrorist was foiled by his own incompetence and the bravery of fellow passengers. Still, the president was furious, and Blair resigned the following year. Panetta, in contrast, was sitting pretty.

## THE CIA AS KILLERS

The main reason for the resurgence of the CIA and its gains relative to the Office of the Director National Intelligence was the Obama administration's transformation of the CIA into a killing machine.

President George W. Bush had granted the CIA its license to kill immediately after 9/11, in the same presidential memorandum authorizing the agency to capture and detain terrorists. However, a post-9/11 proposal to create a mobile assassination squad, Cannonball, failed to get off the ground. Cannonball never became operational and was eventually shut down by Leon Panetta.



Leon Panetta

But traditional methods of assassination were not the only option available to the CIA. There were also unmanned aerial vehicles, better known as drones. Previously, drones had been used for aerial reconnaissance, but in 2001, the CIA successfully tested arming a Predator drone with Hellfire antitank missiles.

This ushered in a new era of targeted killing. Now, there was no need for field operatives to shoot a gun or wield a knife. A CIA officer in a command center in the suburban Washington DC, area, for example, could issue the order to an Air Force drone pilot anywhere around the world to fire a missile. That drone pilot would squeeze a button on a joystick, and, thousands of miles away, perhaps, a terrorist would be dead. The whole process seemed surgical, risk-free, and somehow morally less problematic than old-fashioned assassination.

The first CIA drone strikes took place in Afghanistan in the weeks immediately after 9/11. The focus later shifted to the tribal areas of Pakistan, a transit zone for al-Qaeda and later a launchpad for Taliban attacks on US forces in Afghanistan. Because this region posed an internal security problem for Pakistan itself, the central government in Islamabad permitted the attacks, though they were generally unpopular.



### OBAMA AND DRONES

President Obama wanted to refocus attention on Afghanistan after the costly distraction of Iraq and was therefore determined to scotch the Taliban threat in Pakistan. He was also aware that targeted killing offered a cleaner, politically more acceptable way of dealing with terrorists than RDI. Congress and the US media positively loved drones.

According to official US figures, there were 255 drone strikes in Pakistan between 2009 and 2012 (compared with 45 during the second Bush administration). At times, drones were a near-permanent presence in the skies over the Pakistani tribal areas.

Meanwhile, the CIA acquired a powerful motive for stepping up the drone attacks: revenge. In December 2009, a Jordanian jihadist posing as a potential agent blew himself up at an American base in Afghanistan, killing five CIA officers and two contractors. The number of drone strikes in Pakistan doubled the following year.

The year 2011 was another bloody time in the drone war. With bin Laden dead and al-Qaeda believed to be all but wiped out in Pakistan, the CIA's focus shifted to other countries where jihadism was emerging. In Yemen, drone strikes killed a US citizen: the firebrand anti-American preacher Anwar al-Awlaki along with al-Awlaki's 16-year-old, Denver-born son Abdulrahman.

Although al-Qaeda was now less of a threat, the Taliban remained powerful in Pakistan, and strikes there continued in 2011. One attack in North Waziristan killed dozens of tribal leaders who were meeting to resolve a dispute over local mining rights.

### DRONE SUPPORT FADES

By now, Pakistan's tacit support of the CIA's drone campaign had faded. Following other provocations—such as an agency contractor shooting two men to death on a busy street in Lahore—the increased frequency of strikes caused a wave of angry protests across the country. The CIA's uneasy

## 23 • CIA Renditions, Interrogations, and Drones

alliance with the Pakistani intelligence service ISI was fraying badly. Even US State Department officials expressed a view that the attacks were aiding recruitment to the Taliban.

President Obama did take steps to make the CIA drone program more accountable and transparent. Three years into his first term, he acknowledged that strikes were taking place in Pakistan, something that President Bush never had, and promised a new set of guidelines designed to guarantee the safety of civilians.

By this point, new technology and greater experience among those handling it had improved the accuracy of strikes and reduced the number of collateral deaths. However, the campaign remained controversial throughout the second term of the Obama administration.

### TARGETED KILLING

Targeted killing raised troubling questions about the legality and morality of extrajudicial executions, especially the signature strikes on anonymous individuals. What sort of example was Obama, a constitutional law professor and Nobel Peace Prize winner, setting for the rest of the world? What were the implications of the drone campaign for the CIA itself?

As a bureaucracy, the agency benefited hugely from its new centrality to the War on Terror. According to documents leaked by the former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden in 2013, the CIA's budget far exceeded that of all other components of the intelligence community.

However, the operation against bin Laden also symbolized a less-welcome result of the War on Terror: the CIA's militarization. There had been a paramilitary dimension to the agency almost since its founding, but targeted killing—whether by drone or assassination squad—took this to a whole new level. Further evidence of the fusion between intelligence and the military came in 2011 when Leon Panetta was replaced as director by David Petraeus, a four-star Army general. Panetta became secretary of defense.

This might not have been a problem had the CIA discharged its traditional intelligence mission more effectively. By now, though, much of the agency's young workforce had professional experience in little other than counterterrorism and manhunting.

It was not surprising, therefore, that the Obama presidency witnessed another in the long list of CIA intelligence lapses: the failure to anticipate the Arab uprisings of spring 2011.

---

### Suggested Reading

Mazzetti, *The Way of the Knife*.

Priest and Arkin, *Top Secret America*.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 For what reasons, and with what consequences, did the CIA torture detainees in the War on Terror?
- 2 For what reasons, and with what consequences, did the CIA shift from capturing and interrogating terrorists to killing them?

## LECTURE 24

# THE CIA BALANCE SHEET: WINS AND LOSSES

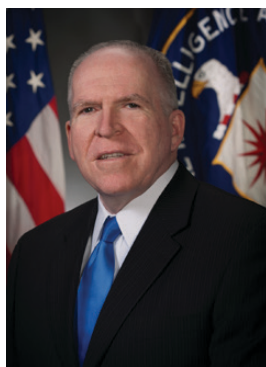
---

This lecture looks at some of the intelligence controversies early in the era of Donald Trump as president. Those controversies serve as a jumping-off point to look over the CIA's record since its creation.

### TRUMP AND THE CIA

On January 21, 2017—the day after his inauguration as president of the United States—Donald Trump visited CIA headquarters. Many CIA officers, past and present, were dismayed by what they perceived as Trump’s disrespectful performance. The former CIA director John Brennan—who had retired only the day before—was particularly angry.

The president put a brave face to the American public, tweeting the next morning that it had been a “great meeting.” But before long, he was back on the attack, claiming that the administration of his predecessor, President Barack Obama, had illegally spied on his election campaign and that bureaucrats in the “deep state” were orchestrating leaks against him.



John Brennan

The spies resisted, especially after a meeting between President Trump and Russian leader Vladimir Putin in July 2018, when Trump appeared to side with Putin in rejecting the specter of Russian election interference. Brennan called the president’s behavior “treasonous.”

Among President Trump’s arguments for why the US public should believe him—and not the CIA—about the 2016 election is the agency’s litany of previous intelligence errors, many of which have been outlined in this course.

Still, CIA intelligence gathering had its successes, as well. The agency may have missed the Soviet deployment of nuclear missiles to Cuba in 1962, but it detected them soon after they arrived on the island. It provided sound intelligence to President John F. Kennedy during the resulting crisis.

## 24 • The CIA Balance Sheet: Wins and Losses

CIA analysts also performed admirably throughout much of the Vietnam War in the 1960s and 1970s. The agency was a source of reasonably good battlefield intelligence and sensible strategic assessments about the negative long-term prospects of US involvement.

There were also more recent successes, with the CIA helping to foil enemy plots in the War on Terror. For example, the agency alerted German police in June 2018 to a suspected Islamist extremist who was manufacturing the deadly toxin ricin in his Cologne apartment. It is impossible to know how common such moments might be.

### **INTELLIGENCE PERFORMANCE**

Ironically, the CIA had itself to blame for creating the expectation that it could do more. Early boosters of the agency often talked in terms of preventing another Pearl Harbor—the trigger event for US entry into World War II. Others argue that the ability to predict precisely the time and location of events is an unfairly high standard on which to judge the performance of an intelligence service.

Moreover, the CIA's primary intelligence consumer is the US president, whose performance as president must be taken into account, as well. In the ideal intelligence cycle, the president brings an open mind to agency estimates, reads them carefully, and makes decisions informed by them.

In practice, this hardly ever happens. Presidents are too distracted by other business or simply ignore intelligence that does not conform to their beliefs. President Lyndon Johnson's reluctance to listen to CIA experts in Vietnam and President George W. Bush's lack of focus prior to 9/11 both are examples with tragic consequences.

Another factor is politicization of intelligence—that is, presidents cherry-pick existing CIA estimates or pressuring the agency to arrive at certain conclusions to justify policy positions. The best-known example is the politicization of intelligence around Iraq's weapons of mass destruction under Saddam Hussein.

President Bush seized on faulty, or inconclusive, evidence to prepare the United States to go to war against Iraq in 2003. Later, President Trump drew from the same example—and the fact that US intelligence was wrong, incomplete, or heavily massaged—to support his criticisms of the CIA.

To sum up, the CIA's intelligence performance has not been as poor as sometimes argued. Yes, there have been failures, some of them disastrous. However, we should not ignore the agency's successes or the role of other players in the failures.

### **COVERT-ACTION PERFORMANCE**

When it comes to the CIA's other main mission—covert action—the balance sheet is less favorable to the agency. Failures during the Cold War include the repeated discovery by communist authorities of CIA operations in the former Soviet bloc and Asia as well as the agency's failed attempts at regime change in various countries, above all in Cuba. Another problem was the collapse of more positive nation-building projects, most notably in Vietnam.

Of course, there have been successes, too. During the Cold War, at least three CIA operations achieved their short-term objectives: the 1953 overthrow of Iranian prime minister Mohammad Mosaddeq, the 1954 removal of Guatemalan president Jacobo Árbenz, and the arming of Afghan insurgents that helped force the Soviet Union's withdrawal in 1989. That Afghan operation contributed to the disintegration of the Soviet Union itself in 1991.

## 24 • The CIA Balance Sheet: Wins and Losses

However, each of these undertakings, while successful in the short term, had unfortunate long-term consequences. In Iran, Guatemala, and the 1980s-era operations in Afghanistan, the CIA's role was meant to be hidden through the use of local proxies. But in each case, American involvement was obvious. Also, the use of proxies in these foreign intrigues meant that the CIA hitched its wagon to local actors who had motives and agendas of their own, which were not necessarily the same as those of the United States.

In Iran, the early-1950s restoration to power of the dynastic ruler, the shah, contributed to the growth of anti-American feeling that surged in the 1979 Iranian Revolution and subsequent US hostage crisis. The Guatemalan intervention had a similar effect in Central America, fueling the spread of military authoritarianism and popular anti-Americanism. In Afghanistan, arming the mujahideen fed the growth there of militant Islamism—a development that would return to haunt the United States in the War on Terror.

These various developments are not exclusively the fault of the CIA. Each had complex causes including some that had nothing to do with the United States. Still, in every case, American intervention played a role.

This list of examples of CIA covert operations rebounding against the United States could even extend to include the 2016 presidential election. There is a long history of US interference in elections overseas. One researcher has counted 81 overt or covert election-influence operations by the United States between the end of World War II and 2000. That is compared with 36 known election operations by the Soviet Union or Russians.

A similar point can be made about the tools Russians used to influence the 2016 election: hacks, strategic leaks, and social media manipulations. The US government pioneered the use of cyber intrusions in foreign countries. These have ranged from election-influence operations to attacks intended to cause physical damage, such as the Stuxnet infection of Iranian nuclear centrifuges discovered in 2010. The suggestion here is that American election meddling and cyber intrusions contributed to an international environment in which reciprocal interference becomes more likely.



### THE CIA ON THE WORLD STAGE

The gradual, widespread dissemination of knowledge about CIA operations has come to reduce America's moral authority in the international community. Historically, the United States has inspired admiration and imitation around the world for its political democracy and the culture engendered by an open society. Yet when foreigners discover Americans engaging in deception and meddling in their countries, they are disappointed and angry. Covert operations diminish what is perhaps the US's greatest asset in international relations: its soft power.

Additionally, covert action has often worked to undermine US foreign policy. That includes bureaucratic conflicts between the CIA and the State Department, and the use of covert ops as a quick fix to complex foreign policy problems. In the Middle East, for example, regime change and targeted killings have sometimes substituted for addressing deeper issues in US relations with the region.

Plus, the CIA's original mission was intelligence gathering and analysis. Covert action tends to distract from that function. A number of CIA directors, starting with Walter Bedell Smith in the early 1950s, tried to rein in covert operations and reprioritize intelligence. They all failed. The lure of quick-fix covert operations has proven too powerful. This is yet another reason for some of the intelligence failures in the CIA's history.

### THE CIA'S POWER

The CIA's leading role in the War on Terror included a program of enhanced interrogation, viewed by many critics as torture, and a campaign of targeted killing, often remotely by drones. When Congress investigated possible abuses, the CIA obstructed it. The agency also successfully eluded attempts by the new Office of the Director of National Intelligence to bring it to heel.

## 24 • The CIA Balance Sheet: Wins and Losses

The CIA did not engage in the same sort of domestic surveillance during the War on Terror as it had during the Cold War era—at least not on the same scale. The National Security Agency was responsible for that. However, the CIA did try to influence American opinion through a concerted public relations campaign while at the same time zealously guarding its secrets.

That, briefly, is the case for the CIA as an unaccountable, invisible power looming behind the visible world of electoral politics, a secret government. However, on a closer look, the agency doesn't appear so frighteningly all-powerful.

### Gina Haspel

In 2018, Gina Haspel became the first woman ever selected to direct the CIA. She is a well-regarded career intelligence officer, but also oversaw a CIA prison in Thailand where enhanced interrogations took place. She was in the chain of command when agency videotapes depicting a detainee's waterboarding were destroyed. Haspel's confirmation, combined with public comments from the president about torture, raised concerns that the agency was reviving the practice.



## The Agency: A History of the CIA

All presidents—whether Republicans or Democrats—have approved broadly of what the CIA was doing. If they have not known the details, it is because they did not want to. Congress and the media—the two main forces capable of restraining the agency—have also often chosen to turn a blind eye to its activities. Periodic public skepticism and scrutiny has been the exception rather than the norm.

Indeed, for many in Washington, the CIA has not done too much; it has done too little. Conservatives, in particular, have tended to view professional spies as overly cautious, soft, and liberal. This is one reason why the Reagan White House ran its Iran-Contra operation through the National Security Council during the 1980s.

If anything, the CIA has been too successful for its own good at avoiding accountability. Congressional oversight can be irksome, but it can also provide a check on presidents making excessive use of the CIA's covert powers.

### CONCLUSION

To sum up, thanks in part to the CIA's longstanding efforts to escape external oversight, it now found itself highly vulnerable to presidential misuse. The agency did have vast secret powers, but its history has showed that, in the hands of a motivated president, it could be meekly obedient.

To discharge its dual missions of intelligence and covert operations, the CIA needs public confidence. To some extent, the CIA deserves the confidence of the US public. Its intelligence mission is essential. It is staffed, for the most part, by competent, hardworking, dedicated officers. It can point to moments in history when it has provided good, sometimes critically important intelligence.

## 24 • The CIA Balance Sheet: Wins and Losses

However, that same history also encompasses intelligence failures, misconceived covert operations, and abuses of secret power. US citizens are the ultimate check on the CIA's power. They need to keep themselves informed about what the agency is doing at home and around the world in their name.

---

### Suggested Reading

As of this course's production, it is too early for serious, scholarly books on the CIA in the Trump era to have appeared, but there are a number of excellent online resources for keeping informed about the CIA's activities and other current national security issues. These include (but are not limited to):

National Security Archive, <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu>.

Lawfare, <https://www.lawfareblog.com>.

Small Wars Journal, <http://smallwarsjournal.com>.

TomDispatch, <http://www.tomdispatch.com>.

---

### Questions to Consider

- 1 Has the CIA fulfilled its mission as the intelligence agency of the world's largest democracy?
- 2 Are President Donald Trump and his followers correct in perceiving the CIA as part of a "deep state?"

# QUIZ

This quiz is intended to refresh and test your knowledge of the audio or video lessons. An answer key follows.

- 1 Which of the following intelligence agencies came first?**
  - a. Britain's MI6.
  - b. France's Deuxième Bureau.
  - c. The US's Office of Strategic Services.
- 2 What was Operation Jedburgh?**
  - a. An intelligence operation behind Axis lines during World War II.
  - b. Sen. Jedburgh's plan to remove OSS director Bill Donovan.
  - c. A World War II counterintelligence campaign in Switzerland.
- 3 In January 1946 President Harry Truman established the:**
  - a. Defense Intelligence Agency.
  - b. Central Intelligence Group.
  - c. Central Intelligence Agency.
- 4 Early CIA officers were associated with what schools?**
  - a. Big 10.
  - b. Pac-10.
  - c. Ivy League.
- 5 The Truman Doctrine is a catchphrase for:**
  - a. The Manhattan Project.
  - b. US defense of weaker nations against the Soviet Union.
- 6 The CIA's enabling legislation was:**
  - a. The Central Intelligence Agency Act.
  - b. The National Security Act.
  - c. The Spies Without Borders Act.

## Quiz

- 7 **If any one person steered the CIA into covert ops, it was:**
- George F. Kennan.
  - Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter.
  - Enver Hoxha.
- 8 **CIA Director Allen Dulles:**
- Favored covert operations.
  - Opposed covert operations.
  - Was the twin brother of John Foster Dulles.
- 9 **This Roosevelt was once the CIA field director in Iran:**
- Archie Roosevelt.
  - Theodore Roosevelt Jr.
  - Kim Roosevelt.
- 10 **After the Guatemalan coup of 1954, mission chief Tracy Barnes's wife Janet described the mood at CIA headquarters as:**
- "You can own the world."
  - "We are the world."
  - "The world owes us."
- 11 **By 1958, 90 percent of US intelligence about the Soviet Union came from:**
- Resettled émigrés.
  - British intelligence.
  - U-2 spy planes.
- 12 **President Dwight Eisenhower:**
- Approved Operation PLUTO.
  - Disapproved Operation PLUTO.
  - Was never made aware of Operation PLUTO.

- 13 Edward Lansdale was an inspiration for the Vietnam-era novel:
- The Quiet American.*
  - The Ugly American.*
  - Neither.
  - Both.
- 14 Which of the following spy novelists never worked as a spy?
- William F. Buckley Jr.
  - Ian Fleming.
  - Robert Ludlum.
  - John le Carré
  - Graham Greene
- 15 When a White House lawyer for President Richard Nixon ordered the CIA to come up with \$1 million to pay off the Watergate burglars, CIA director Richard Helms:
- Drew funds out of the agency's Civil Air Transport front account
  - Told the White House to ask the FBI
  - Refused, saying, "the agency's credibility would have been ruined forever."
- 16 CIA counterintelligence chief James Angleton:
- Brought his friend and British double-agent Kim Philby to justice.
  - Succumbed to alcoholism and insomnia in the search for Soviet moles.
  - Defected to Israel's secret service, Mossad.
- 17 In 1975, Congress investigated the CIA led by:
- Senator Frank Church.
  - Representative Otis Pike.
  - Neither.
  - Both.

## Quiz

- 18 A hole in US counterterrorism defenses in the late 1990s was in:
- Domestic terrorism.
  - State-sponsored terrorism.
  - Transnational threats.
- 19 In April 2005, the US intelligence apparatus was reorganized to include:
- Abolishing the position of director of Central Intelligence.
  - Creating the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency.
  - Reducing the role of the Office of National Intelligence.
- 20 The Navy Seal assault on Osama bin Laden's hideout in Abbottabad, Pakistan, in May 2011 was codenamed:
- Operation Geronimo.
  - Neptune Spear.
  - Cannonball.
- 21 While Russia engaged in hacks, strategic leaks, and social media manipulations to influence the 2016 election, some research indicates that the United States participated in the following number of overt or covert election-influence operations since the end of World War II:
- 36.
  - 50.
  - 81.



# TIMELINE OF NOTABLE EVENTS (1941–2011)



**July 11, 1941**

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt selects William J. Donovan as coordinator of information.

**July 13, 1942**

The Office of Strategic Services (OSS) replaces the Office of the Coordinator of Information, with Donovan as director of the OSS.

**January 1946**

President Harry Truman establishes the Central Intelligence Group.

**March 1947**

President Truman announces the Truman Doctrine, pledging aid to communist-threatened nations.

**July 1947**

President Truman signs the National Security Act, creating the Central Intelligence Agency.

**December 1947**

President Truman signs National Security Council directive 4/A, authorizing the CIA to carry out “covert psychological operations” to counteract Soviet propaganda.





### **June 1948**

National Security Council directive 10/2 creates the Office of Policy Coordination, answering to the secretaries of state and defense but housed administratively within the CIA.

### **October 1949**

The *Stormie Seas* debacle occurs in Albania.

### **1949–1954**

The CIA undertakes missions to push back against Soviet influence in Europe.

### **1950–1953**

The CIA undertakes covert operations during the Korean War.

### **August 19, 1953**

A coup assisted by the CIA replaces Iranian leader Mohammed Mossadeq with Fazlollah Zahedi.

### **June 28, 1954**

A CIA coup overthrows President Jacobo Árbenz of Guatemala.

### **July 4, 1956**

The first U-2 spy flight takes place over the Soviet Union. More flights provide massive amounts of intelligence.

### October 1956

A coup to overthrow the leftist Syrian government fails. Another coup fails in 1957.

### November 4, 1956

The Soviet army invades Hungary.

### May 18, 1958

CIA pilot Allen Lawrence Pope is shot down, revealing and dooming a CIA coup in Indonesia.

### May 1, 1960

U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers is shot down by a Soviet missile and captured. He returns home in 1962.

### September 1960

The CIA makes an effort to eliminate Congolese leader Patrice Lumumba, but Lumumba dies from other means.

### April 17, 1961

The Bay of Pigs invasion is launched and quickly fails.

### October 1962

The Cuban Missile Crisis occurs.

### 1966–1967

*Ramparts* magazine publishes an article revealing that the CIA had secretly funded research programs related to the Vietnam War at Michigan State University.

*The New York Times* begins investigating the CIA as well.

### January 30, 1968

The Tet Offensive shifts public opinion against the Vietnam War. Notably, the CIA had been using counterinsurgency and nation building as tools in the war, which would influence later strategy.







### **September 1973**

A military coup leads to the death by suicide of Chilean leader Salvador Allende. Augusto Pinochet takes over.

### **December 1974**

Seymour Hersh publishes a *New York Times* story on the controversial MHCHAOS program.

### **1978**

The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act mandates strict procedures for authorizing surveillance.

### **January 1978–February 1979**

The Iranian Revolution culminates in the establishment of an Islamic republic under Ruhollah Khomeini.

### **November 4, 1979**

Fifty-two Americans are captured by Iranian militants, who broke into the US Embassy in Tehran.

### **December 1979**

The Soviets send troops into Afghanistan.

### **January 1980**

President Jimmy Carter expands American operations in Afghanistan.

### **January 20, 1981**

Hostages are released, ending the Iranian hostage crisis.

### **1985–1987 (approximately)**

The Iran-Contra scandal occurs and comes to light.

### **March 1985**

President Ronald Reagan approves National Security Decision Directive 166. This formalizes a change in US strategy in Afghanistan from merely harassing the Soviets to the aim of driving them out.

### **February 1989**

The Soviets complete their retreat from Afghanistan.

### **December 26, 1991**

The Soviet Union dissolves.

### **1996**

Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden declares a jihad on the United States.

### **October 2000**

Two al-Qaeda operatives drive a small boat packed with explosives into the USS *Cole* in the Yemeni harbor of Aden.

### **September 11, 2001**

Al-Qaeda launches four terror attacks against New York City and Washington DC.





### **November 2001**

The CIA uses a Predator drone to blow up an al-Qaeda safe house south of Kabul, assassinating the group's military chief Mohammed Atef and seven others. Drone strikes become a major tool, though support for them waxes and wanes over time.

### **2004**

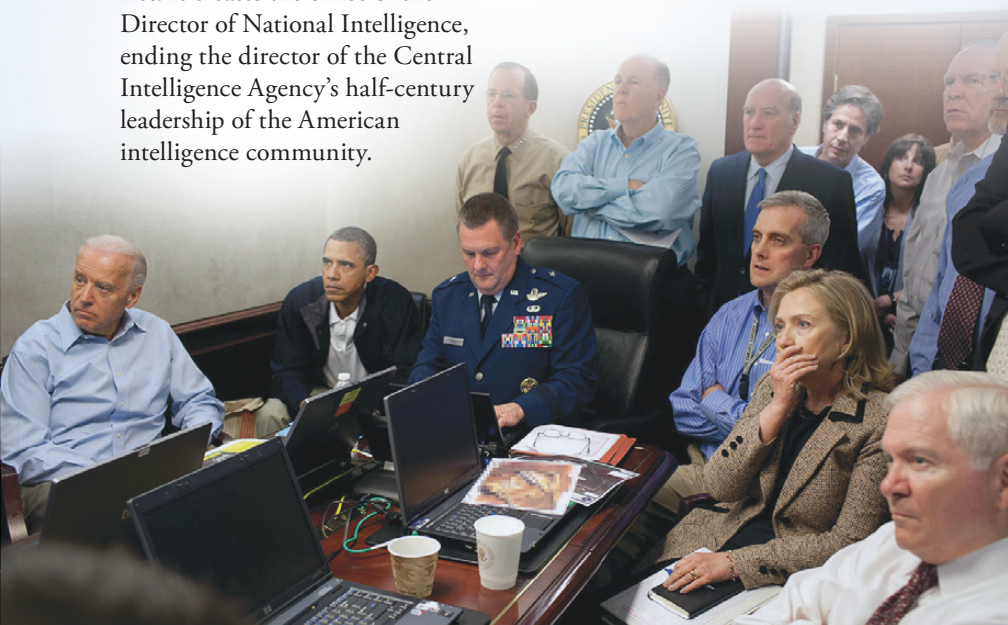
Congress passes the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act. It creates the office of the Director of National Intelligence, ending the director of the Central Intelligence Agency's half-century leadership of the American intelligence community.

### **December 2009**

A Jordanian jihadist blows himself up at an American base in Afghanistan, killing five CIA officers and two contractors.

### **May 2011**

Osama bin Laden is killed in Pakistan, a triumph for the CIA.



# BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ahern, Thomas L., Jr. *Vietnam Declassified: The CIA and Counterinsurgency*. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2010. A highly detailed and thoughtful account of CIA rural pacification efforts based on CIA records. Ahern is a former intelligence officer who served in Vietnam during the 1960s.

Andrew, Christopher. *For the President's Eyes Only: Secret Intelligence and the American Presidency from Washington to Bush*. New York: Harper Collins, 1995. An excellent introductory survey of the relationship between intelligence and the US presidency from the revolutionary era to the end of the Cold War (with a bias toward the post-World War II era).

Bearden, Milton A., and James Risen. *The Main Enemy: The Inside Story of the CIA's Final Showdown with the KGB*. New York: Random House, 2003. A readable, first-hand account of the so-called Year of the Spy, the CIA's later Afghan operations, and the collapse of the Soviet bloc by senior CIA officer Bearden and *New York Times* reporter James Risen.

Bohning, Don. *The Castro Obsession: U.S. Covert Operations Against Cuba, 1959–1965*. Washington DC: Potomac Books, 2005. A detailed account of the CIA's anti-Castro operations. Bohning is a former Miami journalist, and he draws on extensive interviews with participants.

Byrne, Malcolm. *Iran-Contra: Reagan's Scandal and the Unchecked Abuse of Presidential Power*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2014. Based on deep research in declassified papers, this volume has succeeded Theodore Draper's excellent *A Very Thin Line* as the most comprehensive account of Iran-Contra affair.

Coll, Steve. *Directorate S: The CIA and America's Secret Wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan*. New York: Penguin, 2018. A followup volume to the prodigiously researched and compellingly written *Ghost Wars*, *Directorate S* takes the story of the CIA's involvement in Afghanistan from 9/11 to 2014.

———. *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001*. New York: Penguin, 2004. A definitive history of pre-9/11 CIA operations in Afghanistan combining deep research, multiple perspectives, and superb storytelling.

## Bibliography

Corke, Sarah-Jane. *U.S. Covert Operations and Cold War Strategy: Truman, Secret Warfare, and the CIA*. London: Routledge, 2008. A useful guide to the bureaucratic struggles in 1940s Washington that eventually resulted in the CIA gaining responsibility for Cold War covert operations.

Cullather, Nick. *Secret History: The CIA's Classified Account of its Operations in Guatemala, 1952–1954*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999. An internally commissioned but surprisingly critical history of the CIA's coup operation in Guatemala based on CIA records.

Dobbs, Michael. *One Minute to Midnight: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and Castro on the Brink of Nuclear War*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008. A very well-researched and highly readable day-by-day account of the Cuban Missile Crisis incorporating the perspectives of Washington, Moscow, and Havana.

Farber, David. *Taken Hostage: The Iran Hostage Crisis and America's First Encounter with Radical Islam*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005. A comprehensive, well-researched, and engagingly written account of the hostage crisis.

Friedman, Andrew. *Covert Capital: Landscapes of Denial and the Making of U.S. Empire in the Suburbs of Northern Virginia*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2013. A theoretically dense but rewarding history of the rise of the suburban developments surrounding the CIA's Langley headquarters in Northern Virginia.

Gaddis, John Lewis. *George F. Kennan: An American Life*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2011. A monumental biography of the architect of US Cold War strategy, both overt and covert.

Gleijeses, Piero. *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944–1954*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991. A deeply researched, pathbreaking history of the downfall of Jacobo Árbenz that does a particularly fine job of presenting the Guatemalan perspective on the US intervention.



## The Agency: A History of the CIA

Grose, Peter. *Operation Rollback. America's Secret War Behind the Iron Curtain*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000. An engrossing account of the rollback campaign initiated by George Kennan and largely carried out by the CIA, focusing on the role of communist-bloc émigrés.

Gustafson, Kristian. *Hostile Intent: U.S. Covert Operations in Chile, 1964–1974*. Washington DC: Potomac Books, 2007. The best available treatment of the intelligence dimension of US involvement in Chilean politics during the 1960s and 1970s. Gustafson downplays the influence of the CIA.

Harmer, Tanya. *Allende's Chile and the Inter-American Cold War*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011. A sophisticated account of the Allende presidency that decenters the United States and instead emphasizes the influence of Chile's Latin American neighbors, especially Cuba and Brazil.

Immerman, Richard H. *The Hidden Hand: A Brief History of the CIA*. Chichester, UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2014. Although concise and dense, this is the best up-to-date history of the CIA by a leading academic intelligence historian who served in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

Jeffreys-Jones, Rhodri. *The CIA and American Democracy*. Third ed. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003. A scholarly survey of the history of the CIA notable for its balanced coverage of the CIA's intelligence and covert action missions as well as its authoritative, fair-minded judgments.

———. *Cloak and Dollar: A History of American Secret Intelligence*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002. An acerbic but insightful account of the evolution of both the foreign and domestic security services from the nation's founding through the 1990s.

Jenkins, Tricia. *The CIA in Hollywood: How the Agency Shapes Film and Television*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2012. Takes up the story of the CIA's involvement in Hollywood in the 1990s, focusing on the CIA's efforts to mold its own public image through movies and TV, especially in the period after 9/11.

## Bibliography

Johnson, A. Ross. *Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty: The CIA Years and Beyond*. Washington DC, and Stanford, CA: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Stanford University Press, 2010. Draws on CIA records about the secretly financed Cold War radio stations broadcasting to the Eastern Bloc. Johnson is a former director of Radio Free Europe and the volume is laudatory, but valuable nonetheless.

Johnson, Loch K. *A Season of Inquiry Revisited: The Church Committee Confronts America's Spy Agencies*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2015. A revised edition of a 1986, blow-by-blow account of the Church Committee by a committee staffer who went on to become an eminent intelligence studies scholar.

Jones, Howard. *The Bay of Pigs*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. A concise but well-documented and insightful narrative of the Bay of Pigs invasion based on recently declassified CIA records.

Jones, Milo, and Philippe Silberzahn. *Constructing Cassandra: Reframing Intelligence Failure at the CIA, 1947–2001*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Security Series, 2013. A provocative study of the CIA's failure to predict the Iranian Revolution and several other international crises emphasizing persistent flaws in the Agency's institutional identity and culture.

Kennan, George F., and Frank Costigliola, ed. *The Kennan Diaries*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2014. This work offers insight into the emotional life of George F. Kennan.

Kinzer, Stephen. *The Brothers: John Foster Dulles, Allen Dulles, and Their Secret World War*. New York: Times Books, 2013. A vivid and perceptive twin biography of the Dulles brothers that draws on recent scholarship to explain their obsessive hostility toward developing-world nationalist leaders.

Lawfare. <https://www.lawfareblog.com>. A blog about pressing national security challenges. Published by the Lawfare Institute and Brookings Institution.

Mangold, Tom. *Cold Warrior: James Jesus Angleton—The CIA's Master Spy Hunter*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991. A remarkably detailed, critical biography of Angleton focusing on the years of the molehunt.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

Mazzetti, Mark. *The Way of the Knife: The CIA, a Secret Army, and a War at the Ends of the Earth*. New York: Penguin, 2013. *New York Times* reporter Mark Mazzetti's chronicle of the CIA's transformation into a "killing machine" during the Obama era, featuring a large cast of often bizarre characters.

Murphy, David E., Sergei A. Kondrashev, and George Bailey. *Battleground Berlin: CIA vs. KGB in the Cold War*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999. A detailed account of early Cold War US-Soviet espionage rivalry by a team of authors that includes a former officer from both the CIA and the KGB.

National Security Archive. <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu>. Website of the National Security Archive featuring recently declassified government documents and valuable commentaries. Hosted by George Washington University.

Olmsted, Kathryn S. *Challenging the Secret Government: The Post-Watergate Investigations of the CIA and FBI*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996. A well-researched and elegantly written history of both the Church and Pike committees that takes a more critical view of their achievements than Loch Johnson's book on the same subject.

Powers, Thomas. *The Man Who Kept the Secrets: Richard Helms and the CIA*. New York: Knopf, 1979. An outstandingly good biography of the quintessential American spy who was at the helm of the CIA during the crises of the early 1970s.

Prados, John. *Safe for Democracy: The Secret Wars of the CIA*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2006. A compendious volume of CIA covert operations with particularly detailed accounts of the Agency's activities in Asia.

———. *The Family Jewels: The CIA, Secrecy, and Presidential Power*. Updated ed. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2014. One of this prolific intelligence historian's best books, *The Family Jewels* ranges far beyond the 1970s to consider the continuities between that era and later secret government abuses.

## Bibliography

Priest, Dana, and William M. Arkin. *Top Secret America: The Rise of the New American Security State*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2011. A pioneering and absorbing account of the emergence since 9/11 of new government intelligence agencies and private companies making up a “military intelligence complex.” The slightly more recent James Risen, *Pay Any Price: Greed, Power, and Endless War* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014), offers additional detail.

Rahnema, Ali. *Behind the 1953 Coup in Iran: Thugs, Turncoats, Soldiers, and Spooks*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. A diligently researched account of the crucial days between August 15 and August 19, 1953, marrying Anglo-American and Iranian perspectives on the overthrow of Mosaddeq.

Robarge, David. “Moles, Defectors, and Deceptions: James Angleton and CIA Counterintelligence.” *Journal of Intelligence History* 3, no. 2 (2003): 21–49. An interesting article by the CIA’s chief historian that usefully summarizes previous works on the subject and challenges the anti-Angleton consensus.

Rovner, Joshua. *Fixing the Facts: National Security and the Politics of Intelligence*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011. A valuable study of various US intelligence failures, culminating in the Iraq War. Rovner compares the American and British experiences in Iraq, and emphasizes the influence of politicization over analytical errors.

Saunders, Frances Stonor. *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War*. London: Granta, 1999. (Published in the United States as *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters*. New York: New Press, 2000.) An enterprisingly researched, entertainingly written, and highly critical account of the CIA’s secret patronage of writers and artists in the cultural Cold War.

Scott, Len. “The ‘Incredible Wrongness’ of Nikita Khrushchev: The CIA and the Cuban Missile Crisis.” *History* 100, no. 340 (2015): 210–228. A useful scholarly survey of the CIA’s performance during the Cuban Missile Crisis by a leading British intelligence historian.

## The Agency: A History of the CIA

Small Wars Journal. <http://smallwarsjournal.com>. An online magazine about unconventional warfare with an accompanying blog and other resources. Run by the Small Wars Foundation.

Taubman, Philip. *Secret Empire: Eisenhower, the CIA, and the Hidden Story of America's Space Espionage*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003. A well-researched and lively history of the U-2 and Corona programs.

Thomas, Evan. *The Very Best Men: Four Who Dared—The Early Years of the CIA*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995. An outstandingly well-researched and well-written social history of the early CIA's principal covert operatives featuring compelling pen-portraits of, among others, Frank Wisner and Desmond FitzGerald.

TomDispatch.com. <http://www.tomdispatch.com>. A blog featuring a range of critical essays on national security issues by leading writers. Created by editor/writer Tom Engelhardt and hosted by The Nation Institute.

Warner, Michael. *The Rise and Fall of Intelligence: An International Security History*. Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2014. An ambitious effort to locate the history of the CIA within a world historical context, Warner's book traces the evolution of intelligence from ancient origins to the present-day erosion of the state intelligence monopoly.

Weiner, Tim. *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA*. New York: Doubleday, 2007. A highly readable popular narrative of the CIA's history by a leading intelligence journalist. Criticized by scholars for its relentlessly negative tone, it is better researched and more reliable than academic reviews would suggest.

Westad, Odd Arne. *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. An extremely influential recent scholarly survey of the history of the Cold War.

Wilford, Hugh. *America's Great Game: The CIA's Secret Arabists and the Shaping of the Modern Middle East*. New York: Basic Books, 2013. An account of CIA operations in the Middle East during the 1940s and 1950s focusing on the chief US operative in Iran around the time of the 1953 coup, Kermit "Kim" Roosevelt.

## Bibliography

———. *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008. Examines the experiences of a variety of US citizen groups who received covert CIA subsidies in the Cold War, from labor to journalists.

Willmetts, Simon. *In Secrecy's Shadow: The OSS and the CIA in Hollywood Cinema, 1941–1979*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016. A smart, thoughtful, and well-researched discussion of the CIA's relationship with the US movie industry, starting with the OSS's ventures into moviemaking during World War II and ending with the conspiracy thrillers of the 1970s.

Wise, David. *Molehunt: The Secret Search for Traitors That Shattered the CIA*. New York: Random House, 1992. A revelatory account of the CIA molehunt based mainly on extraordinarily extensive interviewing of the officers involved.

Woods, Randall B. *Shadow Warrior: William Egan Colby and the CIA*. New York: Basic Books, 2013. A richly revealing biography of 1970s CIA director William Colby that is particularly good on the prior years he spent working on counterinsurgency operations in Vietnam.

Wright, Lawrence. *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda's Road to 9/11*. New York: Knopf, 2006. A highly impressive feat of investigative journalism married to compelling story-telling. Although the book foregrounds al-Qaeda itself, there are excellent passages on the CIA and FBI investigations of the terrorist network, including the strained personal relationship between Michael Scheuer and John O'Neill (the focus of a recent TV drama series with the same title).

Zegart, Amy. *Spying Blind: The CIA, the FBI, and the Origins of 9/11*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007. A powerful critique of systemic problems within the US intelligence community that contributed to the intelligence failure of 9/11.

# IMAGE CREDITS

Page	Credit
5	Yale University Art Gallery/Public domain.
6	LC-DIG-hec-28438/Public domain.
7	National Archives and Records Administration/Public domain.
8	LC-USZ62-117121/Public domain.
9	LC-USZ62-70080/Public domain.
10	LC-USZ62-54011/Public domain.
13	LC-DIG-hec-12925/Public domain.
14	National Archives and Records Administration/Public domain.
22	LC-USZ62-93383/Public domain.
24	National Archives and Records Administration/Public domain.
25	Central intelligence Agency/Public domain.
29	bbcpersian/Wikimedia commons/Public domain.
32	MirandaCrafton13/NSAEBB/NSAEBB435/Wikimedia commons/CC BY-SA 4.0.
33	Wikimedia commons/Public domain.
34	farahpahlavi.org/Wikimedia commons/Public domain.
38	Gobierno de Guatemala - Caballeros Cadetes/Wikimedia commons/Public domain.
39	LC-DIG-det-4a19873/Public domain.
45	National Archives Identifier (NAID) 594350/Wikimedia commons/Public domain.
51	Mariluna/Wikimedia commons/Public domain.
54	FOTO:FORTEPAN/Nagy Gyula/Wikimedia commons/CC BY-SA 3.0.
57	Central Intelligence Agency/flickr/Public domain.
58	Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-27237-0001/Wikimedia Commons/CC-BY-SA 3.0.
63	LC-DIG-ds-07187/Public domain.
66	United States Department of State/flickr/Public domain.
67	Stevan Kragujevic/Wikimedia commons/CC BY-SA 3.0.
68	LC-F81- 28789/Public domain.
70	1Veertje/Wikimedia commons/Public domain.
73	Harry Pot/Anefo/Wikimedia commons/CC0.
77	LC-DIG-ppmsc-03256/Public domain.
80	Central Intelligence Agency/Public domain.
83	SDASM Archives/flickr/Public domain.
86	Abbie Rowe. White House Photographs. John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston

## Image Credits

- 88 ..... LC-USZ62-127233/Public domain.  
89 ..... Central Intelligence Agency/Wikimedia commons/Public domain.  
90 ..... Abbie Rowe. White House Photographs. John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and  
Museum, Boston  
92 ..... U.S. Navy photographer/Wikimedia commons/Public domain.  
97 ..... National Archives and Records Administration/Public domain.  
97 ..... U.S. Air Force/Wikimedia commons/Public domain.  
100 ..... LC-USZ62-126386/Public domain.  
101 ..... LC-DIG-ds-00539/Public domain.  
103 ..... Yoichi Okamoto/Wikimedia commons/Public domain.  
110 ..... Elsadorfman/Wikimedia commons/CC BY-SA 3.0.  
110 ..... LC-USZ62-71719/Public domain.  
116 ..... Cassowary Colorizations/Wikimedia commons/CC BY 2.0.  
117 ..... National Archives, UK/Public domain.  
118 ..... CBS Television/Wikimedia commons/Public domain.  
121 ..... LC-DIG-ggbain-03724/Public domain.  
124 ..... LC-DIG-ds-01512/Public domain.  
124 ..... United States Naval History and Heritage Command/Public domain.  
128 ..... Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum/Public domain.  
133 ..... Institute for Policy Studies/Wikimedia commons/CC BY 2.0.  
137 ..... LC-DIG-highsm-15095/Public domain.  
139 ..... LC-DIG-ppmsca-54574/Public domain.  
142 ..... National Counterintelligence Center/Public domain.  
144 ..... LC-DIG-ppmsc-03265/Public domain.  
150 ..... National Archives and Records Administration/Public domain.  
151 ..... LC-DIG-ds-05053/Public domain.  
152 ..... Mary Ann Moorman (Mary Krahrmer)/Public domain.  
154 ..... National Archives of the Netherlands/Public domain.  
156 ..... National Archives and Records Administration/Public domain.  
161 ..... LC-DIG-ppmsca-19518/Public domain.  
161 ..... LC-USZCN4-116/Public domain.  
162 ..... National Archives and Records Administration/Public domain.  
165 ..... NARA/CSIS: Center for Strategic & International Studies/flickr/CC BY 2.0.  
167 ..... Don Koralewski/DOD DN-SN-82-07899/Wikimedia commons/Public domain.



## The Agency: A History of the CIA

170	LC-DIG-ppss-01026/Public domain.
172	Central Intelligence Agency/Public domain.
175	LC-USZ62-13040/Public domain.
181	National Archives and Records Administration/Public domain.
185	National Archives and Records Administration/Public domain.
189	National Archives and Records Administration/Public domain.
190	LC-USZ62-107700/Public domain.
193	Central Intelligence Agency/Public domain.
194	Federal Bureau of Investigation/Public domain.
195	United States Department of Defense/Public domain.
196	Central Intelligence Agency/flickr/Public domain.
199	United States Department of Defense/Public domain.
200	United States Department of Defense/Public domain.
202	National Archives and Records Administration/Public domain.
204	United States Department of Defense/Public domain.
206	United States Marine Corps/Public domain.
211	Obama White House/flickr/Public domain.
212	National Archives and Records Administration/Public domain.
213	United States Department of Defense/Public domain.
218	CIA/Wikimedia commons/Public domain.
223	Central Intelligence Agency/flickr/Public domain.

### Timeline image credits

230	National Archives and Records Administration/Public domain.
230	LC-USZ62-70080/Public domain.
231	USAF - U.S. National Archive/Public domain.
232	U.S. National Archives and Records Administration/Public domain.
232	Don Koralewski/DOD DN-SN-82-07899/Wikimedia commons/Public domain.
234	United States Department of Defense/Public domain.
234	Robert J. Fisch/Wikimedia Commons/CC BY-SA 2.0.
235	Obama White House/flickr/Public domain.
235	United States Air Force/Public domain.

# QUIZ ANSWERS

- 1 Which of the following intelligence agencies came first?**
  - b. France's Deuxième Bureau.
- 2 What was Operation Jedburgh?**
  - a. An intelligence operation behind Axis lines during World War II.
- 3 In January 1946 President Harry Truman established the:**
  - b. Central Intelligence Group.
- 4 Early CIA officers were associated with what schools?**
  - c. Ivy League.
- 5 The Truman Doctrine is a catchphrase for:**
  - b. US defense of weaker nations against the Soviet Union.
- 6 The CIA's enabling legislation was:**
  - b. The National Security Act.
- 7 If any one person steered the CIA into covert ops, it was:**
  - a. George F. Kennan.
- 8 CIA Director Allen Dulles:**
  - a. Favored covert operations.
- 9 This Roosevelt was once the CIA field director in Iran:**
  - c. Kim Roosevelt.
- 10 After the Guatemalan coup of 1954, mission chief Tracy Barnes's wife Janet described the mood at CIA headquarters as:**
  - a. "You can own the world."

- 11 By 1958, 90 percent of US intelligence about the Soviet Union came from:
  - c. U-2 spy planes.
- 12 President Dwight Eisenhower:
  - a. Approved Operation PLUTO.
- 13 Edward Lansdale was an inspiration for the Vietnam-era novel:
  - d. Both.
- 14 Which of the following spy novelists never worked as a spy?
  - c. Robert Ludlum.
- 15 When a White House lawyer for President Richard Nixon ordered the CIA to come up with \$1 million to pay off the Watergate burglars, CIA director Richard Helms:
  - c. Refused, saying, “the agency’s credibility would have been ruined forever.”
- 16 CIA counterintelligence chief James Angleton:
  - b. Succumbed to alcoholism and insomnia in the search for Soviet moles.
- 17 In 1975, Congress investigated the CIA led by:
  - d. Both.
- 18 A hole in US counterterrorism defenses in the late 1990s was in:
  - c. Transnational threats.
- 19 In April 2005, the US intelligence apparatus was reorganized to include:
  - a. Abolishing the position of director of Central Intelligence.

## Quiz Answers

- 20 The Navy Seal assault on Osama bin Laden's hideout in Abbottabad, Pakistan, in May 2011 was codenamed:
- b. Neptune Spear.
- 21 While Russia engaged in hacks, strategic leaks, and social media manipulations to influence the 2016 election, some research indicates that the United States participated in the following number of overt or covert election-influence operations since the end of World War II:
- c. 81.