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August 30, 2012

No Charges Filed on Harsh Tactics Used by the C.I.A.

By SCOTT SHANE

Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. announced Thursday that no one would be prosecuted for the deaths of a prisoner in Afghanistan in 2002 and another in Iraq in 2003, eliminating the last possibility that any criminal charges will be brought as a result of the brutal interrogations carried out by the C.I.A.

Mr. Holder had already ruled out any charges related to the use of waterboarding and other methods that most human rights experts consider to be torture. His announcement closes a contentious three-year investigation by the Justice Department and brings to an end years of dispute over whether line intelligence or military personnel or their superiors would be held accountable for the abuse of prisoners in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.
The closing of the two cases means that the Obama administration’s limited effort to scrutinize the counterterrorism programs carried out under President George W. Bush has come to an end. Without elaborating, Mr. Holder suggested that the end of the criminal investigation should not be seen as a moral exoneration of those involved in the prisoners’ treatment and deaths. ......


REVIEW OF WEINER’S A HISTORY OF THE FBI

Behind the Bureau: On the FBI

Beverly Gage

August 21, 2012  |  This article appeared in the September 10, 2012 edition of The Nation.

J. Edgar Hoover died forty years ago, at the reasonably ripe age of 77. The timing of his death—a heart attack on May 1, 1972—turned out to be a blessing and a curse for his historical legacy. Had he lived a few months longer, he could have become mired in Watergate and been tarnished by the downfall of his longtime ally Richard Nixon. A few years beyond that and he might have been hauled before the Church Committee to answer for the civil liberties abuses committed during his thirty-seven-year tenure at the FBI. His death spared him the experience of seeing the bureau maligned, denounced and partially dismantled in the 1970s. But it also made him a poster boy—often rightly, sometimes wrongly—for all that had gone wrong in American intelligence policy since the ugly days of the Palmer raids in the wake of World War I. In the four decades since his death, Hoover has come in for
merciless treatment at the hands of journalists, biographers and government investigators seeking to expose his secrets and scuff up his polished public image. Today, most Americans know him best not as the consummate public servant of FBI lore but as a tyrannical brute and alleged cross-dresser who spent a lifetime assaulting Americans’ constitutional rights.

Enemies
A History of the FBI. By Tim Weiner. 2012
Buy this book.

At first glance, Tim Weiner’s Enemies fits comfortably into the tradition of exposé. A longtime intelligence reporter, Weiner is best known for Legacy of Ashes, his award-winning 2007 indictment of the CIA’s secret operations since its founding in the late 1940s. Enemies promises revelations from never-before-seen FBI files and vows that the truth about the bureau has—at last—come out. But the truth, it turns out, is rather messy. Enemies suffers from one-damned-thing-after-another syndrome, a common hazard with case-based intelligence histories. The book covers a wide range of issues and contexts, from the civil liberties violations committed in the bureau’s early years to World War II espionage on up through the “war on terror.” Weiner seems determined to judge each episode on its merits, and at its best Enemies is surprisingly evenhanded. But at its worst, Enemies collapses under the weight of its internal contradictions. Weiner describes his book as a study of “a century of constant conflict over the conduct of secret intelligence in an open democracy.” Unfortunately, Enemies often seems to embody rather than explain that conflict.

Weiner begins with the founding of the Bureau of Investigation in 1908 and traces its evolution from a tiny, incompetent band of misfits into the Hoover-led powerhouse reorganized as the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1935. From there, he offers a selective and often fascinating journey through the FBI’s efforts to protect the nation from its alleged “enemies, foreign and domestic.” Enemies does not pretend to be an encyclopedic
Weiner focuses on the FBI's intelligence work: ferreting out Russian spies, running American agents against the Russians in turn, manipulating foreign governments, investigating terrorism and keeping tabs on that dubious category of malcontents known as “domestic subversives.” As Weiner notes, the FBI has long been a hybrid agency: part police force, part secret intelligence bureau. And we tend to know a lot more about one side of the story than the other. *Enemies* is an attempt to fill in some of those gaps.

Weiner summons a blend of well-worn FBI scholarship and new revelations from declassified intelligence files acquired through the Freedom of Information Act. The first quarter of the book, which covers the period from 1908 to 1940, draws heavily on the work of such historians as Richard Gid Powers and Athan Theoharis. During these early years, Weiner writes, the bureau bounced in and out of secret intelligence work as public opinion, institutional priorities and presidential directives seemed to demand. In the main, though, it was a law enforcement agency—and not a terribly good one. The early bureau failed to solve many of its biggest cases, including the 1920 Wall Street bombing, the era’s worst terrorist attack. It also bungled its first high-profile campaign against the communists and anarchists who would become the lifelong focus of Hoover’s domestic intelligence efforts.

* * *

The Palmer raids of 1919–20 turned out to be a disaster for the bureau. With the Bolshevik Revolution stirring up fears among some Americans of a similar revolt at home, the bureau helped round up thousands of alleged communists, anarchists and other left-wingers, often ignoring the need for warrants and failing to distinguish between resident aliens and homegrown radicals. It also lacked the legal authority and the institutional know-how to carry
out a mass deportation effort. In response, the fledgling ACLU joined forces with some of the nation’s most prominent attorneys to make the case that the bureau was acting outside the limits of the law. Among those persuaded was Attorney General Harlan Fiske Stone, who shut down the bureau’s political surveillance apparatus upon assuming office in 1924.

The Palmer scandal foreclosed serious domestic intelligence operations for more than a decade, until Franklin Roosevelt gave the go-ahead for the FBI to plunge back in. In telling this next chapter of the story, *Enemies* finally hits its mark. Roosevelt was cagey with his orders at first, encouraging Hoover to keep an eye on homegrown fascists and communists as early as 1934 but refusing to put the instructions in writing. When World War II began five years later, the FBI’s intelligence mission quickly expanded. In the two years between Hitler’s invasion of Poland and the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, the bureau doubled in size. It also acquired jurisdiction over espionage, sabotage and “subversion” cases throughout the Western Hemisphere. Today we tend to think of the CIA (another product of World War II) as the foreign intelligence wing, with the FBI mostly limited to domestic soil. During the 1940s, however, the FBI took charge of fully half the world—albeit the half least engulfed in war.

The FBI’s activities abroad, especially during World War II, are perhaps the least studied aspect of its history, and Weiner provides a valuable, detailed and sometimes shocking account of what bureau agents were up to at that time. Despite its glowing reputation in the 1930s, the FBI was not particularly well prepared for the exigencies of wartime intelligence work. As a result, agents assigned to the new Special Intelligence Service, the FBI’s South America division, faced a steep learning curve. Weiner narrates the war as a series of desperate experiments in spying and counterspying, with the FBI initially a laughingstock to the more established diplomatic services. Things got so bad that Hoover begged to get out of
the South America work—one of the “few examples of Hoover offering to cede power,” as Weiner notes. Roosevelt refused the request, eager to keep the intelligence services competing with (and often undermining) one another. So the FBI adapted to the challenge as best it could, creating a “legal attaché” position that allowed its agents to work with rather than against the State Department and established a permanent infrastructure for FBI activities abroad.

One of the dirty secrets of espionage work, Weiner explains, is that success or failure often depends more on jurisdictional cooperation (or the lack thereof) than on any given agency’s competence. In one of the book’s best chapters, Weiner provides a sharp account of Hoover’s attacks on the early CIA as a cabal of socialists, adventure seekers and clueless intellectuals. “Their use as a secret intelligence agency in the postwar world [is] inconceivable,” Hoover sputtered to Truman—with little effect. Hoover had hoped that Truman would abolish the Office of Strategic Services, forerunner of the CIA, and place the FBI in charge of global intelligence. Instead, he got a permanently divided intelligence establishment

MORE http://www.thenation.com/article/169498/behind-bureau-fbi

_The CIAs Greatest Hits_ by Mark Zepezauer  _Odonian Press_, March 31, 2012
http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/CIA%20Hits/CIA_GreatestHits.html
In order to survive, nations need strong intelligence services. But the idea that the CIA is primarily an intelligence-gathering operation is itself one of the agency's greatest propaganda triumphs.

Despite its name, the Central Intelligence Agency's main purpose is, and has always been, carrying out covert operations involving economic warfare, rigged elections, assassinations and even genocide.

The CIA is also expert at distorting intelligence to justify its own goals, and this "disinformation" leads to dangerous illusions among our policymakers. But covert operations are its life's blood.

The litany of illegal, murderous CIA activity is enough to chill the bones of anyone who cares about liberty and justice.

As long as the CIA exists, our government can break any law it chooses in the name of national security.

Anyone for whom democracy is more than just a word should be working to abolish the CIA. For some ideas on how to do that, send a SASE to Odonian Press at Box 32375, Tucson AZ 85751.

Mark Zepezauer

- The Gehlen Org
- Operation Gladio
- MK-ULTRA
- Operation CHAOS
- Crooked Banks
- Drug Trafficking
- The Mighty Wurlitzer -- the CIA's propaganda machine

"... what the Agency [CIA] does is ordered by the President and the NSC [National Security Council]. The Agency neither makes decisions on policy nor acts on its own account. It is an instrument of the President."

Philip Agee, CIA Diary
"... Secret CIA operations constitute the usually unseen efforts to shore up unjust, unpopular, minority governments, always with the hope that overt military intervention ... will not be necessary. The more successful CIA operations are, the more remote overt intervention becomes, and the more remote become reforms. Latin America in the 1960s is all the proof one needs."

Philip Agee, CIA Diary

"But what counter-insurgency really comes down to is the protection of the capitalists back in America, their property and their privileges. US national security, as preached by US leaders, is the security of the capitalist class in the US, not the security of the rest of the people."

Philip Agee, CIA Diary

"A considerable proportion of the developed world's prosperity rests on paying the lowest possible prices for the poor countries' primary products and on exporting high-cost capital and finished goods to those countries. Continuation of this kind of prosperity requires continuation of the relative gap between developed and underdeveloped countries - it means keeping poor people poor."
Increasingly, the impoverished masses are understanding that the prosperity of the developed countries and of the privileged minorities in their own countries is founded on their poverty."

Philip Agee, CIA Diary

- South Pacific
- Panama
- Iraq
- Haiti
- Yugoslavia

"American capitalism, based as it is on exploitation of the poor, with its fundamental motivation in personal greed, simply cannot survive without force - without a secret police force.

Now, more than ever, each of us is forced to make a conscious choice whether to support the system of minority comfort and privilege with all its security apparatus and repression, or whether to struggle for real equality of opportunity and fair distribution of benefits for all of society, in the domestic as well as the international order. It's harder now not to realize that there are two sides, harder not to understand each, and harder not to recognize that like it or not we contribute day in and day out either to the one side or to the other."

Philip Agee, CIA Diary
Overview

* hired top Nazi war criminals, shielded them from justice and learned--and used--their techniques
* has been involved in assassinations, bombings, massacres, wars, death squads, drug trafficking, and rigged elections all over the world
* tortures children as young as 13 and adults as old as 89, resulting in forced "confessions" to all sorts of imaginary crimes (an innocent Kuwaiti was tortured for months to make him keep repeating his initial lies, and a supposed al-Qaeda leader was waterboarded 187 times in a single month without producing a speck of useful information)
* orchestrates the media--which one CIA deputy director liked to call "the mighty Wurlitzer"--and places its agents inside newspapers, magazines and book publishers
* and much more.

The CIA's crimes continue unabated, and unpunished. The day before General David Petraeus took over as the twentieth CIA director, federal prosecutors announced that they were dropping 99 investigations into the deaths of people in CIA custody, leaving just two active cases they're willing to pursue.
While much of the media focus on *l'affaire* Petraeus has centered on the CIA director’s sexual relationship with his biographer, Paula Broadwell, the scandal opens a window onto a different and more consequential relationship—that between the CIA and the military’s Joint Special Operations Command. In a behind-the-scenes turf war that has raged since 9/11, the two government bodies have fought for *control of the expanding global wars waged by the United States*—a turf war that JSOC has largely won. *Petraeus*, an instrumental player in this power struggle, *leaves behind an agency that has strayed from intelligence to paramilitary-type activities*. Though his legacy will be defined largely by the scandal that ended his career, to many within military and intelligence circles, Petraeus’s career trajectory, from commander of US military forces in Iraq and Afghanistan to the helm of the CIA, is a symbol of this evolution.
Jeremy Scahill
Jeremy Scahill, a Puffin Foundation Writing Fellow at The Nation Institute, is the author of the bestselling Blackwater...

Jeremy Scahill

“I would not say that CIA has been taken over by the military, but I would say that the CIA has become more militarized," Philip Giraldi, a retired career CIA case officer, told The Nation. “A considerable part of the CIA budget is now no longer spying; it’s supporting paramilitaries who work closely with JSOC to kill terrorists, and to run the drone program.” The CIA, he added, “is a killing machine now.”

As head of US Central Command in 2009, Petraeus issued execute orders that significantly broadened the ability of US forces to operate in a variety of countries, including Yemen, where US forces began conducting missile strikes later that year. During Petraeus’s short tenure at the CIA, drone strikes conducted by the agency, sometimes in conjunction with JSOC, escalated dramatically in Yemen; in his first month in office, he oversaw a series of strikes that killed three US citizens, including 16-year-old Abdulrahman Awlaki. In some cases, such as the raid that killed Osama bin Laden in Pakistan, commandos from the elite JSOC operated under the auspices of the CIA, so that the mission could be kept secret if it went wrong.

One current State Department liaison who has also worked extensively with JSOC describes the CIA as becoming “a mini-Special Operations Command that purports to be an intelligence agency.” For all the praise Petraeus won for his counterinsurgency strategy and the “surge” in Iraq, he says, his real legacy is as a “political tool,” an enabler of those within the national security apparatus who want to see a continuation of covert global mini-wars. Pointing to the “mystique that surrounds JSOC” and Adm. William McRaven, commander of the Special Operations Command, the liaison says, “Petraeus was trying to implement that kind of command climate at the CIA.”

“Petraeus wanted to be McRaven, and now that window has closed,” he said. “We are firmly in the age of McRaven. There is no other titular figure with the confidence of the president that is able to articulate strategies and hold their own in rooms where everyone else has the same or greater amount of intellectual heft. McRaven is everything that Petraeus is not.”
Retired Army Col. W. Patrick Lang, a former senior defense intelligence official, says that Petraeus’s arrogance—“smoothly concealed beneath the appearance of the warrior scholar”—made him deeply unpopular among the military’s high-ranking officers. Dismissing the media’s portrayal of Petraeus as a “super soldier” and great military leader as “phony bullshit,” Lang describes him as the product of a military promotion system that encourages generals to think of themselves as “divinely selected.” “In fact, he didn’t write the COIN manual, the surge was not the main thing in improving the situation in Iraq…. They sent him to Afghanistan to apply the COIN doctrine in the same glorious way he did in Iraq, and it hasn’t worked. So, if you look beneath the surface from all this stuff, it’s just a lot of hot air. There are great generals, but this guy is not one of them.” Arriving at the CIA, Lang says, Petraeus “wanted to drag them in the covert action direction and to be a major player.”

As for Petraeus’s future, the State Department liaison said, “There will be a lot of profits to be made by him and his immediate circle of advisers, as they’re given a soft landing, whether it’s in academia or within the nexus of the military-industrial complex.”

Giraldi, the former senior CIA officer, expressed concern that in these circumstances, the “CIA is going to forget how to spy.” He also noted the “long-term consequence” of the militarization of the CIA: “every bureaucracy in the world is best at protecting itself. So once the CIA becomes a paramilitary organization, there’s going to be in-built pressure to keep going in that direction. Because you’ll have people at the senior levels in the organization who have come up that way and are protective of what they see as their turf,” he told me. “That’s the big danger.”

*Despite President Obama’s opposition to messy, large-scale military operations, the president is actually a “very careful hawk” when it comes to military action, Jeremy Scahill argued, in an interview early this year with Francis Reynolds.*

**Jeremy Scahill**  
November 14, 2012  |  *[This article appeared in the December 3, 2012 edition of The Nation.]*

**Jeremy Scahill**  
*Why Is President Obama Keeping a Journalist in Prison in Yemen?* (US Politics, World)  
After supporters protested his “sham” trial, Abdulelah Haider Shaye would have been pardoned. Then Obama intervened.

[Dick: see Imperialism Militarism Newsletter.]
**Torture and Impunity: The U.S. Doctrine of Coercive Interrogation**

**Critical Human Rights**
Steve J. Stern and Scott Straus, Series Editors

“A masterful account of an appalling national drift toward accepting torture as part of our culture and polity.”
—Alex Gibney, director, Oscar-winning documentary *Taxi to the Dark Side*

Interview with Author on *Democracy Now*

Many Americans have condemned the “enhanced interrogation” techniques used in the War on Terror as a transgression of human rights. But the United States has done almost nothing to prosecute past abuses or prevent future violations. Tracing this knotty contradiction from the 1950s to the present, historian Alfred W. McCoy probes the political and cultural dynamics that have made impunity for torture a bipartisan policy of the U.S. government.

During the Cold War, McCoy argues, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency covertly funded psychological experiments designed to weaken a subject's resistance to interrogation. After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the CIA revived these harsh methods, while U.S. media was flooded with seductive images that normalized torture for many Americans. Ten years later, the U.S. had failed to punish the perpetrators or the powerful who commanded them, and continued to exploit intelligence extracted under torture by surrogates from Somalia to Afghanistan. Although Washington has publicly distanced itself from torture, disturbing images from the prisons at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo are seared into human memory, doing lasting damage to America’s moral authority as a world leader.

**Alfred W. McCoy** is the J.R.W. Smail Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. His many books include *Policing America’s Empire* and *A Question of Torture*.

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First the 'targeted killing' campaign, then the targeted propaganda campaign

[http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/jun/06/targeted-killing-campaign-propaganda](http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/jun/06/targeted-killing-campaign-propaganda)

Officially, the CIA insists its drone war is a state secret, yet we're now seeing a concerted PR effort to sanitise its dubious legality

- *Jameel Jaffer* and *Nathan Wessler*
President Obama and CIA Director David Petraeus: the agency appears engaged in a carefully planned campaign of leaks about its targeted killing drone campaign. Photograph: Charles Dharapak/AP

A story in last week's New York Times painted a remarkably detailed picture of the US government's so-called "targeted killing" campaign, a campaign that involves the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) to kill suspected insurgents and terrorists and, it turns out, many, many others, as well. The story, written by Jo Becker and Scott Shane, discussed the CIA's choice of munitions, its efforts to avoid civilian casualties, and its method for calculating the number of civilians killed in any given strike. The story also underscored the extent to which President Obama himself is involved in overseeing the campaign – and even in selecting its targets.

The story has already received a great deal of coverage, but two aspects of it deserve more attention.

The first has to do with the targeted killing campaign itself. Long before the New York Times story was published, human rights organizations questioned the campaign's lawfulness. At the ACLU, we sued (pdf) over elements of the campaign two years ago, contending that the US government's then-proposed (and now-realized) killing of Anwar al-Awlaki in Yemen would violate both international law and the US constitution.

But the New York Times story suggests the legal foundation of the targeted killing campaign is not simply shaky, but rotten. One problem is that the US government appears to take a very broad view of who can be targeted. At one point, officials at the State Department complained to the White House that the CIA seemed to believe that any group of "three guys doing jumping jacks" was a terrorist training camp.

Another problem, and perhaps an even deeper one, is in the government's approach towards individuals who are not targeted – not in the conventional sense of the word, anyway. According to the New York Times, the government "counts all military-age males in a strike zone as combatants … unless there is explicit intelligence posthumously proving them innocent".

If this is true, it is astounding. The government has an obligation under international law to distinguish combatants from noncombatants – and, as far as reasonably possible, to avoid causing noncombatants harm. Direct targeting of noncombatants is a war crime; indeed, it is the prototypical one. It surely need not be explained that the government's obligation is to distinguish combatants from noncombatants.
while they are still alive, not after they have been killed. A "shoot first, ask questions later" policy is entirely inconsistent with international law, not to mention morally grotesque.

The other aspect of the New York Times story that warrants more attention has to do with the way the story was assembled. Becker and Shane report that they interviewed "three dozen" of President Obama's current and former advisors. These advisors supplied them with granular detail about deliberations inside the White House, quoted (or paraphrased) conversations between the president and senior officials, and discussed tensions between various agencies – most notably, the State Department and the CIA.

That the advisors were so forthcoming would be remarkable in any circumstances, but it is particularly remarkable here because the US government's official position – a position it has set out in legal briefs and sworn affidavits (pdf) – is that the CIA's targeted killing campaign is a state secret. Indeed, the CIA's position in court is that the agency's mere acknowledgement of the campaign would cause grave and irreparable injury to the nation's security.

The truth, of course, is that the CIA has already acknowledged the campaign, and that dozens of government officials have spoken about it to Jo Becker and Scott Shane and many other reporters besides. The CIA's litigation position is not intended to protect the "secrecy" of the agency's killing program, but to protect the agency's ability to disclose only the information that it wants to disclose – information that invariably paints the CIA's practices as closely supervised, supremely effective, and absolutely necessary.

Later this month, in response to Freedom of Information Act lawsuits, the CIA will have to file a legal brief explaining to a court in New York why it should be permitted to eschew real transparency about the targeted killing program, while simultaneously carrying on its propagandistic campaign of officially sanctioned leaks. Notably, the Freedom of Information Act was meant to foreclose precisely this kind of official duplicity. Almost half a century ago, Republican lawmakers championed the act in the hope of curbing the "selective disclosures, managed news, half-truths, and admitted distortions" that had come to characterize official statements about the war in Vietnam and Cambodia. The act, they said, would "help to blaze a trail of truthfulness and accurate disclosure in what has become a jungle of falsification, unjustified secrecy, and misstatement by statistic".

Whether a court will compel the CIA to retire the increasingly untenable fiction that the targeted killing program is a secret remains to be seen. There is no doubt, though, that selective disclosures – and selective secrecy – about the program has distorted public debate. Last week's New York Times article serves as a reminder that our public debate about the government's bureaucratized killing program is based almost entirely on the government's own selective, self-serving, and unverifiable representations about it.

This surely puts far too much power in the hands of the CIA, and too little in the hands of ordinary citizens.
Tomdispatch.com

Tomgram: Engelhardt, Assassin-in-Chief
Posted by Tom Engelhardt at 7:51am, June 5, 2012.

[Note for TomDispatch Readers: Signed, personalized copies of Terminator Planet: The First History of Drone Warfare, 2001-2050, the new book Nick Turse and I have co-authored, will soon be in the mail to the many of you who contributed $75 or more to this site -- with our deepest thanks. (Copies of my book The United States of Fear, similarly signed, will similarly be off.) Those of you who still have the urge to contribute, do check TD’s donation page for our offer on both books.

And as for the rest of you, remember to pick up your copy of Terminator Planet, either the ebook by clicking here or the paperback by clicking here, and ensure that our little publishing venture is a success. News of drones now seems to be everywhere, even in the comic strips, so this couldn’t be more timely! To catch Timothy MacBain's latest Tomcast audio interview in which Engelhardt discusses drone warfare and the Obama administration, click here or download it to your iPod here. Tom]

Praying at the Church of St. Drone

The President and His Apostles
By Tom Engelhardt
Be assured of one thing: whichever candidate you choose at the polls in November, you aren’t just electing a president of the United States; you are also electing an assassin-in-chief. The last two presidents may not have been emperors or kings, but they -- and the vast national-security structure that continues to be built-up and institutionalized around the presidential self -- are certainly one of the nightmares the founding fathers of this country warned us against. They are one of the reasons those founders put significant war powers in the hands of Congress, which they knew would be a slow, recalcitrant, deliberative body.

Thanks to a long New York Times piece by Jo Becker and Scott Shane, “Secret ‘Kill List’ Proves a Test of Obama’s Principles and Will,” we now know that the president has spent startling amounts of time overseeing the “nomination” of terrorist suspects for assassination via the remotely piloted drone program he inherited from President George W. Bush and which he has expanded exponentially. Moreover, that article was based largely on interviews with “three dozen of his current and former advisers.” In other words, it was essentially an administration-inspired piece -- columnist Robert Scheer calls it “planted” -- on a “secret” program the president and those closest to him are quite proud of and want to brag about in an election year.

The language of the piece about our warrior president was generally sympathetic, even in places soaring. It focused on the moral dilemmas of a man who -- we now know -- has personally approved and overseen the growth of a remarkably robust assassination program in Yemen, Somalia, and Pakistan based on a “kill list.” Moreover, he’s regularly done so target by target, name by name. (The Times did not mention a recent U.S. drone strike in the Philippines that killed 15.) According to Becker and Shane, President Obama has also been involved in the use of a fraudulent method of counting drone kills, one that unrealistically deemphasizes civilian deaths.

Historically speaking, this is all passing strange. The Times calls Obama’s role in the drone killing machine “without precedent in presidential history.” And that’s accurate.

It’s not, however, that American presidents have never had anything to do with or been in any way involved in assassination programs. The state as assassin is hardly unknown in our history. How could President John F. Kennedy, for example, not know about CIA-inspired or -backed assassination plots against Cuba’s Fidel Castro, the Congo’s Patrice Lumumba, and South Vietnamese autocrat (and ostensible ally) Ngo Dinh Diem? (Lumumba and Diem were successfully murdered.) Similarly, during Lyndon Johnson’s presidency, the CIA carried out a massive assassination campaign in Vietnam, Operation Phoenix. It proved to be a staggeringly profligate program for killing tens of thousands of Vietnamese, both actual enemies and those simply swept up in the process.

In previous eras, however, presidents either stayed above the assassination fray or practiced a kind of plausible deniability about the acts. We are surely at a new stage in the history of the imperial
presidency when a president (or his election team) assembles his aides, advisors, and associates to foster a story that’s meant to broadcast the group’s collective pride in the new position of assassin-in-chief.

**Religious Cult or Mafia Hit Squad?**

Here’s a believe-it-or-not footnote to our American age. Who now remembers that, in the early years of his presidency, George W. Bush kept what the *Washington Post*’s Bob Woodward called "his own personal scorecard for the war" on terror? It took the form of photographs with brief biographies and personality sketches of those judged to be the world's most dangerous terrorists, each ready to be crossed out by Bush once captured or killed. That scorecard was, Woodward added, always available in a desk drawer in the Oval Office.

Such private presidential recordkeeping now seems penny-ante indeed. The distance we’ve traveled in a decade can be measured by the *Times’* description of the equivalent of that “personal scorecard” today (and no desk drawer could hold it):

“It is the strangest of bureaucratic rituals: Every week or so, more than 100 members of the government’s sprawling national security apparatus gather, by secure video teleconference, to pore over terrorist suspects’ biographies and recommend to the president who should be the next to die. This secret 'nominations' process is an invention of the Obama administration, a grim debating society that vets the PowerPoint slides bearing the names, aliases, and life stories of suspected members of Al Qaeda’s branch in Yemen or its allies in Somalia’s Shabab militia. The nominations go to the White House, where by his own insistence and guided by [counterterrorism ‘tsar’ John O.] Brennan, Mr. Obama must approve any name.”

In other words, thanks to such meetings -- on what insiders have labeled “terror Tuesday” -- assassination has been thoroughly institutionalized, normalized, and bureaucratized around the figure of the president. Without the help of or any oversight from the American people or their elected representatives, he alone is now responsible for regular killings thousands of miles away, including those of civilians and even children. He is, in other words, if not a king, at least the king of American assassinations. On that score, his power is total and completely unchecked. He can prescribe death for anyone “nominated,” choosing any of the “baseball cards” (PowerPoint bios) on that kill list and then order the drones to take them (or others in the neighborhood) out.

He and he alone can decide that assassinating known individuals isn’t enough and that the CIA’s drones can instead strike at suspicious “patterns of behavior” on the ground in Yemen or Pakistan. He can stop any attack, any killing, but there is no one, nor any mechanism that can
stop him. An American global killing machine (quite literally so, given that growing force of drones) is now at the beck and call of a single, unaccountable individual. This is the nightmare the founding fathers tried to protect us from.

In the process, as Salon’s Glenn Greenwald has pointed out, the president has shredded the Fifth Amendment, guaranteeing Americans that they will not “be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.” The Justice Department’s Office of Legal Counsel produced a secret memo claiming that, while the Fifth Amendment’s due process guarantee does apply to the drone assassination of an American citizen in a land with which we are not at war, “it could be satisfied by internal deliberations in the executive branch.” (That, writes Greenwald, is “the most extremist government interpretation of the Bill of Rights I’ve heard in my lifetime.”) In other words, the former Constitutional law professor has been freed from the law of the land in cases in which he “nominates,” as he has, U.S. citizens for robotic death.

There is, however, another aspect to the institutionalizing of those “kill lists” and assassination as presidential prerogatives that has gone unmentioned. If the Times article -- which largely reflects how the Obama administration cares to see itself and its actions -- is to be believed, the drone program is also in the process of being sanctified and sacralized.

You get a sense of this from the language of the piece itself. (“A parallel, more cloistered selection process at the C.I.A. focuses largely on Pakistan…”) The president is presented as a particularly moral man, who devotes himself to the "just war" writings of religious figures like Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine, and takes every death as his own moral burden. His leading counterterrorism advisor Brennan, a man who, while still in the CIA, was knee-deep in torture controversy, is presented, quite literally, as a priest of death, not once but twice in the piece. He is described by the Times reporters as “a priest whose blessing has become indispensable to Mr. Obama.” They then quote the State Department’s top lawyer, Harold H. Koh, saying, “It’s as though you had a priest with extremely strong moral values who was suddenly charged with leading a war.”

In the Times telling, the organization of robotic killing had become the administration’s idée fixe, a kind of cult of death within the Oval Office, with those involved in it being so many religious devotees. We may be, that is, at the edge of a new state-directed, national-security-based religion of killing grounded in the fact that we are in a “dangerous” world and the “safety” of Americans is our preeminent value. In other words, the president, his apostles, and his campaign acolytes are all, it seems, praying at the Church of St. Drone.

Of course, thought about another way, that “terror Tuesday” scene might not be from a monastery or a church synod, but from a Mafia council directly out of a Mario Puzo novel, with the president as the Godfather, designating “hits” in a rough-and-tumble world.
How far we’ve come in just two presidencies! Assassination as a way of life has been institutionalized in the Oval Office, thoroughly normalized, and is now being offered to the rest of us as a reasonable solution to American global problems and an issue on which to run a presidential campaign.

**Downhill All the Way on Blowback Planet**

After 5,719 inside-the-Beltway (largely inside-the-Oval-Office) words, the *Times* piece finally gets to this single outside-the-Beltway sentence: “Both Pakistan and Yemen are arguably less stable and more hostile to the United States than when Mr. Obama became president.”

Arguably, indeed! For the few who made it that far, it was a brief reminder of just how narrow, how confining the experience of worshiping at St. Drone actually is. All those endless meetings, all those presidential hours that might otherwise have been spent raising yet more money for campaign 2012, and the two countries that have taken the brunt of the drone raids are more hostile, more dangerous, and in worse shape than in 2009. (And one of them, keep in mind, is a nuclear power.) News articles since have only emphasized how powerfully those drones have radicalized local populations -- however many “bad guys” (and children) they may also have wiped off the face of the Earth.

And though the *Times* doesn’t mention this, it’s not just bad news for Yemen or Pakistan. American democracy, already on the ropes, is worse off, too.

What should astound Americans -- but seldom seems to be noticed -- is just how into the shadows, how thoroughly military-centric, and how unproductive has become Washington's thinking at the altar of St. Drone and its equivalents (including special operations forces, increasingly the president’s secret military within the military). Yes, the world is always a dangerous place, even if far less so now than when, in the Cold War era, two superpowers were a heartbeat away from nuclear war. But -- though it’s increasingly heretical to say this -- the perils facing Americans, including relatively modest dangers from terrorism, aren’t the worst things on our planet.

ELECTING an assassin-in-chief, no matter who you vote for, is worse. Pretending that the Church of St. Drone offers any kind of reasonable or even practical solutions on this planet of ours, is worse yet. And even worse, once such a process begins, it’s bound to be downhill all the way. As we learned last week, again in the *Times*, we not only have an assassin-in-chief in the Oval Office, but a cyberwarrior, perfectly willing to release a new form of weaponry, the most sophisticated computer “worm” ever developed, against another country with which we are not at war.

This represents a breathtaking kind of rashness, especially from the leader of a country that, perhaps more than any other, is dependent on computer systems, opening the U.S. to potentially debilitating kinds of future blowback. Once again, as with drones, the White House is setting the global rules of the road for every country (and group) able to get its hands on such weaponry and it’s hit the highway
at 140 miles per hour without a cop in sight.

James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and the rest of them knew war, and yet were not acolytes of the eighteenth century equivalents of St. Drone, nor of presidents who might be left free to choose to turn the world into a killing zone. They knew at least as well as anyone in our national security state today that the world is always a dangerous place -- and that that’s no excuse for investing war powers in a single individual. They didn’t think that a state of permanent war, a state of permanent killing, or a president free to plunge Americans into such states was a reasonable way for their new republic to go. To them, it was by far the more dangerous way to exist in our world.

The founding fathers would surely have chosen republican democracy over safety. They would never have believed that a man surrounded by advisors and lawyers, left to his own devices, could protect them from what truly mattered. They tried to guard against it. Now, we have a government and a presidency dedicated to it, no matter who is elected in November.

Tom Engelhardt, co-founder of the American Empire Project and author of The United States of Fear as well as The End of Victory Culture, runs the Nation Institute’s TomDispatch.com. His latest book, co-authored with Nick Turse, is Terminator Planet: The First History of Drone Warfare, 2001-2050. To listen to Timothy MacBain’s latest Tomcast audio interview in which Engelhardt discusses drone warfare and the Obama administration, click here or download it to your iPod here.

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UN expert labels CIA tactic exposed by Bureau 'a war crime'


The UN's expert on extrajudicial killings has described a tactic used by the CIA and first exposed by a Bureau investigation as 'a war crime'.

Earlier this year the Bureau and the Sunday Times revealed the CIA was deliberately targeting rescuers and funeral-goers in its Pakistan drone strikes. Those controversial tactics have reportedly been revived.

Christof Heyns, the UN special rapporteur, told a meeting in Geneva on June 21: 'Reference should be made to a study earlier this year by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism… If civilian 'rescuers' are indeed being intentionally targeted, there is no doubt about the law: those strikes are a war crime.'

[...]

In a separate presentation to the Council, Heyns, said that he was hopeful that the US would reveal the procedures, rules and legal opinions underlying its controversial use of drones. He also noted that the US government did not give his predecessor a satisfactory response when asked to clarify which aspects of international law it believes covers targeted killings.
But after a two-day Council debate, Heyns said the US had not been forthcoming: 'I don't think we have the full answer to the legal framework,' he said. 'We certainly don't have the answer to the accountability issues.'

A number of other Geneva delegates also expressed concern about targeted killings. Swiss UNHRC representative Dante Martinelli addressed the Council and called for transparent reporting of casualties from targeted killing operations which 'cause many victims among the civilian population.' Because of the cost to civilians, Switzerland called for 'respect for the rules of international law.'

**Senators terrified with abuse of Patriot Act's secret laws**

By *RT TV (about the author)*
Horrified with the way the US government uses the Patriot Act against its own people, two senators have been trying to make these practices public for years. Tired of being ignored, they're now taking their fight against secret programs to public.

Two US senators wrote the attorney general of the United States this week, urging the federal government to give the American public evidence explaining how the Patriot Act has been interpreted since signed into law in 2001.

In a joint letter to Attorney General Eric Holder sent Thursday, Senators Ron Wyden (D-Oregon) and Mark Udall (D-Colorado) plead with the government to provide the American people with the facts behind what the Patriot Act can let America's top investigators do. The lawmakers, who have rallied for disclosure of these details for more than two years, say citizens would be "stunned" to learn what the government believes it can get away with under the law.

The controversial USA Patriot Act was hastily signed into legislation after the September 11 al-Qaeda attacks under the guise of a being a necessity for preventing future terrorist efforts, but for over a decade since the law has become notorious for its ability to stick federal eyes into seemingly every aspect of the American public in the name of counter-terrorism. Although the government has gone on the record to downplay the constitutionally-damning powers they are granted under the law, Senators Wyden and Udall say it is time that the feds fulfill the demands of millions of concerned Americans and discuss in detail what they can do under the act -- and what they've already done.

Wydeall and Udall are specifically calling on Holder to provide information about how the government has interpreted Section 215 of the Patriot Act, which grants government officials with certain clearance to obtain "tangible things" deemed "relevant" to issues of terrorism. While that much is clear, write the senators, how the government goes about abiding by it "has been the subject of secret legal interpretations," which they add "are contained in classified opinions" that are not made available to much of Congress, let alone members of the general public.

"We believe most Americans would be stunned to learn the details of how these secret court opinions have interpreted Section 215," add the senators. "As we see it, there is now a significant gap between what most Americans think the law allows and what the government secretly claims the law allows. This is a problem, because it is impossible to have an informed public debate about what the law should say when
they public doesn't know what its government thinks the law says."

The Justice Department has in their own defense said that disclosing details on certain interpretations could be detrimental to national security, an issue to which the senators acknowledge. "We believe that is entirely legitimate for government agencies to keep certain information secret," write the lawmakers. The argument being made by Wyden and Udall, however, is that the government is letting itself perceive the law in a way which not only are Americans completely oblivious to, but Americans are also under the false impression that matters are marvelously different.

"In a democratic society -- in which the government derives its powers from the consent of the people -- citizens rightly expect that their government will not arbitrarily keep information from them," reads the letter to Holder."Americans expect their government to operate within the boundaries of publically-understood law, and as voters they have a need and a right to know how the law is being interpreted, so that they can ratify or reject decisions made on their behalf.

"Americans know that the government will sometimes conduct secret operations, but they don't think that government officials should be writing secret laws."

Wydell and Udall add that this is not something that they've only recently been pressing for. They claim to have gone after the president himself to declassify the interpretations of the Patriot Act so that Congress can consider discussions on Capitol Hill, but say that despite repeated attempts to appeal to Holder and others in the past, no leeway whatsoever has been accomplished. Now both the American Civil Liberties Union and The New York Times are trying to get the truth through filing Freedom of Information Act requests, but the feds are working overtime to make sure that the attempts at finding the facts are ignored.

The senators say they had a glimmer of hope in August 2009 when the Department of Justice and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence announced that they would begin a new processes for reviewing and releasing details of decisions from the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court -- the court that interprets the Patriot Act -- but "two and a half years later; however; this 'process' had produced literally zero results."

http://rt.com rt.com is Russian television, which actually does a great job reporting on US news too.

The views expressed in this article are the sole responsibility of the author

ah,election time by liberalsrock on Sunday, Mar 18, 2012 at 1:00:09 PM

The NSA Is Building the Country's Biggest Spy Center by 911TRUTH on Sunday, Mar 18, 2012 at 1:03:17 PM

How about your own transparency, Wyden and Udall? by Joan Mootry on Sunday, Mar 18, 2012 at 4:47:45 PM

SECRETS OF THE CIA Film

http://www.personalgrowthcourses.net/video/secrets_cia
Dennis Kucinich: “Unaccountable, Immoral and, by Definition, Inhuman”

**Dennis Kucinich, Statement:** “The use of lethal force by the United States in countries such as Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia - countries we are not at war with - constitutes an already troubling method of waging war in which we are accountable to no one. As Philip Alston, the United Nations Special Rapporteur recognizes: ‘Not even the American public, let alone the international community, knows when and where the CIA has authorized the kill, the criteria for individuals who may be killed, how the CIA insures killings are legal, and what follow-up there is when civilians are illegally killed. It follows that the international law requirements of transparency and accountability are comprehensively violated.’”


A Kidnapping in Milan: THE CIA ON TRIAL

**Steve Hendricks.** Norton, 2010. Rev. from the publisher.

A book so compelling it deserves to become one of the nonfiction classics of our time.

As propulsively readable as the best “true crime,” *A Kidnapping in Milan* is a potent reckoning with the realities of counterterrorism. In a mesmerizing page-turner, Steve Hendricks gives us a ground-level view of the birth and
growth of international Islamist terrorist networks and of counterterrorism in action in Europe. He also provides an eloquent, eagle’s-eye perspective on the big questions of justice and the rule of law.

“In Milan a known fact is always explained by competing stories,” Hendricks writes, but the stories that swirled around the February 2003 disappearance of the radical imam Abu Omar would soon point in one direction—to a covert action by the CIA. The police of Milan had been exploiting their wiretaps of Abu Omar for useful information before the taps went silent. The Americans were their allies in counterterrorism—would they have disrupted a fruitful investigation?

In an extraordinary tale of detective versus spy, Italian investigators under the leadership of prosecutor Armando Spataro unraveled in embarrassing detail the “covert” action in which Abu Omar had been kidnapped and sent to be tortured in Egypt. Spataro—seasoned in prosecutions of the Mafia and the Red Brigades and a passionate believer in the rule of law—sought to try the kidnappers in absentia: the first-ever trial of CIA officers by a U.S. ally. An exemplary achievement in narrative nonfiction writing, A Kidnapping in Milan is at once a detective story, a history of the terrorist menace, and an indictment of the belief that man’s savagery against man can be stilled with more savagery yet.

Prouty, Nada. Uncompromised: The Rise, Fall, and Redemption of an Arab-American Patriot in the CIA. Palgrave, 2011. This tale of rampant trampling of citizen’s rights reminds us to be vigilant against unaccountable government overreach.

CIA TRIES TO CENSOR BOOK


“CIA Seeks to Censor 9/11 Book”


Intro: "In what amounts to a fight over who gets to write the history of the Sept. 11 attacks and their aftermath, the Central Intelligence Agency is demanding extensive cuts from the memoir of a former FBI agent who spent years near the center of the battle against Al Qaeda."

CIA TORTURE

1. ‘Five Fingers’ Is Sheer Torture - CBS News
   www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/05/02/tribeca/main1575597.shtml - Cached Similar - Add to iGoogle
   May 2, 2006 – (CBS) Showbuzz's Judy Faber reviews the feature film "Five Fingers," which is screening at the Tribeca Film Festival. ...

2. Five Fingers review (2006) Phillippe, Fishburne - Qwipster's Movie ...
   www.qwipster.net/fivefingers.htm - Cached Similar
   As you can tell from the plot summary above, Five Fingers isn't a pleasant movie. Films about torture rarely are. However, at the same time, the film isn't ...

CIA DESTRUCTION OF TORTURE TAPES EVIDENCE

NY Times reports the destruction of video tapes of interrogations using torture by the CIA. --Carl.

“Former CIA Legal Chief Wanted for Murder by Drone”

Peter Beaumont, Guardian UK

Intro: "Campaigners against US drone strikes in Pakistan are calling for the CIA's former legal chief to be arrested and charged with murder for approving attacks that killed hundreds of people."


GARY WEBB

AND REAL JOURNALISTS WHO TELL THE TRUTH ARE EULOGIZED INSTEAD OF TARGETTED. Gary Webb: A hero of authentic journalism

Anthony Lappé, GNN Gary Webb, RIP

No thanks to the L.A. Times
Marc Cooper, LA Weekly Trashed by the CIA's Claque
Gary Webb: a Great Reporter
Alexander Cockburn and Jeffery St. Clair, Counterpunch Why They Hated Gary Webb
Alexander Cockburn and Jeffery St. Clair, Counterpunch How Webb Saved My Ass from the FBI
Gary Webb was the Real Deal
Bill Conroy, Counterpunch I Knew It Was the Truth and That's What Kept Me Going
My Last Talk with Gary Webb
Richard Thieme, Counterpunch A Giant Falls
Press accounts fail to mention his vindication by CIA Inspector General reports and congressional investigations
Michael C. Ruppert, From the Wilderness The Pariah
“Two years ago, Gary Webb wrote a series of articles that said some bad things about the CIA. The CIA denied the charges, and every major paper in the country took the agency's word for it. Gary was ruined. Which is a shame, because he was right.”
Charles Bowden, Esquire

BOOKS ON CIA//MIND CONTROL/HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

From Sue Skidmore 6-20-11
Experiments in MIND-CONTROL on Writers
From: missouripeacecoalition-owner@lists.riseup.net Sent: Wednesday, July 20, 2011 7:51 AM
July 20, 2011
On this day in 1977, the Central Intelligence Agency released 20,000 documents revealing that they had engaged in mind-control experiments. They released the documents after a request under the Freedom of Information Act, and the revelation triggered a Congressional hearing in August. The program was named MK-ULTRA; it began in the early 1950s and ran at least through the late 1960s.

MK-ULTRA had its roots in Operation Paperclip, a program to recruit former Nazi scientists who had conducted studies on torture and brainwashing. Operation Paperclip spawned several secret government programs involving mind control, behavior modification, hypnosis, and the like. It's not clear whether the CIA's real aim was to produce a "Manchurian candidate" who could be brainwashed to carry out various tasks, or whether these off-the-wall "operations" were a smoke screen to keep attention away from their real mission: to come up with better torture and interrogation techniques. The program received 6 percent of the CIA's operating budget without oversight or accounting.

Since then-director Richard Helms ordered all the MK-ULTRA documents destroyed in 1973, the investigation had to rely on sworn testimony and the 20,000 remaining documents, which had escaped
destruction because they were stored in a different warehouse. The limited information that was available at the Congressional hearings revealed that "chemical, biological, and radiological" methods to achieve mind control were studied. This involved, among other things, administering drugs like LSD, heroin, amphetamines, and mescaline to people without their knowledge or consent; they also used, according to the Congressional report, "aspects of magicians' art." In one project, called Operation Midnight Climax, the CIA set up brothels in San Francisco, gave patrons LSD, and filmed their responses through hidden cameras. They figured that even if subjects got suspicious, they would be too embarrassed to report anything to the authorities. In other experiments conducted at McGill University in Montreal, subjects — who had come to the institute thinking they were to be treated for anxiety or post-partum depression — were put into drug-induced comas and exposed to tape loops for weeks at a time; others were given electroconvulsive therapy at 30 to 40 times the normal dose. Many subjects suffered lasting damage.

The CIA had the assistance of nearly a hundred colleges and universities, pharmaceutical companies, research foundations, hospitals, and prisons in conducting the MK-ULTRA project. Some evidence suggests that Unabomber Ted Kaczynski was one of the subjects; Ken Kesey, author of One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, volunteered for the LSD tests at a Veterans Administration hospital when he was a student at Stanford. The official CIA position is that they no longer conduct mind-control experiments, although at least one veteran of the agency has said that the tests continue.

_A Terrible Mistake: The Murder of Frank Olson and the CIA's Secret Cold War Experiments - H. P. Albarelli Jr.; Review'Gripping Cold War tale of the CIA frying French brains. Tremendous.' -- Fortean Times April 2010. Following nearly a decade of research, this account solves the mysterious death of biochemist Frank Olson, revealing the identities of his murderers in shocking detail. It offers a unique and unprecedented look into the backgrounds of many former CIA, FBI, and Federal Narcotics Bureau officials—including several who actually oversaw the CIA’s mind-control programs from the 1950s to the 1970s. In retracing these programs, a frequently bizarre and always frightening world is introduced, colored, and dominated by many factors—Cold War fears, the secret relationship between the nation’s drug enforcement agencies and the CIA, and the government’s close collaboration with the Mafia.See all Editorial Reviews_

_The CIA Doctors: Human Rights Violations by American Psychiatrists - Colin A. Ross; The C.I.A. Doctors, (Manitou Communications, 2006), uncovers the truth about violations of human rights by American Psychiatrists in the twentieth century. Documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act and cross-referenced research published in leading medical journals expose the existence of mind altering experiments on unwitting human subjects, paid for by the U.S. government, the U.S._
Military and the C.I.A. These experiments which include LSD experiments, sensory deprivation, electroconvulsive treatment, brain electrode implants, radiation experiments and prostitution rings were perpetrated not by a few renegade doctors but by leading psychiatrists, psychologists, neurosurgeons, universities, medical schools and maximum security prisons on American soil. Dr. Ross takes you on a mind-blowing fact finding adventure into the secret world of espionage and Manchurian Candidates. Given our situations in Guantanamo and Abu Graib the only question left unanswered is what are the U.S. Government, psychiatrists and medical schools doing today? The C.I.A. Doctors was originally published as BLUEBIRD: Deliberate Creation of Multiple Personality by Psychiatrists in 2000. About the AuthorColin A. Ross, M.D. is an internationally renowned clinician, researcher, author and lecturer in the field of traumatic stress and trauma related disorders. He is the founder and President of The Colin A. Ross Institute for Psychological Trauma. Dr. Ross has authored over 100 professional papers and books. He has reviewed for numerous professional journals, and is a member of the American Psychiatric Association and the International Society for the Study of Dissociation. In addition, Dr. Ross has served as expert witness in over 50 court cases, consulted on several television and video productions on trauma related disorders, and produced an educational video for mental health professionals on the treatment of trauma based disorders.

The Secret Team: The CIA and Its Allies in Control of the United States and the World (Second Edition) - L. Fletcher Prouty; The book the CIA doesn't want you to read—now with a new foreword by Jesse Ventura. The Secret Team, L. Fletcher Prouty’s exposei of the CIA’s brutal methods of maintaining national security during the Cold War, was first published in the 1970s. However, virtually all copies of the book disappeared upon distribution, having been purchased en masse by shady “private buyers.” Certainly, Prouty’s allegations—such as how the U-2 Crisis of 1960 was fixed to sabotage Eisenhower–Khrushchev talk—cannot have pleased the CIA. The Secret Team appears once more with a new introduction by Jesse Ventura. About the AuthorL. Fletcher Prouty (1917–2001), a retired colonel of the U.S. Air Force, served as the chief of special operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the Kennedy years. He was directly in charge of the global system designed to provide military support for the clandestine activities of the CIA. He was also the author of The Secret Team: The CIA and Its Allies.

Jesse Ventura is the former governor of Minnesota and author of several bestselling books, including Don’t Start the Revolution Without Me! and American Conspiracies. Ventura is the host of the television show Conspiracy Theory with Jesse Ventura on truTV. He lives in Minnesota and Mexico
Shadow Masters: An International Network of Governments and Secret-Service Agencies Working Together with Drugs Dealers and Terrorists for Mutual Benefit and Profit - Daniel Estulin; This investigation examines how behind-the-scenes collaboration between governments, intelligence services and drug traffickers has lined the pockets of big business and Western banks. Beginning with a last-minute request from ex-governor Jesse Ventura, the narrative winds between the author's own story of covering "deep politics" and the facts he has uncovered. The ongoing campaign against Victor Bout, the "Merchant of Death," is revealed as "move/countermove" in a game of geopolitics, set against the background of a crumbling Soviet Union, a nascent Russia, bizarre assassinations, wars and smuggling. About the Author Daniel Estulin is an award-winning investigative journalist and author of The True Story of the Bilderberg Group. He is the host of two radio shows in Spain.

The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate": The CIA and Mind Control: The Secret History of the Behavioral Sciences - John D. Marks; A comprehensive, detailed and thoroughly readable account of the CIA safehouses, the brainwashing experiments, the involvement of the universities. (Washington Monthly)

Perhaps the most compelling, well-researched, organized and well-written account of CIA operations ever. (Progressive)

A serious effort to reconstruct carefully the details of intelligence agency experiments with 'mind control.' (American Political Science Review)

One of the most important books of the year. . . . We see the CIA on the cutting edge of inquiry into hypnosis, drugs, brainwashing, personality assessment, psychosurgery, electric and radio stimulations of the brain, the creation of involuntary amnesia, terminal shock therapy. (Playboy)

Fascinating reading. (Washington Post)

A wonderful piece of investigative reporting. The best account we'll ever get of one of the seamiest episodes of American intelligence. (Seymour Hersh)

Product Description "The CIA exposé to end all CIA exposés." —New York A 'Manchurian Candidate' is an unwitting assassin brainwashed and programmed to kill. In this book, former State Department officer John Marks tells the explosive story of the CIA's highly secret program of experiments in mind control. His curiosity first aroused by information on a puzzling suicide. Marks worked from thousands of pages of newly
released documents as well as interviews and behavioral science studies, producing a book that 'accomplished what two Senate committees could not' (Senator Edward Kennedy). A new consciousness and a totally new morality are necessary to bring about a radical change in the present culture and social structure. This is obvious, yet the Left and the Right and the revolutionary seem to disregard it. Any dogma, any formula, any ideology is part of the old consciousness; they are the fabrications of thought whose activity is fragmentation - the Left, the Right, the centre. This activity will inevitably lead to bloodshed of the Right or of the Left or to totalitarianism. This is what is going on around us. One sees the necessity of social, economic, and moral change but the response is from the old consciousness, thought being the principal actor. The mess, the confusion, and the misery that human beings have got into are within the area of the old consciousness, and without changing that profoundly, every human activity-political, economic or religious-will only bring us to the destruction of each other and of the earth.

-J. Krishnamurti This Light in Oneself

Sue Skidmore to Dick

*A Nation Betrayed: The Chilling True Story of Secret Cold War Experiments Performed on our Children and Other Innocent People* by Carol Rutz ...

[www.whale.to/b/rutz_h.html](http://www.whale.to/b/rutz_h.html) - The Want to Know site lists three books. Carol Rutz was one of those books listed. The Want to Know site is about Mind Control and other things…...and is a project of several professionals. [http://www.wanttoknow.info/aboutus](http://www.wanttoknow.info/aboutus) It looks very legitimate to me. Carol Rutz book is out at Amazon and can be ordered as above. Thanks, Sue

A survivor of SRA and Government Mind Control experimentation is the author of *A Nation Betrayed* which tells the true story of secret Cold War experiments performed on children. With extensive research and testimony from survivors, she documents experiments by the CIA to create a Manchurian Candidate. Book


[2003] Carol Rutz's Lecture at Indiana University


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**JAMES RISEN FIGHTS SUBPOENA**

Red alert: Our national security is being outsourced.

The most intriguing secrets of the "war on terror" have nothing to do with al-Qaeda and its fellow travelers. They're about the mammoth private spying industry that all but runs U.S. intelligence operations today.

Surprised? No wonder. In April, Director of National Intelligence Mike McConnell was poised to publicize a year-long examination of outsourcing by U.S. intelligence agencies. But the report was inexplicably delayed -- and suddenly classified a national secret. What McConnell doesn't want you to know is that the private spy industry has succeeded where no foreign government has: It has penetrated the CIA and is running the show.

Over the past five years (some say almost a decade), there has been a revolution in the intelligence community toward wide-scale outsourcing. Private companies now perform key intelligence-agency functions, to the tune, I'm told, of more than $42 billion a year. Intelligence professionals tell me that more than 50 percent of the National Clandestine Service (NCS) -- the heart, brains and soul of the CIA -- has been outsourced to private firms such as Abraxas, Booz Allen Hamilton, Lockheed Martin and Raytheon.

These firms recruit spies, create non-official cover identities and control the movements of CIA case officers. They also provide case officers and watch officers at crisis centers and regional desk officers who control clandestine operations worldwide. As the Los Angeles Times first reported last October, more than half the workforce in two key CIA stations in the fight against terrorism -- Baghdad and Islamabad, Pakistan -- is made up of industrial contractors, or "green badgers," in CIA parlance.

Intelligence insiders say that entire branches of the NCS have been outsourced to private industry. These branches are still managed by U.S. government employees ("blue badgers") who are accountable to the agency's chain of command. But beneath them, insiders say, is a supervisory structure that's controlled entirely by contractors; in some cases, green badgers are managing green badgers from other corporations.

Sensing problems -- and possibly fearing congressional action -- the CIA recently conducted a hasty review of all of its job classifications to determine which perform "essential government functions" that should not be outsourced. But it's highly doubtful that such a short-term exercise can comprehensively identify the proper "blue/green" mix, especially because contractors' work statements have long been carefully formulated to blur the distinction between approvable and debatable functions.

Although the contracting system is Byzantine, there's no question that the private sector delivers high-quality professional intelligence services. Outsourcing has provided solutions to personnel-management problems that have always plagued the CIA's operations side. Rather than tying agents up in the kind of office politics that government employees have to engage in to advance their careers, outsourcing permits them to focus on what they do best, which boosts morale and performance. Privatization also immediately increased the number of trained, experienced agents in the field after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.
Even though wide-scale outsourcing may not immediately endanger national security, it's worrisome. The contractors in charge of espionage are still chiefly CIA alumni who have absorbed its public service values. But as the center of gravity shifts from the public sector to the private, more than one independent intelligence firm has developed plans to "raise" succeeding generations of officers within its own training systems. These corporate-grown agents will be inculcated with corporate values and ethics, not those of public service.

And the current piecemeal system has introduced some vulnerabilities. Historically, the system offered members of the intelligence community the kind of stability that ensured that they would keep its secrets. That dynamic is now being eroded. Contracts come and go. So do workforces. The spies of the past came of age professionally in a strong extended family, but the spies of the future will be more like children raised in multiple foster homes -- at risk.

Today, when Booz Allen Hamilton loses a contract to SAIC, people rush from one to the other in a game of musical chairs, with not enough chairs for all the workers who possess both the highest security clearances and expertise in the art of espionage. Some inevitably lose out. Any good counterintelligence officer knows what can happen next. Down-on-their-luck spies begin to do what spies do best: spy. Other companies offer them jobs in exchange for industry secrets. Foreign governments approach them. And some day, terrorists will clue in to this potential workforce.

The director of national intelligence has put our security at risk by classifying the study on outsourcing and keeping the truth about this inadequately planned and managed system out of the light. Much of what has been outsourced makes sense, but much of the structure doesn't, not for the longer term. It's time for the public and Congress to demand the study's release. More important, it's past time for the industry -- an industry conceived of and run by some of the best and brightest the CIA has ever produced -- to come up with the kind of innovative solutions it's legendary for, before the damage goes too deep.

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R.J. Hillhouse writes the national security blog the Spy Who Billed Me and is the author of the espionage thriller "Outsourced."


Here is the National Security Archive website at http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/
In the news

"CIA to Air Decades of Its Dirty Laundry"
By Karen DeYoung and Walter Pincus
Washington Post
June 22, 2007

"CIA Kidnapping, Wiretapping of '60s, '70s Revealed"
Morning Edition (National Public Radio)
June 22, 2007

"C.I.A. to Release Documents on Decades-Old Misdeeds"
By Scott Shane
New York Times
June 22, 2007

Chronology of the CIA's record on declassification

CIA Proposed Rule on FOIA Fees Would Burden Requesters and the Agency
February 7, 2007

CIA Had Single Officer in Hungary 1956
October 31, 2006

CIA Claims the Right to Decide What is News
June 14, 2006

Secret Understanding Between National Archives and CIA Exposes Framework for Surreptitious Reclassification Program
April 19, 2006

CIA Wins 2006 "Rosemary Award" for Worst Freedom

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Washington D.C., June 21, 2007 - The Central Intelligence Agency violated its charter for 25 years until revelations of illegal wiretapping, domestic surveillance, assassination plots, and human experimentation led to official investigations and reforms in the 1970s, according to declassified documents posted today on the Web by the National Security Archive at George Washington University.

CIA director Gen. Michael Hayden announced today that the Agency is declassifying the full 693-page file amassed on CIA's illegal activities by order of then-CIA director James Schlesinger in 1973--the so-called "family jewels." Only a few dozen heavily-censored pages of this file have previously been declassified, although multiple Freedom of Information Act requests have been filed over the years for the documents. Gen. Hayden called the file "a glimpse of a very different time and a very different Agency." The papers are scheduled for public release on Monday, June 25.

"This is the first voluntary CIA declassification of controversial material since George Tenet in 1998 reneged on the 1990s promises of greater openness at the Agency," commented Thomas Blanton, the Archive's director.

Hayden also announced the declassification of some 11,000 pages of the so-called CAESAR, POLO and ESAU papers--hard-target analyses of Soviet and Chinese leadership internal politics and Sino-Soviet relations from 1953-1973, a collection of intelligence on Warsaw Pact military programs, and hundreds of pages on the A-12 spy plane.

The National Security Archive separately obtained (and posted today) a six-page summary of the illegal CIA activities, prepared by Justice Department lawyers after a CIA briefing in December 1974, and the memorandum of conversation when the CIA first briefed President Gerald Ford on the scandal on January 3, 1975.

Then-CIA director Schlesinger commissioned the "family jewels" compilation with a May 9, 1973 directive after finding out that Watergate burglars E. Howard Hunt and James McCord (both veteran CIA officers) had cooperation from the Agency as they carried out "dirty tricks" for President Nixon. The Schlesinger directive, drafted by deputy director for operations William Colby, commanded senior CIA officials to report immediately on any current or past Agency matters that might fall outside CIA authority. By the end of May, Colby had been named to succeed Schlesinger as DCI, and his loose-leaf notebook of memos totaled 693 pages [see John Prados, Lost Crusader: The Secret Wars of CIA Director]
Seymour Hersh broke the story of CIA's illegal domestic operations with a front page story in the *New York Times* on December 22, 1974 ("Huge C.I.A. Operation Reported in U.S. Against Antiwar Forces, Other Dissidents in Nixon Years"), writing that "a check of the CIA's domestic files ordered last year… produced evidence of dozens of other illegal activities… beginning in the nineteen fifties, including break-ins, wiretapping, and the surreptitious inspection of mail."

On December 31, 1974, CIA director Colby and the CIA general counsel John Warner *met with the deputy attorney general*, Laurence Silberman, and his associate, James Wilderotter, to brief Justice "in connection with the recent *New York Times* articles" on CIA matters that "presented legal questions." Colby's list included 18 specifics:

1. Confinement of a Russian defector that "might be regarded as a violation of the kidnapping laws."
2. Wiretapping of two syndicated columnists, Robert Allen and Paul Scott.
3. Physical surveillance of muckraker Jack Anderson and his associates, including current Fox News anchor Brit Hume.
5. Break-in at the home of a former CIA employee.
7. Warrantless entry into the apartment of a former CIA employee.
8. Mail opening from 1953 to 1973 of letters to and from the Soviet Union.
11. Assassination plots against Castro, Lumumba, and Trujillo (on the latter, "no active part" but a "faint connection" to the killers).
15. Amassing of files on 9,900-plus Americans related to the antiwar movement.
16. Polygraph experiments with the San Mateo, California, sheriff.
17. Fake CIA identification documents that might violate state laws.
CIA's Broken Promises on Declassification

What Others Say about CIA's Promises

"C.I.A., Breaking Promises, Puts Off Release of Cold War Files"
By Tim Weiner
New York Times (Select)
July 15, 1998

Document 1: Summary of the Family Jewels
Memorandum for the File, "CIA Matters," by James A. Wilderotter, Associate Deputy Attorney General, 3 January 1975
Source: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library

On New Years' eve, 1974, DCI Colby met with Justice Department officials, including Deputy Attorney General Laurence H. Silberman, to give them a full briefing of the "skeletons."

Document 2: Colby Briefs President Ford on the Family Jewels
Memorandum of Conversation, 3 January 1975
Source: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library

Ten days after the appearance of Hersh's New York Times story, DCI William Colby tells President Ford how his predecessor James Schlesinger (then serving as Secretary of Defense) ordered CIA staffers to compile the "skeletons" in the Agency's closet, such as surveillance of student radicals, illegal wiretaps, assassination plots, and the three year confinement of a Soviet defector, Yuri Nosenko.

Document 3: Kissinger's Reaction
Memorandum of Conversation between President Ford and Secretary of State/National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger, 4 January 1975
Source: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library

An apoplectic Kissinger argues that the unspilling of CIA secrets is "worse than the days of McCarthyism" when the Wisconsin Senator went after the State Department. Kissinger had met with former DCI Richard Helms who told him that "these stories are just the tip of the iceberg," citing as one example Robert F. Kennedy's role in assassination planning. Ford wondered whether to fire Colby, but Kissinger advised him to wait until after the investigations were complete when he could "put in someone of towering integrity." The "Blue Ribbon" announcement refers to the creation of a commission chaired by then-vice president Nelson A. Rockefeller.

Document 4: Investigations Continue
Memorandum of Conversation between Kissinger, Schlesinger, Colby et al., "Investigations of Allegations of CIA Domestic Activities," 20 February 1975
Source: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library

Cabinet and sub-cabinet level officials led by Kissinger discuss ways and means to protect information sought by ongoing Senate (Church Committee) and House (Pike Committee) investigations of intelligence community abuses during the first decades of the Cold War. Worried about the foreign governments that have cooperated with U.S.
intelligence agencies, Kissinger wants to "demonstrate to foreign countries that we aren't too dangerous to cooperate with because of leaks."

CIA AND DRUGS

January 25, 2008

*A CounterPunch Special Investigation*

*How the CIA Infiltrated the DEA: Operation Two-Fold*

By DOUGLAS VALENTINE

The DEA and its predecessor federal drug law enforcement organizations have always been infiltrated and, to varying degrees, managed by America's intelligence agencies. The reason is simple enough: the US Government has been protecting its drug smuggling allies, especially in organized crime, since trafficking was first criminalized in 1914. Since then drug law enforcement has been a function of national security in its broadest sense; not just protecting our aristocracy from foreign enemies, but preserving the Establishment's racial, religious and class prerogatives.

The glitch in the system is that while investigating traffickers, federal drug agents are always unearthing the Establishment's ties to organized crime and its proxy drug syndicates. US intelligence and security agencies recognized this problem early in the early 1920s and to protect their Establishment patrons (and foreign and domestic drug smuggling allies fighting communists), they dealt with the problem by suborning well-placed drug law enforcement managers and agents.

They have other means at their disposal as well. In 1998, for example, in a series of articles in the *San Jose Mercury News*, reporter Gary Webb claimed that the CIA had facilitated the flow of crack cocaine to street gangs in Los Angeles. After the Agency vehemently denied the allegations, Webb was denounced by the CIA's co-conspirators: the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Washington Post*. Frightened into submission by the growls of its biggers and betters, the *Mercury News* retracted Webb's story and sent the reporter into internal exile. The CIA's Inspector General later admitted that Webb was partially right. But being unjustly discredited is the price one pays for tearing the mask off the world's biggest drug trafficker.

It's always been that way. Case in point: in 1960 MacMillan published Russ Koen's book *The China Lobby*. In it Koen said the Nationalist Chinese were smuggling narcotics into the US, "with the full knowledge and connivance" of their government in Taiwan. He said that "prominent Americans have participated and profited from these transactions." The idea of prominent Americans profiting from drug trafficking was unthinkable and quick as a flash, Harry J. Anslinger, the Commissioner of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics (FBN), denounced Koen as a fraud. Within weeks Koen's book was remaindered into obscurity by MacMillan.
Professor Al McCoy's seminal book *The Politics of Heroin*, published in 1972, is another example. The CIA knew about McCoy's research and approached his publisher, demanding that it suppress the book on grounds of national security. Harper Row refused, but agreed to allow the CIA to review the book prior to publication. When McCoy objected, Harper Row said it would not publish the book unless McCoy submitted.

Examples of federal drug law enforcement’s complicity with the CIA also abound and many are recounted in my first book on the subject, *The Strength of the Wolf: The Federal Bureau of Narcotics 1930-1968*. In my new book, *The Strength of the Pack: The Politics, Espionage Intrigues, and Personalities that Defined the DEA*, I explain how the CIA infiltrated the DEA and how, under CIA direction, the war on drugs became a template for the war on terror. One example shall be presented in this essay.

**The Merry Pranksters**

My new book, *Strength of the Pack*, begins in April 1968, when, in the wake of a huge corruption scandal, the Johnson Administration folded the FBN into a new organization called the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD). Attorney General Ramsey Clark announced the appointment of thirty-eight year old John E. Ingersoll as the BNDD's director. In a letter to me Clark said that Ingersoll "offered a clean break with a past that had ended in corruption and, I hoped, a new progressive, scientific based approach to drug control in a time of deep social unrest."

Clark appointed Ingersoll while Johnson was president and after the elections, in an attempt to preempt the in-coming Nixon Administration, Clark held a news conference to proclaim the Johnson Administration's success in cleansing the BNDD of any lingering corruption. "32 Narcotics Agents Resign in Corruption Investigation Here," read the headline in the 14 December 1968 *New York Times*. Clark noted that five of the bad agents had been indicted, and that additional prosecutions and resignations would soon be forthcoming. The Democrats had lost the election, largely because the "law and order" candidate Richard Nixon had promised to win the war on drugs. Ironically, once he was elected president, this vow would pit Nixon against the CIA, which was aiding and abetting the major politicians and generals commanding America's allies in Vietnam, Laos and Thailand, many of whom were part of a huge Kuomintang drug smuggling network. In order to defeat the Communists, their drug smuggling activities had to be protected. But in order for Nixon to make good on his promise to win the war on drugs, they had to be stopped. Thus began the CIA's infiltration of the BNDD, and its struggle with Nixon's anti-Establishment, felonious minions for control over targeting of major traffickers as a mean of managing the war on drugs.

BNDD Director John Ingersoll was totally unprepared for the political tug-of-war he found himself in the midst of. He had joined the Oakland police department in 1956, serving as a motorcycle cop and later as an administrative assistant to the chief. In the mid-1960s he became the police chief in Charlotte, North Carolina where he earned a reputation as a straight arrow and fighter against corruption. But within a year of taking control of the BNDD, Ingersoll realized he was no match for the wily federal drug agents he inherited. They were a cunning and dangerous wolf pack, and the organization's top officials were among the worst offenders.

As one agent explains, "Most were corrupted by the lure of the underworld. They thought they could check their morality at the door--go out and lie, cheat, and steal--then come back and retrieve it. But you can't. In fact, if you’re successful because you can lie, cheat, and steal, those things become tools you use in the bureaucracy. You’re talking about guys whose lives depended on their ability to be devious and who become very good at it. So these people became the bosses. Meanwhile the agents were losing their simplicity in subtle ways."

Ingersoll knew this, but he was also aware of the high priority Nixon placed on winning the war on
drugs. Rather than generate a scandal, Ingersoll decided to go outside of the organization, to the CIA, for help in quietly rooting out corruption. The 1975 Rockefeller Commission Report On CIA Activities Within The United States stated that the joint CIA-BNDD anti-corruption program began when Ingersoll became "vitally" concerned that some of his employees might have been corrupted by drug traffickers. Lacking the necessary security apparatus to expunge these corrupt agents, Ingersoll in early 1970 asked the Director of Central Intelligence, Richard Helms, for help building a "counter-intelligence" capacity. The request was "apparently" supported by President Nixon's Attorney General, John Mitchell.

The man Ingersoll appointed chief inspector of BNDD, Patrick Fuller, had served with IRS investigations for nearly 20 years in California. Fuller was Ingersoll's close friend, but apart from that, he was incapable of mounting internal security investigations against federal drug agents. When Ingersoll proposed that they turn to the CIA, Fuller readily agreed. The plan, known as Operation Twofold, involved the hiring of CIA officers to spy on ranking BNDD officials suspected of corrupt practices, past and present. As Pat Fuller recalls, "We recruited the CIA officers for BNDD through a proprietary company. A corporation engaged in law enforcement hired research consultants, and three CIA officers posing as private businessmen were hired to do the contact and interview work."

The principle recruiter was Jerry Soul, assisted by CIA officers John F Murnane, Joseph Cruciani, and Chick Barquin. Then a personnel officer at CIA headquarters, Soul had managed Cuban exiles during the Bay of Pigs invasion, and later directed the CIA's exile Cuban mercenary army and air force in the Congo.

Apart from one exile Cuban, the CIA officers hired for Operation Twofold were, typically, Anglo paramilitary officers whose careers had stalled due to the gradual reduction of CIA forces in Vietnam and Laos. Those hired were put through the BNDD training course and assigned by Fuller to spy on a particular regional director and his trusted subordinates. According to Fuller, no records were kept and some participants will never be identified because they were "cut-outs" who never went to a BNDD office, but spied from afar and reported clandestinely. Some were not even known to Fuller. All were supposed to be sent overseas but most remained in the US. Much of Twofold remains a mystery because, as the Rockefeller Commission reported, it "violated the 1947 Act which prohibits the CIA's participation in law enforcement activities."

No one was ever prosecuted.

Twofold Case Studies

Twofold was aimed at the BNDD's top managers. One target was Joseph J. Baca, the assistant Regional Director in Los Angeles. The cousin of a top Mexican cop, Baca in July 1969 was charged by the New Mexico State Police with trafficking in drugs and stolen property. He was accused of arranging burglaries and holdups, and allegedly sold heroin to a drug smuggler. But the local investigations were closed without any adverse action against Baca, so Twofold torpedo Charles "Chuck" Gutensohn was asked to investigate.

Gutensohn had served with the Special Forces in South Vietnam. He left the army in 1964, earned a college degree, and in 1968 joined the CIA. For the next two years, Gutensohn served in Pakse, Laos, one of the major drug transit points between the Golden Triangle and Saigon. He had drug experience and upon returning to the US, Gutensohn was given the choice of being the CIA's liaison to the BNDD in Laos, or joining Twofold. Gutensohn's brother Joel, also a Vietnam veteran, had joined the Twofold program six months earlier in Chicago. That being the case, Chuck joined too.

"After meeting with Jerry Soul," Gutensohn recalls, "I met Fuller at a hotel near Tyson's Corner. He said that when we communicated, I was to be known as Leo Adams, for Los Angeles. He was to
be Walter De Carlo, for Washington, DC."

Fuller recruited Gutensohn and the other CIA officers because they did not have to be trained in the "tradecraft skills" required for the job of spying on their bosses. But Gutensohn's cover was blown before he got to LA. As he recalls, "Someone at headquarters was talking and everyone knew. About a month after I arrived, one of the agents said to me, "I hear that Pat Fuller signed your credentials."

A similar situation occurred in Miami, where Fuller's targets were Regional Director Ben Theisen and Group Supervisor Pete Scrocca. Terry Burke, who would cap his career as the DEA's acting administrator in 1990, was one of the Twofold agents assigned to investigate Theisen and Scrocca. Tall and handsome, Burke's background is fascinating. After serving as a Marine guard at the US Embassy in Rome, he joined the CIA and served as a paramilitary officer in Laos from 1963-1965, working for legendary CIA officer Tony Poshepny at the 118A base near Ban Houei Sai--the epicenter of the Golden Triangle's opium and heroin trade. Burke received the CIA's highest award, the Intelligence Star, for gallantry in combat in Laos. He served his next tour in the Philippines but in 1969 was assigned to a dead-end job at CIA headquarters. Knowing his career had stalled, Burke contacted a friend from Italy, Customs Agent Fred Cornetta. Then the agent in charge at Dulles airport, Cornetta persuaded Burke to join the BNDD.

Burke applied and was hired in December 1970. Fuller recruited him into the Twofold operation and assigned him to Pete Scrocca's group. But instead of spying on his new colleagues, Burke set about proving that he was tough and smart enough to work "undercover cases on bad guys with shotguns in motel rooms." Burke never sent any negative reports to Fuller, and Theisen and Scrocca eventually accepted him.

Gutensohn and Burke's experience was not unusual, and Twofold never resulted in a single dismissal of any corrupt BNDD agent. The astonishing reason for this is quite simple. Little did Ingersoll or Fuller know that the CIA never initiates a program unless it is deniable and has "intelligence potential." Twofold conformed to these criteria: it was deniable because it was, ostensibly, a BNDD program; and it had intelligence potential in so far as it was perfectly suited for Angletonian style "operations within operations."

As the BNDD's chief inspector Pat Fuller told me, "There was another operation even I didn't know about. Why don't you find out who set that one up, and why?"

**Boxes Within Boxes**

Well, I did find out about this operation. Quite by accident, while interviewing a DEA agent in Miami, I was introduced to Joseph C DiGennaro, a member of the CIA's secret facet of Operation Twofold, its unilateral drug operations unit. Hidden behind Fuller's "inspections" program, the purpose of the CIA's unilateral drug unit was to identify drug-dealers worldwide, and selectively kidnap and/or assassinate them. As DiGennaro explains, his entry into the program began when an eminent surgeon, a family friend, suggested that he apply for a job with the BNDD. Then working as a stockbroker in New York City, DiGennaro in August 1971 met Fuller at a Howard Johnson's near the Watergate complex. Fuller told him that if he took the Twofold job, he would be given the code name Novo Yardley. The code name was based on DiGennaro's posting in New York, and a play on the name of the famous American spy, Herbert Yardley.

DiGennaro took the job and was sent to a CIA security officer to obtain the required clearances. That's when he was told that he and several other recruits were being "spun-off" from Fuller's inspection program into the CIA's unilateral "operational" program. He was told that he had been selected because he had a black belt in Karate and the uncanny ability to remember lists and faces. The background check took 14 months, during which time DiGennaro received intensive combat and tradecraft training. In October 1972 he was sent to BNDD regional headquarters in New York and, as a cover, was assigned to a compliance group that mostly inspected pharmacies.
His paychecks came from official BNDD funds, though the program was funded by the CIA through the Department of Interior's Bureau of Mines. The program had been authorized by the "appropriate" Congressional committee.

DiGennaro's special group was managed by the CIA's Special Operations Division (then under Evan Parker, first director of the CIA's Phoenix Program) in conjunction with the military, which provided assets within foreign military services to keep ex-filtration routes open. Ex-filtration routes were air corridors and roads. The military also cleared air space when captured suspects were brought into the US. DiGennaro spent most of his time on operations in South America, but served in Lebanon and other places too.

Within the CIA's special anti-drug unit, which numbered about 40 men, were experts in printing, forgery, maritime operations, and telecommunications. The operatives knew one another by first name only. DiGennaro, however, was aware that other BNDD agents, including Joseph Salm and Paul Seema, were in the program. No one else in the BNDD, however, knew about the program. When the call to duty came, DiGennaro would check with Fuller and then take sick time or annual leave to go on missions. There were lots of missions. As his group leader in New York, Joe Quarequio, told me: "Joey was never in the office."

The job was tracking down, kidnapping, and if they resisted, killing drug dealers. The violence was the result of the "limited window of opportunity" needed to get the job done. Due to the need for plausible deniability, there was minimal contact with the American Embassy where the mission was conducted. DiGennaro had "a Guardian Angel" who "assembled intelligence, developed routines, and contacted informants." But the host country and its uniformed police and military services were rarely aware of his presence, and there was little coordination with the local BNDD outpost.

The operations were extremely dangerous. As DiGennaro recalls, "There was a case in Colombia. There was seventy-two to ninety-six hours to get it done. I was flown to Colombia where I contacted my Guardian Angel. He had paid someone off and that someone had led him to a cocaine lab. The operators of the lab had been surveilled and followed to their hideout. In order to capture them, we had to work with a local military unit, which we contacted by two-way radio. In this particular instance, someone intercepted the call, and the next thing we know there's a woman on the radio alerting the suspects. She was an agent of the traffickers inside the local military unit. We hear her screaming at the soldiers. Then she's shot. We didn't know who she was calling," he continues, "so we had to leapfrog by helicopter and military truck to where we thought the subjects were. That time we happened to be right. We got the violators back to the United States. They were incapacitated by drugs and handcuffed in various men's' rooms in Chicago and Miami."

As one DEA Agent recalls, "We'd get a call that there was 'a present' waiting for us on the corner of 116th St and Sixth Avenue. We'd go there and find some guy who'd been indicted in the Eastern District of New York, handcuffed to a telephone pole. We'd take him to a safe house for questioning and, if possible, turn him into an informer. Sometimes we'd have him in custody for months. But what did he know?" If you're a Colombian or a Corsican drug dealer in Argentina and a few guys with police credentials arrest you, how do you know it's a CIA operation?

Expendable operative DiGennaro did not see the management apparatus that was directing him. He never knew much about the people the CIA unit was snatching and snuffing either; only that people were prosecuted and that defendants screamed.

DiGennaro's last operation in 1977 involved the recovery of a satellite that had fallen into a drug dealer's hands. By then he had all the CIA tradecraft skills required to fly solo; he learned who owned satellite, negotiated for it in good faith, and purchased it back on the black market. Such was the extent of the "parallel mechanism" the CIA had with the BNDD; a mechanism the CIA
obviously used not only for anti-drug purposes, but for counter-terror reasons as well.

**Fallout**

By 1977, some 125 "former" CIA officers had been infiltrated into the DEA at every level of the organization, especially in intelligence units, making everything possible--from black market arms exchanges, to negotiations with terrorists, to political assassination. It also put the CIA in total control of targeting.

However, as the CIA's influence became pervasive, more and more DEA agents felt its adverse impact on their cases. First the CIA demanded a list of all overseas DEA informants, as well as copies of all its intelligence reports. They got both. Next they began recruiting traffickers the DEA was working on. These recruits were subtracted from the DEA target list. In Chile in 1973, for example, the CIA allowed five drug traffickers to leave the soccer stadium in Santiago where dissidents were being tortured en masse. These traffickers fled to Colombia where they helped form the cartel that would eventually supplied crack cocaine to street gangs in Los Angeles, through other CIA assets in Latin America.

As one DEA agent puts it, "The relationship between the CIA and DEA was not as it was originally intended. The CIA does not belong in any type of law enforcement activity, unless it can result in a conviction. Which it rarely does. They should only be supportive, totally."

In February 1977, as he was about to resign in dismay, this agent and a group of other senior DEA officials felt compelled to document a litany of CIA misdeeds.

The CIA was causing so many problems that in early 1977, outgoing Assistant Administrator for Enforcement Dan Casey sent a three page, single-spaced memorandum to DEA Administrator Peter Bensinger expressing his concern "over the role presently being played by the CIA relative to the gathering of operational intelligence abroad." Signing off on the memo were six enforcement division chiefs. "All were unanimous in their belief that present CIA programs were likely to cause serious future problems for DEA, both foreign and domestic." Unilateral CIA programs in foreign countries were a "potential source of conflict and embarrassment and which may have a negative impact on the overall U.S. narcotic reduction effort." He referenced specific incidents, citing CIA electronic surveillance and the fact that the CIA "will not respond positively to any discovery motion." Casey foresaw more busted cases and complained that "Many of the subjects who appear in these CIA promoted or controlled surveillances regularly travel to the United States in furtherance of their trafficking activities." The "de facto immunity" from prosecution enables the CIA assets to "operate much more openly and effectively."

Casey was especially upset that the CIA demanded that DEA provide telephone numbers for its operations. "This practice is most disturbing because, in effect, it puts DEA in the position of determining which violators will be granted a de facto immunity." Considering the seriousness of the problem, he recommended that "all DEA support for CIA electronic surveillance be suspended at once." He asked DDEA Administrator Peter Bensinger to insist that the CIA adhere to guidelines set by the Carte White House Domestic Council, which limited the CIA to gathering strategic intelligence. He advised that DEA personnel not request CIA support "which might end to prejudice the domestic prosecution of any drug trafficker."

Alas, Bensinger suffered the CIA at the expense of the DEA's integrity. He ignored Casey and his division chiefs. **The Strength of the Pack** features examples of how this accommodation with the CIA emasculated the DEA. One major example is the CIA's Contra Connection, as revealed by Gary Webb. There is also the fact that Manuel Noriega was a CIA asset and that his DEA file was destroyed by CIA infiltrators, paving the way for the invasion of Panama. There was also the Pan Am 103 case in December 1988, in which a bomb was planted by enemy agents who had penetrated a protected CIA drug ring, which was making a "controlled delivery."

This huge crack in the CIA's protective shield led to the formation of the CIA's Counter-Narcotics Center, and business continued as usual. In December 1989, as reported in the 4 May 1990 issue
of *Newsday*, "a small US special operations team both planned and carried" out a raid that resulted in the death of drug lord Jose Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha, his 17 year old son, and several bodyguards. Pablo Escobar in 1994 was similarly assassinated by a CIA led execution squad.

The Gacha and Escobar hits, and many more like them which the public knows little or nothing about, are extrapolations of those performed by Joey DiGennaro. And the beat goes on. Shortly after he resigned in 1993, DEA chief Robert Bonner revealed that the CIA in 1990 had shipped a ton of pure cocaine to Miami from its Counter Narcotic Center warehouse in Venezuela. The Orwellian "controlled delivery" was accidentally lost.

With Bush’s war on terror, the situation has only gotten worse. In Afghanistan and South West Asia, the DEA is entirely infiltrated and controlled by the CIA and military. DEA headquarters is basically an adjunct of the Oval Office. And the Establishment continues to keep the lid on the story. After sending my manuscript to two reviewers--one with CIA connections, the other with DEA connections--my publisher has stopped communicating with me. I think my editor just wants me to go away.

One can only wonder how deeply America will descend into this vortex of fear and subservience to state security before it vanishes altogether.


**CIA AND DRUG TRADE**

In 1991 our RSO, the **Arkansas Committee**, invited Professor Al McCoy to visit us here and speak at GifflIs in Old Main. He spoke on the CIA controlled drug trade at the Mena, Arkansas airport. We filmed that event and it is available upon your request in DVD format. Dr. McCoy's book is available at:

http://www.amazon.com/Politics-Heroin-Complicity-Global-Trade/dp/1556524838/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1268670378&sr=1-1

Dr. Kurzmarov of the University in Tulsa has invited Dr. McCoy to speak there and the poster announcing that is attached for your information and action. Dr. Kuzmarov visited here two weeks ago to discuss his new book "The Myth of the Addicted Army" and connections to the CIA controlled drug trade worldwide. See:

http://www.amazon.com/Myth-Addicted-Army-Vietnam-Politics/dp/1558497056/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1268670208&sr=1-1

**Suspicious Minds: On Timothy Melley**  
*Peter C. Baker*

*December 19, 2012 | This article appeared in the January 7-14, 2013 edition of The Nation.*
In 1994, the fiction writer Charles Baxter published “Dysfunctional Narratives,” an essay in which he claims to have uncovered “the greatest influence on American fiction for the last twenty years.” His argument is an unorthodox one: Joyce, Woolf, Proust, Beckett, Kafka, Hemingway and Faulkner aren’t mentioned at all, and the person in question, it turns out, isn’t even a novelist, though he did write books (ones full of sentences that are “leaden and dulling, juridical-minded to the last, impersonal but not without savor,” and that “present the reader with camouflage masked as objective thought”). This person’s influence on America fiction, however, is traceable neither to his books nor their prose style, but rather to his apparent addiction to deniability—that noxious brew of disavowal, compartmentalization, structured ignorance and deception-as-policy through which negative outcomes become all but impossible to blame on anyone in particular. The person Baxter has in mind is none other than Richard Nixon, who brought the rhetoric of deniability to the public stage as no one had before, and who made its quintessential phrase—“mistakes were made”—a staple of American discourse about decisions and their consequences.

The Covert Sphere

*Secrecy, Fiction, and the National Security State.*
Institutionalized torture says not look what we can do, but look what we disown, what only the bad apples among us require.

Baxter goes on to argue that widespread narratives of disavowal “humiliate the act of storytelling”: “You can’t reconstruct a story—you can’t even know what the story is—if everyone is saying, ‘Mistakes were made.’ Who made them? Well, everybody made them and no one did, and it’s history anyway, so we should forget about it.” Without motives, agency or resolution, our national story becomes “dysfunctional.” So too stories about the self, which attempt to address unhappiness but are ill-equipped to do so, at least when unhappiness results from the actions of governments, corporations or banks, all of which have become deniability experts. Authors create characters who are unhappy, confused or trapped—and looking for answers why. But because the misdeeds of banks, for example, are fiendishly hard to understand (often by design) and not easily shoehorned into the conventions of realist storytelling, novels are more likely to point the finger at something close by and easily named. Family life works well as a cause of unhappiness, and so does childhood trauma (even better if its memory has been repressed and the narrative can trace its recovery). “That’s the whole story,” Baxter writes glumly. “When blame has been assigned, the story is over.”

By his own description, Baxter is an author committed to fiction where characters take actions and live with their effects. “Mistakes and crimes tend to create narratives, however, and they have done so from the time of the Greek tragedies,” he notes. Consequently, the “culture of disavowals”—which Baxter sees everywhere, from talk shows to graduate fiction workshops to the acclaimed novels of the day—strikes him as a defeat: the domestication, in the most pejorative sense of the word, of life and literature by the powers that be.

Timothy Melley, a professor at Miami University, is also interested in how American fiction has been influenced by institutionalized deception from on high, particularly with regard to the covert sectors of government that came into being
during and after World War II. But his account—which he eventually frames in explicit opposition to Baxter’s—locates the origins of deniability much earlier than Nixon. If deniability has an author, Melley argues in *The Covert Sphere*, it is George Kennan, who in 1948 penned National Security Council directive NSC-10/2, the document that changed the CIA, then barely one year old, from a purely intelligence-gathering outfit into an agency charged with “propaganda, economic warfare, preventive direct action, including sabotage, anti-sabotage” and so on. Crucially, NSC-10/2 ordered that these operations be implemented in such a way that, if discovered, “the US Government can plausibly disclaim any responsibility.”

More than sixty years later, the American covert sector is a thriving, many-tentacled monster of deniability funded by at least $75 billion per year, consisting of at least forty-five government agencies, 1,271 smaller government organizations and 1,391 private corporations. Thanks to the occasional revelation by investigative journalists or congressional committees, most Americans have a vague idea that the covert sector exists, that it has a great deal of power, and that it has in the past resorted to surveillance, kidnapping, torture and assassination in the name of protecting American interests. But what people know best about the covert sector is that it remains mostly unknowable by design: it lies, it keeps its past and future plans secret, it spreads misinformation both abroad and at home, and it shrouds its every move in a thick haze of overlapping cover stories and disavowals. It is the massive “known unknown” of American life, the supreme dysfunctional narrative, doing its business somewhere out of sight while we eat breakfast, or sleep, or read about it in the news without learning what it is. “Mistakes were made” implies a corollary, unspoken but I think widely felt: more mistakes are being made right now, and will remain unknown until long after the damage is done.

This is the sort of impotent half-knowledge that Baxter bemoans in “Dysfunctional Narratives.” Melley agrees that repeated exposure to lying-as-policy has been bad for everyone. Citizens have been pushed into a state of “radical unknowing,” or knowing for certain only that they really don’t know. But unlike Baxter, Melley thinks America’s writers, or at least a few of them, have risen admirably to the challenge—not by constructing narratives that Baxter would ever call functional, but by playing dysfunction for all it’s worth, the better to pinpoint its effect on the national and individual consciousness.

This is a familiar argument: radical new times have rendered obsolete familiar literary modes and pleasures. Paeans to an art that revels in its own instability, uncertainty or inconclusiveness—its intentional, self-aware dysfunctionality—are as old as literature itself, as are conservative laments such as Baxter’s. But Melley isn’t interested (or at least not exclusively so) in cheerleading for the postmodern. What makes his argument fascinating is his attention to the actual history of America’s relationship to the institutions that house its official open secrets, and to the special place in that relationship occupied by fiction.

* * *

As the first-ever government agency with deniability written into its charter, the CIA was from the beginning a storytelling machine. It was no coincidence that in its early days the organization was full of literature students and writers recruited by influential scholars of English, or that for decades it operated as perhaps the most generous literary patron in the West,
funding scores of novels, translations and literary journals. And so it is oddly apt that most Americans know most of what they
know about the covert sector—or, more accurately, half-know most of what they half-know—not from fact-oriented discourses
like journalism, history and the law, but instead from novels, films, TV shows, comic books and narrative video games: in
other words, through fictions, some of them quite outlandish, some chock-full of accurate information and insight, most
somewhere in between, and all of them more or less dismissible as “just fiction.”

Melley’s boldest suggestion is that fiction about the covert activity assumes an outsize role not only for members of the
general public, but also for most individuals within the covert sector. This is, he argues, a natural consequence of the secret
government’s size and “hypercompartmentalization,” itself a natural outcome of its foundational obsession with deniability.
The covert sector is so large, so fragmented into agencies, subdivisions, private contractors and shell companies—often
competing with each other for funding and operational jurisdiction—that it can be difficult, if not impossible, for any one of the
beast’s many tentacles to know what the rest have in their clutches. This is exacerbated by complex classification schemes
that parcel out information—even of a single operation—piecemeal on a “need to know” basis, a process that can leave even
those with high-security clearances in the dark. Often, Melley claims, those at the top of the totem pole are the most ignorant
of all, because what is required of them is not knowledge but its opposite: public expressions of shock when, against the
odds, this or that unsavory activity comes to light. Even if those technically “inside” the covert state know a bit more than
John Everyman, it is certainly plausible that they hanker to know more—to view the monster from above, and to see its many
tentacles writhing at once. Like the rest of us, some often have nowhere better to turn than fiction.

Such a proposition is difficult to prove, but Melley attempts to marshal compelling evidence. In the 1960s, he notes, CIA
employees reportedly watched Mission Impossible each week in search of ideas for new gadgets. JFK loved Ian Fleming
novels and wanted America to find “our James Bond.” The “ticking time bomb scenario,” so endlessly invoked in recent
debates over the efficacy and morality of torture, has apparently never occurred in real life but famously first appeared in Les
centurions, a 1960 French thriller in which French soldiers use torture to extract information from Muslim members of the
Algerian resistance. Today, the book is a favorite of US counterinsurgency professionals, including (by his own admission)
David Petraeus, until recently the director of the CIA. After 9/11, the Pentagon and Department of Homeland Security started
recruiting artists—including thriller author Brad Meltzer—for Red Cell, a project dedicated to imagining how the terrorist
attacks of the future might play out. The Pentagon ran a similar program. And in 2008, Defense Intelligence Agency recruits
started training on Sudden Thrust, a video game written by a Hollywood screenwriter.

As has been more widely observed, the television show 24—an eight-season ticking time bomb scenario—has figured
prominently in decidedly nonfictional decisions about the treatment of Muslims in US custody since 2001. At a 2002 gathering
of government officials charged with cooking up new approaches to interrogation, the assembled experts concluded that one
useful thing they could do was to watch 24. The show’s hero, Jack Bauer—who gets the job done by beating, drugging or
electrocuting someone roughly every other episode—has been cited with approval by (to name just a few) Bush
administration legal counsel John Yoo, Department of Homeland Security chief Michael Chertoff, former President Bill Clinton
and Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, who proclaimed: “Jack Bauer saved Los Angeles…. He saved hundreds of thousands of lives…. Are you going to convict Jack Bauer?” After Osama bin Laden was killed by Navy SEALs, “Jack Bauer” became a trending topic on Twitter, with many people tweeting their thanks to this nonexistent man.

Melley devotes an entire chapter to the notoriously muddled notion of “brainwashing,” a nonsensical term for a process of total thought control that has never really existed outside of novels, movies, and hysterical think-tank studies and news stories about the Communist threat. Much of the hysteria about brainwashing was stirred up by government PR specialists: Edward Hunter, the first journalist to use the term, was a former employee of the Office of Strategic Services, the World War II forerunner of the CIA. The propaganda affected not only the public but also the compartmentalized covert sector itself. While one tentacle cooked up stories about brainwashing—which inevitably seeped into thrillers like The Manchurian Candidate—the other sank millions of dollars into the search for its antidote, or better yet, a counterweapon. Again and again, researchers were forced to conclude that there is no such thing as brainwashing, just old-fashioned torture, most useful not for changing someone’s mind or turning them into a sleeper agent, but for the age-old purpose of making someone repeat whatever story you want (or, put otherwise, for producing fiction under extreme duress).

The findings of this “Manhattan Project of the mind,” as the historian Alfred McCoy has called it, were collected in the CIA’s 1963 KUBARK Counterintelligence Interrogation Manual, used for years as the basis for the military’s Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE) training program. After 9/11, the KUBARK manual’s list of torture techniques was mined no less assiduously than episodes of 24 for ideas about how to torture men who, ironically, were often described by Western academics and journalists as having turned to terrorism as the result of some unbelievably potent, almost magical form of indoctrination. In 2004, a remake of The Manchurian Candidate replaced the Commie “hypnosis” of the original with a suitably futuristic “nanochip” that makes Denzel Washington do whatever his global overlords say.

* * *

When fact and fiction crossbreed this promiscuously—especially within a powerful, weaponized bureaucracy—all manner of disasters are possible. President Eisenhower was on to something when he complained that intelligence briefings from Tehran sounded “like a dime novel”; much the same could be said for the scores of kooky terror plots cooked up by FBI agents for the purpose of entrapping Muslims. But for fiction writers, Melley argues, the state’s reliance on stories offers a way in. He quotes E.L. Doctorow approvingly: “The novelist’s opportunity to do his work today is increased by the power of the regime to which he finds himself in opposition.” The inaccessibility of key facts is a deep obstacle to journalism, history and legal inquiry, but not to novels, for which complex realities built from lies plausible enough to believe in, and rich illusions shot through with facts, are old news. As Norman Mailer put it, defending his qualifications to write fiction about the CIA: “It is a fictional CIA and its only real existence is in my mind, but I would point out that the same is true for men and women who have spent forty years working within the Agency.”

The literary stars of Melley’s account—the authors he identifies as best understanding how the nature of the covert sector
creates a particularly “puzzling relation” between representation and reality—are a familiar bunch. Mailer gets credit for stressing, in *Harlot’s Ghost*, the deep affinities between spycraft and literature, and for explicitly trumpeting fiction’s unique virtues over journalism in his novelistic memoir *Armies of the Night*. Denis Johnson is praised for recasting the Vietnam War, in *Tree of Smoke*, as first and foremost a series of propaganda fictions. Doctorow and Robert Coover receive high marks for their perceptive novelistic treatments of the fiction-laced “spectacle of secrecy” that was the Rosenberg trial (retold in Coover’s *The Public Burning* and Doctorow’s *The Book of Daniel*).

The more a work is, like our public sphere, scarred by radical unknowing, the more Melley praises it. His favorite sections of Don DeLillo’s *Libra* are not the detailed reimaginings of Lee Harvey Oswald’s life (or even of his love for James Bond), but instead the descriptions of Nicholas Branch, the fictitious CIA analyst brought out of retirement to write the agency’s internal report on the Kennedy assassination. Day after day Branch sits in his office, paralyzed by the mounting stacks of papers around him. He has access to any agency document he requests, but he also knows that a good deal of agency work goes into destroying some documents and forging others; plus some of his requests go unanswered. He *should* know more than anyone else about the Kennedy assassination, but in an important sense he knows less, having lost all ability to distinguish coincidence from significance, real documents from forgeries, and actual forgeries from forged forgeries—that is, forgeries deliberately designed to look like forgeries to an analyst, and so send him down the wrong path.

Similarly, in each of Joan Didion’s three novels about the security state (*A Book of Common Prayer*, *Democracy* and *The Last Thing He Wanted*), a narrator sets out to tell the story of a citizen caught up in the workings of the covert sector and, inevitably, “instead narrates her own failure to tell the story she meant to tell.” Like Branch, Didion’s narrators fail in part because they don’t have access to certain data, in part because they have access to more potentially relevant data than they could ever sort, and no clue how even to begin telling the story. The fear is that filling in the covert sector’s narrative gaps—writing a speculative key to its coded maps—might only serve to obscure the truth. “I still believe in history,” says the journalist-narrator of *The Last Thing He Wanted*, then instantly doubles back. “Let me amend that. I still believe in history to the extent I believe history to be made exclusively and at random” by men shrouded in “entire layers of bureaucracy dedicated to the principle that self-perpetuation depended on the ability not to elucidate but obscure.” In the looking-glass world of the covert sector, functional stories of cause and effect too easily become part of a cover-up built on false understanding. The narrator of *Democracy* (one “Joan Didion”), surveying the story she is in the middle of telling, puts it bluntly: “I am resisting narrative here.” Charles Baxter, we can assume, is not a fan.

For Melley, this mode finds its purest expression in Tim O’Brien’s *In the Lake of the Woods*. The main character, John Wade, is a Vietnam veteran traumatized by memories of the wartime atrocities he has witnessed, participated in and covered up through alterations to the record. Decades later, he wakes up one morning and discovers that his wife is gone. He remembers little of the night before, but does recall standing over her sleeping body holding a pot of boiling water. The journalist-narrator is another Vietnam vet with problems of memory and guilt. Early on, he announces that he has never figured the case out and that Wade’s wife was never found. Like DeLillo and Didion, O’Brien dramatizes the public’s
relationship to the half-known goings-on of the past ("a handful of splotchy images" from Southeast Asia), but he also gestures toward more recent events, the events of (literally) last night—events more difficult to name because we experience them, if at all, only as a queasy awareness of what they might have been. Mistakes are being made. "Who will ever know?" says the narrator. "It’s all hypothesis, beginning to end."

* * *

I admire these books; indeed, some I love, in part for the virtues Melley catalogs. And his account of their spawning ground—the "known unknowns" of the covert sector—is fascinating. But his response to Baxter’s argument in “Dysfunctional Narratives” is deeply dissatisfying. Baxter’s essay explores how large dysfunctional systems might influence fiction about subjects other than systems: how distortions of power subtly discourage artists from writing about power in the first place, whether or not their subject is explicitly political. To respond, as Melley does, by noting that an extremely small handful of authors have successfully written about systems is almost a non sequitur.

What Melley’s account reveals most about his favorite books is how disarmingly similar they are—and not just in their self-aware "I can’t go on, I’ll go on" approach to storytelling. Almost every book he discusses has at its center a character drawn by circumstance into the dysfunction of the covert sector. In *The Last Thing He Wanted*, the narrator discovers that her father is an arms dealer. In *Democracy*, the main character is having an affair with a CIA agent. Both main characters in *A Book of Common Prayer* are married to prominent players in the secret government. John Wade, the amnesiac veteran from *In the Lake of the Woods*, is a direct participant in a military atrocity and the cover-up. The principal narrator of Coover’s *The Public Burning* is Vice President Richard Nixon himself. DeLillo’s Nicholas Branch works in the belly of the CIA, and his Lee Harvey Oswald is, well, Lee Harvey Oswald.

This relative uniformity of approach is evidence of a shortcoming at least as significant as the type pinpointed by Baxter. It may seem natural that fiction hoping to plumb the conceptual depths of the covert sector should involve its biggest institutions. But one of Melley’s central claims is that the nature of the covert sector has contributed to postmodern shifts in the nature of all public knowledge—not just knowledge about CIA coups, for example. The authors he spotlights are similarly obsessed with the idea of the secret services as pockets of the national unconscious. Here’s the narrator of DeLillo’s *The Names*, a man who works for the CIA but doesn’t know it:

If America is the world’s living myth, then the CIA is America’s myth. All the themes are there, in tiers of silence, whole bureaucracies of silence, in conspiracies and doublings and brilliant betrayals. The agency takes on shapes and appearances, embodying whatever we need at a given time to know ourselves or unburden ourselves.

But doesn’t the unconscious find expression in daily life? By which I mean: Shouldn’t it be possible to write an essentially realistic novel that contains not a single secret government plot but nonetheless makes contact with the scars those plots have left on the national psyche? Other than a few halfhearted pages on John Barth’s *Lost in the Funhouse*, this possibility
merits no real consideration in *The Covert Sphere*. In this regard, the book operates in ignorance of one of its most important insights: that the work of the covert sector extends far beyond the confines of the CIA’s offices and involves the uneasy acceptance of radical unknowing, which comes in an ever-multiplying number of forms and is a presence in all our lives—even if we’re not paranoiacs who work in the CIA archives or write newsletters about how 9/11 was an inside job, even if our fathers are not international arms dealers, even if we are knowing readers of high-concept novels. Not only that, but Melley’s way of thinking about the relationship between literature and politics leaves little room for the possibility that the best novels about 9/11 or World War I or Vietnam could be ones that do not mention or even bear direct traces of these conflicts.

* * *

There is a basic truth about the covert sector that is remarkably easy to overlook: however unknowable and mysterious it may be—however much it may seem to be a separate reality parallel to ours—it is not literally another world. Remote military outposts, for example, are buildings like any other, occupying space, requiring plumbing and electricity. Such banal facts are at the center of fascinating work by Trevor Paglen, whom Melley mentions only in passing, perhaps because Paglen doesn’t write fiction. His work is part investigative journalism, part geography, part art photography. Many of his projects have involved scrounging for information about where exactly in the physical world the work of the covert state gets done: its torture dungeons; the remote airports where planes shuttling from dungeon to dungeon land for fuel; the spots in the night sky where surveillance satellites lurk; the small offices in strip malls that house CIA shell companies. Then he gets as close as he can and takes photographs, often using an extremely high-powered lens. Paglen also trains his camera on smaller traces of covert activity: leases and purchase orders signed by nonexistent people; uniform patches for government programs mentioned in no congressional budget. Encountering these images for the first time, I felt a dizzying sense of revelation, all the more dizzying because I knew their central claim—that the covert sector exists in physical space—was completely obvious. I was, I suppose, metasurprised: surprised to find myself surprised.

There are many such moments in the British filmmaker Patrick Keiller’s “Robinson” trilogy. Each of its installments consists almost entirely of static shots of English cities and countryside accompanied by voice-overs from an invisible narrator who relates the observations of a London-obsessed loner named Robinson. Keiller’s camera captures lichen growing on roadway signs; supermarkets, busy intersections and freeways; spiders spinning cobwebs—and also the British covert sector, in the form of restricted-access military bases, some still in use and hidden behind fences and foliage, others deserted and weathered and beginning to be reclaimed by the land. Keiller is implicitly convinced that it’s all connected, but less in the manner of a DeLillo paranoiac and more like a nature writer describing a physical journey through an ecosystem.

Keiller has professed his love for W.G. Sebald’s 1995 novel *The Rings of Saturn*, in which the anonymous narrator (a man not unlike Keiller’s Robinson) describes his walking tour along the southeast coast of England. In a memorable seven-page passage he recalls wandering Orford Ness, a small, narrow peninsula that for much of the twentieth century was owned by the British Ministry of Defense, which used it to test phosphorus shells, nuclear detonators and who knows what else. Today its barracks, bunkers, blast chambers and watchtowers sit deserted. Sebald’s narrator has heard many rumors about the
base at Orford Ness and suspects that much of its past is unknowable, thanks to probable tampering with the records in advance of their declassification. He acquires no new facts on his walk. To the contrary: the more he walks, the less he feels he knows. “Where and in what time I truly was that day…I cannot say, even now as I write these words.” This sounds like an extreme version of Melley’s “radical unknowing.” But the passage is also a straightforward account of an afternoon’s walk, a walk that any Briton with a free afternoon and train fare could take herself. And so, however much remains hidden to the narrator, he also claims a modest knowing: he was there; he saw what he could see; he kept walking, kept thinking.

Whether this meets Baxter’s standard for functional narrative, I don’t know—but it’s surely at least a modest start. It seems clear that American letters could use a small army of Paglens, Keillers and Sebalds roaming our geographies of secrecy, pens and cameras in hand. In fact, one of the best living describers of the American landscape, John McPhee, published a fascinating book in 1984 called La Place de la Concorde Suisse, in which he travels around Switzerland with an army information patrol. In the process he charts the myriad ways the country’s military aims have shaped its social structures, economy and, most of all, land. Bridges are wired to blow, the mountains are full of camouflaged airplane hangars and cannon turrets, and almost every man of fighting age has a gun, ammo and a gas mask in the house. “There is scarcely a scene in Switzerland that is not ready to erupt in fire,” McPhee writes. “About this we don’t talk,” a colonel tells him. “But keep your eyes open. You may see something.”

Also in this issue, Marcy Wheeler inquires into whether Congress can protect Americans against the increasingly invasive security state.

Peter C. Baker

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CIA, FBI, Intelligence Bibliography: Combined Bibliographic Resources for :CIA, FBI, Intelligence, Terrorism and War on Terror Compiled by Dick Bennett mainly 2004-2007 (numbers refer to installments of Bibliography)

#24

CIA (see: Bush, Imperialism, Torture)

--Prados, John. Safe for Democracy: The Secret Wars of the CIA. Ivan Dee, 2006. Relates the inside stories of covert operations and examines CIA’s relations with presidents and
Congress.


#23

CONTRA/CIA INVASION OF NICARAGUA


#22

FBI (see: Secrecy)


#20

FBI

MCCARTHYISM


Terrorism and War on Terror:

#25

TERRORISM WAR ON and BUSH ADMIN. MISUSE OF INTELLIGENCE

Ron Suskind's *The One Percent Doctrine: Deep Inside America's Pursuit of its Enemies since 9/11* (Simon & Schuster, 2007) tells the story of how the Bush administration prepared to deal with threats, both real and perhaps even imaginary. The title of this work comes from Vice-President Dick Cheney's address to those assembled in the White House Situation Room - a collection of the best intelligence officers in the country: If there's a one-percent chance that Pakistani scientists are helping Al Qaeda build or develop a nuclear weapon, we have to treat it as a certainty in terms of our response. "It's not about our analysis, or finding a preponderance of evidence. It's about our response." And there you have it, in a nutshell. It was no longer about critical analysis, but about mere suspicion, and fear mongering.

#24

TERROR, WAR ON (see: Bush, Iraq, Liberals, 9-11, Suicide Bombers, Torture, War)
---Scheuer, Michael. *Imperial Hubris: Why the West Is Losing the War on Terror*. Rev. Bradley Gitz in *ADG*, his choice for the worst book of 2005. “...the latest evidence of the apparently irresistible urge that some of our citizens feel to bow and scrape when attacked by savages.”

---The One Percent Doctrine by Ron Suskind In this troubling portrait of the war on terror, America's intelligence agencies confront not just al-Qaeda but the Bush administration's politicized incompetence.

---Chernus, Ira. *Monster to Destroy: the Neoconervative War on Terror and Sin.*

Chernus also wrote *American Nonviolence: The History of an Idea.*


---Ann Louise Bardach, “Twilight of the Assasins” in *Atlantic Monthly* denounces the US for harboring the terrorists Bosch and Posada, who blew up a Cubana airplane, killing all aboard.


**#24**

WAR ON TERROR (see: Middle East, Torture)

--Mr. George Soros, a financier, is author of *The Age of Fallibility: Consequences of the War on Terror* (Public Affairs, 2006).

**--“Outlawed: Extraordinary Rendition, Torture, and the Disappearances in the ‘War on Terror.’”**


**#23**

TERRORISM (see: Imperialism, Islamic, Torture)

---Kunkel, Benjamin. “Dangerous Characters.” *NYT Book Review* (Sept. 11, 2005). Reviews many novels about “terrorism”; that is, individual and small group terrorism; omits state terrorism. Who are the novelists of state terrorism?


**--Gareau, Frederick. *State Terrorism and the United States: From Counterinsurgency to the War on Terrorism.* www.claritypress.com


**#22**

TERRORISM (see: Zarqawi)
Bloom, Mia. *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. Columbia UP, 2005

ZARQAWI


#20

WAR ON TERROR (see: Empire, Islam)


#20

ISLAM

These 5 books are reviewed in *NYTimes Book Rev.* (Feb. 6, 2005): these books attempt “to make sense of…the global interaction and conflict” of Islam and the West, the globalization of Islam.


Abbas, Hassan. *Pakistan’s Drift Into Extremism: Allah, the Army, and America’s War on Terror*. Sharpe, 2005.

October 30, 2002

WAR ON TERRORISM (see: 9-11)


END CIA (FBI) NEWSLETTER #1

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Dick Bennett

My blog:
War Department/Peace Department
http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/
Newsletters
http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/

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