

Intelligence Liaison

Adam D.M. Svendsen, PhD

Frequently known as “intelligence cooperation,” intelligence liaison has evolved substantially over the years. This article, written from a British-European perspective, identifies several challenges intelligence liaison has confronted during its evolution, particularly in the context of international affairs.

The British were pioneers in intelligence liaison.¹ Confronting the many challenges of empire required its frequent and highly pragmatic use. Intelligence liaison varies considerably in its directness, being bilateral and also multilateral and plurilateral, involving many different participants. However, bilateral remains the most common and viable form.²

Some History

Intelligence liaison – in its broadest definition – has been underway for centuries.³ However, it has only been recognized as a particular intelligence topic since the early 1940s. Examples of intelligence liaison can be found in some early texts, such as Thucydides’ *History of the Peloponnesian War*, dating from 431 BC, in which he penned that: “information had been conveyed to Hippias by their accomplices.”⁴ From very early days, intelligence liaison could have decisive impact; its value as a useful tool for influencing developments and event navigation is apparent across the globe,⁵ overlapping with the Chinese strategist Sun Tzu’s insights that: ‘All warfare is based on deception.’⁶ As US Strategy Professor Michael Handel has noted: ‘Sun Tzu’s definition of deception is very broad...’, including ‘both active and passive measures, from elaborate deception plans, simple baits, and diversion, to secrecy and concealment...’, and intelligence liaison work for communication purposes was no exception to that long list of tasks.⁷ Handel observed: “It is the

¹ See also R. Dover and M.S. Goodman (eds), *Learning from the Secret Past: Cases in British Intelligence History* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2011).

² A.D.M. Svendsen, *Understanding the Globalization of Intelligence* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p.93.

³ A.D.M. Svendsen, *The Professionalization of Intelligence Cooperation: Fashioning Method out of Mayhem* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p.36; also P. Knightley, *The Second Oldest Profession* (London: Deutsch, 1986).

⁴ Chapter 1 of “The First Book” of Thucydides (431BC/2009AD), *History of the Peloponnesian War*, via: <http://classics.mit.edu/Thucydides/pelopwar.html> (accessed: 2015 [emphasis added]); H. Sidebottom, *Ancient Warfare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁵ See also A.D.M. Svendsen, “Intelligence Liaison: An essential navigation tool,” in J. Schroefl, B.M. Rajae and D. Muhr (eds), *Hybrid and Cyber War as Consequences of the Asymmetry* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang International Publishers, 2011); C.S. Gray, “Thucydides was right: Defining the future threat”, www.StrategicStudiesInstitute.army.mil (2015).

⁶ As quoted in M.I. Handel, “Deception, Surprise, and Intelligence,” ch.15 in his, *Masters of War: Classical Strategic Thought* (London: Routledge, 2001 [3rd rev. and expanded ed.]), p.215; see also Sun Tzu (translated by Lionel Giles, 1910), *The Art of War* (US: Filiquarian Publishing 2006); A.D.M. Svendsen, “Strategy and Disproportionality in Contemporary Conflicts,” *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 33, 3 (2010), pp.383-385.

⁷ Handel, *Masters of War*, p. 217.

role of intelligence and the ability to obtain reliable information in real time that has changed the most since the classical works on strategy and war were written.”⁸

Later practitioners reaped greater benefits from increasingly optimized intelligence liaison. Queen Elizabeth I's renowned “spymaster,” Sir Francis Walsingham (c.1530-90), was very much involved in such activities. Through his networks he developed “a complex system of espionage at home and abroad, enabling him to reveal the plots of Throckmorton and Babington against the Queen.”⁹

In earlier years, intelligence cooperation tended to pivot around particular noteworthy individuals, such as Walsingham, and be conducted on a temporary or *ad hoc*, case-by-case basis. For instance, the Duke of Wellington for his intelligence gathering relied on the scout-like qualities of ‘Exploring Officers’ at the decisive Battle of Waterloo (1815), rounding off the Napoleonic Wars (1803-15). Notable amongst those officers were Lt. Col. Colquhoun-Grant and George Scovell, in his capacity as Wellington’s ‘code breaker’, while Prussian General Von Müffling, amongst others, was Wellington’s liaison with his allied forces. However, as before, once peace arrived the military intelligence organizations were essentially disbanded, as they were no longer required.¹⁰

Notably, “The phenomenon of ‘liaison’ entered the intelligence context via the... military and diplomatic worlds ... This includes the word “liaison” itself coming from French, the nineteenth-century language of mainstream military and diplomatic business... Indeed, from its outset, liaison has been closely associated with the history and professionalization of intelligence and its institutions – for instance, being strongly linked to the functions of military attachés, where conducting liaison remains a central role.”¹¹ In the case of the UK, “early developments in the realm of liaison appear to owe much to security and intelligence cooperation against anti-colonial agitators and against the revolutionaries of the late nineteenth century.”¹² As further observed:

The continued gradual growth and regularization of British intelligence liaison generally during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries can be associated with three key developments: firstly, the institutionalization and professionalization of intelligence...; secondly, the proliferation of European ‘grand alliances’ or blocs, their associated politics and the inauguration of the UK alliance ‘commitment’ tradition – to which the UK still adheres today, most notably with the UK–US alliance; and thirdly, the growth of formal and informal global (British) Empire management requirements, where having a global hegemony of intelligence power was, and continues to be (as the US has subsequently found and China is learning), essential for primacy in domestic and international affairs. Over time, natural, as well as ‘man-made’, disasters and crises have similarly had an important impact...¹³

⁸ Handel, *Masters of War*, p.216.

⁹ Entry on ‘Sir Francis Walsingham’ in D. Crystal (ed.), *The Cambridge Biographical Encyclopedia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998 [2ed.]), p.973.

¹⁰ “History of The Intelligence Corps,” *British Army* (London: UK Ministry of Defence, 2010), p.1.

¹¹ Svendsen, *The Professionalization of Intelligence Cooperation*, p.16.

¹² *Ibid.*, p.18.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.37; see also C. Andrew, *Secret Service: The Making of the British Intelligence Community* (London: Heinemann, 1985), and his, *The Defence of the Realm* (London: Allen Lane, 2009); K. Jeffery, *The Secret History of MI6* (New York: Penguin, 2010).

Nineteenth Century Adventures

From the Victorian era onwards, empire management requirements were an important driver for British intelligence liaison. While the Empire rapidly expanded during the latter part of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, that expansion brought with it many challenges of both an intra- and extra-Empire nature. Noteworthy examples include the North American competition with France and the later colonial revolution,¹⁴ the frequently European-linked subversive “anarchist terrorism ... the Irish-Fenian terrorism and the developments associated with the Indian-Sikh rebellion and the Indian revolutionary movement.”¹⁵

Much formal and informal, behind-the-scenes, security communication occurred across the globe, and contributed towards the negotiation of those problems. As British historian Richard Popplewell later found from his research on the UK's Imperial Defence work, “the British were able to defeat the Indian revolutionaries only by developing a complex intelligence network on a global scale...” Their covert means against terrorism was why they were unwilling to publicize their successes.¹⁶

From the late nineteenth century, the UK was involved in the “Scramble for Africa” in direct competition with the other European imperial powers. Greater political attention and strategic management was required from London,¹⁷ and intelligence liaison performed an important supporting role, being employed for tactical and operational, as well as strategic ends, underpinning both military and diplomatic initiatives. By 1884-1885, the Scramble for Africa was at full speed when thirteen European countries and the United States met in Berlin to agree on the rules of African colonization. From 1884 to 1914, the continent continued to undergo much upheaval with direct implications for intelligence functions.¹⁸ According to an official British Army history of the UK military Intelligence Corps:

Prior to the [(second)] Boer War [(1899-1902)] the British Army tended to form ad hoc intelligence organisations during campaigns in order to provide the commander with the necessary information and intelligence ... John Churchill, the first Duke of Marlborough, stated that “no war can be conducted successfully without early and good intelligence” ... By the end of the [(Boer)] war, the intelligence element of the British Forces increased from 2 officers to 132 officers and 2,321 soldiers.¹⁹

This showed growing numbers involved in intelligence and liaison-related activities.

For the UK, *Pax Britannica* was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain. By the beginning of the twentieth century, “perceived imperial overstretch was not far from being at the forefront of British decision-makers’ minds.”²⁰ Overlapping alliance obligations were growing as the UK became increasingly committed to a range of agreements. This was to help bolster and sustain its current high international standing, both diplomatically and militarily, and to be able to secure

¹⁴ F. Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Year's War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000). The Seven Year's War was known as the French and Indian Wars in US history.

¹⁵ Svendsen, *The Professionalization of Intelligence Cooperation*, p.39.

¹⁶ R.J. Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defence: British Intelligence and the Defence of the Indian Empire, 1904-24* (London: Frank Cass, 1995), p.5; see also J. Paxman, *Empire* (London: Viking, 2011).

¹⁷ See T. Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa* (London: Abacus, 1991).

¹⁸ “The Scramble for Africa,” *St. John's College Library, Cambridge, UK* (accessed: 2015).

¹⁹ “History of The Intelligence Corps,” p.1.

²⁰ Svendsen, *The Professionalization of Intelligence Cooperation*, p.38; see also J. Charmley, *'Splendid Isolation'? Britain and the Balance of Power 1874-1914* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1999); D. Reiter, *Crucible of Beliefs: Learning, Alliances and World Wars* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996).

and maintain a seat at the top-table of world politics, enabling the UK to “punch above its weight” in foreign affairs.

Alliance commitments

During the modern historical era, alliances assumed prominence in Western international relations. From the end of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century, European states committed themselves to various alliance arrangements such as, in 1879, the “Dual Alliance” between Germany and Austria-Hungary, later in 1882 becoming the “Triple Alliance” when Italy joined. Further alliance commitments were witnessed in 1894 when the Franco-Russian Alliance came into effect.²¹

These alliances’ formation “occurred in a climate of intense international imperial competition between the European Powers, which extended beyond merely the shaping of the modern European Continent” to involving the imperialist-inspired African adventures.²²

Ultimately, however, due to its empire commitments and other interests demands, increasingly the UK “started tentatively committing itself to the European alliance system – for example, through the Anglo-French Entente in 1904, and then in 1907 to an Anglo-Russian Convention.”²³ By the time of the First World War (1914-18), some – albeit limited – exchanges of military-relevant intelligence were taking place between the newly-fashioned allies of the UK, France and Russia.²⁴ Acting as forges, the crucibles of the early twentieth century wars were to have significant impact on intelligence liaison trends.

Twentieth Century Wars and their Cold War aftermath

The immediate demands of the First World War spurred greater intelligence work, with a rapid increase in manpower, and increased exchange of intelligence.²⁵

By the time of the Second World War (1939-1945), intelligence liaison witnessed rapid growth and greater internationalization – including the number and diversity of actors (or parties) involved. Some of this liaison resulted in significant developments. The Poles sharing their cryptanalytic efforts against the German Enigma cipher with the French and British led eventually to the Allies’ intelligence dominance over Nazi Germany.²⁶ By 1942, British and American signals intelligence was largely integrated.²⁷ Following British Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill’s famous edict to “set Europe ablaze!”, this also included the coordinated conduct of covert or direct action activities and other special operations, involving the British, French, and Americans of the Special Operations Executive (SOE) and Office of Strategic Services

²¹ Svendsen, *The Professionalization of Intelligence Cooperation*, p.37.

²² *Ibid.*; see also, e.g., M. Howard, *The Franco-Prussian War: The German Invasion of France 1870-1871* (London: Routledge, 2001).

²³ Svendsen, *The Professionalization of Intelligence Cooperation*, pp.37-38.

²⁴ M. Herman, *Intelligence Power in Peace and War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press/Chatham House – Royal Institute of International Affairs – RIIA, 1996), pp.200–201; “History of The Intelligence Corps,” pp.2-3.

²⁵ See also, on UK intelligence work during the First World War, e.g., J. Beach, *Haig's Intelligence: GHQ and the German Army, 1916–1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

²⁶ F.H. Hinsley, *British Intelligence in the Second World War* (Abridged edition) (London, HMSO, 1993), p. 14.

²⁷ Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, pp.442-467.

(OSS).²⁸ In November 1944, OSS director Donovan wrote in a memorandum to US President Franklin D. Roosevelt, that: "Your correspondent suggests that OSS has been penetrated by the English Intelligence Service. If by penetration is meant that we have worked closely together with that Service in the spirit of cooperation that you have urged upon us, then the statement is true; but if more than that is meant, the statement is not true and on the contrary we have greatly profited by our working with the British and at the same time we have maintained the integrity of our organization."²⁹

The joint Allied breaking and exploitation of the codes of their Axis enemies, most notably ULTRA (Germany) and MAGIC (Japan), resulted from close liaison. Prominent wartime liaison agreements were struck, notably the 1943 BRUSA (Britain–USA) pact that enabled SIGINT to "became increasingly 'pooled' and 'shared,' especially between the UK, the USA and the other English-speaking countries..."³⁰ Other wartime agreements relating to defense and military intelligence, including imagery intelligence (IMINT), concluded in parallel, quickly demonstrated their value. This was despite the obvious counterintelligence-associated risks, such as sources and methods compromise, that might potentially be involved from their outset.³¹

The contemporary intelligence historian can point to other important trends relating to intelligence liaison around the early 1940s. To handle the exchange of intelligence as workloads grew rapidly – both in terms of the volume of exchanges and the quality exploitation of product – intelligence liaison officers (ILOs) increasingly came into being.

At the start of the Second World War, British Security Coordination (BSC) was established to handle the management of UK intelligence, counterintelligence, and influence operations in the US. The BSC was headquartered in the International Building of the Rockefeller Center, conveniently located in central New York. Facilitating UK-US intelligence liaison, in particular with the OSS, BSC was led by Canadian businessman Sir William Stephenson – 'call-sign' *Intrepid*.³² The value of conducting intelligence liaison work continued on a growth trajectory during the war, involving all domains of intelligence activity.

The wartime BRUSA liaison extended into peacetime and grew as the Cold War began to burgeon. An official US liaison office was opened in London, and "[b]etween 1946 and 1948, with some periodic updates since, a range of agreements, overall forming the UKUSA arrangement, were negotiated and signed." Importantly, "[s]till in operation today, the UKUSA arrangement includes the 'Five Eyes' of the UK, the USA, Australia, Canada and New Zealand."³³

²⁸ M.R.D. Foot, *SOE in France* (London: HMSO, 1966 [1968 rev. ed.]); C.J. Murphy, *Security and Special Operations: SOE and MI5 During the Second World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); "History of The Intelligence Corps," p.3; Douglas Waller, *Wild Bill Donovan: The Spymaster Who Created the OSS and Modern American Espionage* (New York, Free Press, 2011).

²⁹ Quoted in Svendsen, *Understanding the Globalization of Intelligence*, p.27; see also P.H. Hansen, *Second to None: US Intelligence Activities in Northern Europe, 1943–46* (Dordrecht, NL: Republic of Letters, 2011).

³⁰ Svendsen, *The Professionalization of Intelligence Cooperation*, p.18.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp.19-20; see also R.J. Aldrich, *Intelligence and the War against Japan: Britain, America and the Politics of Secret Service* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); "History of The Intelligence Corps," pp.3-4.

³² H. Montgomery Hyde, *The Quiet Canadian The Secret Service Story of Sir William Stephenson* (London: Constable, 1989) and his, *Room 3603: The Incredible True Story of Secret Intelligence Operations During World War II* (Guildford, CT: The Lyons Press/The Globe Pequot Press, 1962).

³³ Svendsen, *The Professionalization of Intelligence Cooperation*, p.19; see also A.D.M. Svendsen, "Buffeted not Busted: The UKUSA 'Five Eyes' after Snowden," *e-ir.info* (8 January 2014) - via: < <http://www.e-ir.info/2014/01/08/buffed-not-busted-the-ukusa-five-eyes-after-snowden/> > (accessed: March 2015); R.J. Aldrich, *The Hidden Hand: Britain, America and Cold War Secret Intelligence* (London: John Murray, 2001).

Related liaison “teething-problems” were not too far behind, however, with “[p]erhaps the most (in)famous British ILO [being] Harold ‘Kim’ Philby, who was posted to Washington in October 1949 and was later exposed as one of the ‘Cambridge Five’ Soviet spies.”³⁴ Such episodes of betrayal, including several involving North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) liaison, pointed to there being risks relating to intelligence liaison blowback.³⁵

Risk management techniques were apparent within liaison domains. Indeed, contained within the appendices of the – now declassified – documents relating to UKUSA in particular (and highlighted here as an example), officials had already written into the agreements damage-limitation procedures to act as safeguards to prevent, or at least mitigate, instances of intelligence compromise. The documents noted: “In addition to the ... regularly assigned [liaison] personnel, visits by selected personnel for short periods of time to deal with special problems will be encouraged.”³⁶

Despite the occasional shocks to the system, the increased intelligence-sharing process generally continued on both bilateral and multilateral bases. Intelligence liaison was expanded to include high-level strategic exchanges, often for important political reasons. The need for extensive liaison was “further enhanced by the advent of nuclear weapons and the need for joint early warning systems to defend against potentially catastrophic nuclear strikes subject to the deterrence threat of mutually assured destruction (MAD).”³⁷ Sharing responsibilities and geographic specialization provided broader incentives for maintaining intelligence liaison initiatives.³⁸

Wrecked by the high financial and material costs of the two world wars, the UK began a retreat from empire, termed the “End of Empire.” Gradually, “*Pax Britannica* painfully waned and fitfully passed on the mantle to *Pax Americana* during the Cold War and beyond,” especially after the Suez Crisis of 1956.³⁹ But, resisting decline, the UK simultaneously “continued its intelligence liaison links with many of its former colonies and the Commonwealth countries....”,⁴⁰ notably Canada, Australia, New Zealand and several in Africa.

³⁴ Svendsen, *The Professionalization of Intelligence Cooperation*, p.19.; see also C.R. Moran, *Classified: Secrecy and the State in Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); R.J. Aldrich, “The Secret State,” ch.19 in P. Addison and H. Jones (eds), *A Companion to Contemporary Britain 1939-2000* (London: The Historical Association/Blackwell Publishing, 2005).

³⁵ Svendsen, *Understanding the Globalization of Intelligence*, p.235, col.2.

³⁶ ‘Liaison Personnel’ in “Appendix I - Sheet 1: Liaison and Methods of Exchange,” 1 June 1951, p.85, para.5, *HW/80/9* - *UK National Archives* (declassified June 2010).

³⁷ Svendsen, *The Professionalization of Intelligence Cooperation*, p.19; J.L. Gaddis, *The Cold War* (London: Penguin, 2005), p.326; H. Dylan, *Defence Intelligence and the Cold War: Britain's Joint Intelligence Bureau 1945-1964* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); M.S. Goodman, *The Official History of the Joint Intelligence Committee: Volume I: From the Approach of the Second World War to the Suez Crisis* (London: Routledge Government Official History Series, 2014) and his *Spying on The Nuclear Bear: Anglo-American Intelligence and the Soviet Bomb* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007); L. Scott, *Macmillan, Kennedy & the Cuban Missile Crisis: Political, Military and Intelligence Aspects* (Basingstoke: Palgrave/Macmillan, 1999).

³⁸ M.M. Aid and C. Wiebes (eds), *Secrets of Signals Intelligence During the Cold War and Beyond* (London: Routledge, 2001); R.J. Aldrich, “British intelligence and the Anglo-American ‘Special Relationship’ during the Cold War,” *Review of International Studies*, 24, 3 (1998); L.C. Jenssen and O. Riste (ed.), *Intelligence in the Cold War: Organisation, Role and International Cooperation* (Oslo: Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, 2001).

³⁹ W. Scott Lucas, *Divided We Stand: Britain, the US and the Suez Crisis* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1995).

⁴⁰ Svendsen, *The Professionalization of Intelligence Cooperation*, pp.39-40; see also C. Walton, *Empire of Secrets: British Intelligence, the Cold War and the Twilight of Empire* (London: HarperPress, 2013); R. Cormac, *Confronting the Colonies: British Intelligence and Counterinsurgency* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); R.J. Aldrich, “The UK-US Intelligence Alliance in 1975: Economies, Evaluations and Explanations,” *Intelligence and National Security*, 21, 4

Throughout the Twentieth Century and into the Twenty-First, UK-US intelligence liaison remained central, albeit at times played out hidden from public view in the shadows of secrecy.⁴¹ This included during the 1982 Falklands War, when Western Hemisphere countries – such as the US and Chile – struck a fine balance in their interactions with the UK. For instance, adopting that path was necessitated as they provided a valuable mixture of both direct and indirect assistance in helping the UK recapture the Falkland Islands from Argentina after its armed invasion.⁴²

The UK Intelligence Corps recounted in 2010, “Since the second world war, the Corps has deployed with the British Army on all its major deployments - Palestine, Cyprus, Korea, Suez, Brunei, Indonesia, Dhofar, Northern Ireland, Falkland Islands, the Gulf, Africa and the former Yugoslavia, Sierra Leone, Iraq and Afghanistan...”,⁴³ demonstrating a substantial roll-call of deployments for the UK also requiring much intelligence input, including enhanced international liaison interactions with, amongst other partners, host countries.

Remaining highly intriguing alongside equally noteworthy episodes of its absence and/or perversion, intelligence liaison overall played a growing role in multilateral operations in modern times. Examples include NATO’s intelligence cooperation during the Cold War, in the Balkans conflicts, and in Afghanistan. Liaison was also a prime instrument in the 1990-1991 coalition war against Iraq (Desert Shield / Desert Storm), the 2003 invasion of Iraq (Operations Iraqi Freedom), and in the multi-national anti-piracy campaign in the Indian Ocean.⁴⁴

Twenty-First Century Demands

Today, we can reasonably claim that we are “substantially ‘back to the future’” when it comes to the use of intelligence liaison for both offensive and defensive purposes. With the global rise of terrorism and the attendant demands of other multi-functional operations, such as counter-insurgency (COIN) work, liaison has continued utility for the contemporary intelligence and security practitioner.^{45,46} With wide-ranging international cooperation after the 11 September

(August 2006); D. Stafford and R. Jeffreys-Jones (eds), *American-British-Canadian Intelligence Relations 1939-2000* (London: Frank Cass, 2000).

⁴¹ R.J. Aldrich, *The Hidden Hand: Britain, America and Cold War Secret Intelligence* (London: John Murray, 2001).

⁴² J. Borger, “US feared Falklands war would be ‘close-run thing,’ documents reveal,” *The Guardian* (1 April 2012); “Reagan On The Falkland/Malvinas,” *The National Security Archive* (Washington, DC: 1 April 2012); H. Alexander, “Without Chile’s help, we would have lost the Falklands”, *The Daily Telegraph* (7 July 2014); L. Freedman, *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign: War and Diplomacy: v. 2* (London: Routledge, Government Official History Series, 2007).

⁴³ “History of The Intelligence Corps,” p.4.

⁴⁴ For beginning insights, see references in and across related texts such as Svendsen, *Intelligence Cooperation and the War on Terror, Understanding the Globalization of Intelligence*, and *The Professionalization of Intelligence Cooperation*.

⁴⁵ R.J. Aldrich, “Dangerous Liaisons: Post-September 11 Intelligence Alliances,” *Harvard International Review*, 24, 3 (Fall, 2002); see also A.D.M. Svendsen, “Exemplary ‘friends and allies’? Unpacking UK-US relations in the early Twenty-First Century,” *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, 9, 4 (December 2011), pp.342-361; A.D.M. Svendsen, “*Flectas Non Frangas*’: Revisiting early Twenty-First Century UK-US defence relations (2000-05) after five years,” *Defense & Security Analysis*, 28, 3 (September 2012), pp.234-246; A.D.M. Svendsen, “The Federal Bureau of Investigation and Change: Addressing US domestic counter-terrorism intelligence,” *Intelligence and National Security*, 27, 3 (June 2012), pp.371-397.

⁴⁶ Svendsen, *The Professionalization of Intelligence Cooperation*, p.41; see also A.D.M. Svendsen, *Intelligence Cooperation and the War on Terror: Anglo-American Security Relations after 9/11* (London: Routledge/Studies in Intelligence Series, 2010); R.J. Aldrich, R. Cormac, and M.S. Goodman (eds), *Spying on the World: The Declassified Documents of the Joint Intelligence Committee, 1936-2013* (Edinburgh, Scotland: Edinburgh University Press, 2014).

2001 terror attacks in the US and during the so-called 'War on Terror' or 'Long War' (c.2001-present), liaison plays a crucial role, especially with a growing Special Forces dimension.⁴⁷

Today, many demands drive intelligence liaison activities, including such tasks as: crisis management, United Nations-sponsored peacekeeping and humanitarian operations, cyber attacks, counter-insurgency, counter-terrorism, counter-proliferation, and the countering of transnational organized crimes, and so forth. Adroitly balancing these collective challenges sits very much at the top of ever-expanding contemporary intelligence, defense (including military), security and law enforcement (including police) agendas. As termed by security analyst Glen Segell, today's complex landscape of information exchange consists of being "M4IS2: multiagency, multinational, multidisciplinary, multi-domain information sharing and sense making; and the eight entities that do M4IS2 are commerce, academia, government, civil society, media, law enforcement, military and non-government/non-profit."⁴⁸ Therein lies the broad range of contemporary intelligence liaison challenges.

Showing that they are not divorced from the wider contexts in which they are intimately embedded, the intelligence liaison trends "rode on the back of the exponentially accelerating communications, information and technology revolutions experienced during the twentieth century and beyond, including the computer, digital and Internet/cyber revolutions...", and "[i]ntimately associated with all of these related developments is the rise of the increasingly sophisticated COMSEC and INFOSEC dimension..."⁴⁹, today known as 'information assurance'. Fusion activities and their supporting structures, such as fusion centers to facilitate the different forms intelligence liaison takes, have gained in significance, as recent developments in the US – for example, relating to cyber threat intelligence sharing - can attest.⁵⁰

In recent times, "[a]longside the aforementioned significant developments has been the flourishing of "private" and "business intelligence" ... These developments also include "private intelligence" burgeoning in other areas – for instance, commercially, and with regard to

⁴⁷ For in-depth case studies, see on counter-terrorism interactions: Svendsen, *Intelligence Cooperation and the War on Terror*, esp. pp.39-100, and Svendsen, *Understanding the Globalization of Intelligence*, esp. pp.27-56; for WMD counter-proliferation interactions: Svendsen, *Intelligence Cooperation and the War on Terror*, esp. pp.101-164, and Svendsen, *Understanding the Globalization of Intelligence*, esp. pp.56-73; see also R.J. Aldrich, "Transatlantic Intelligence and Security Cooperation," *International Affairs*, 80, 4 (2004); W. Rees and R.J. Aldrich, "Contending cultures of counterterrorism: transatlantic divergence or convergence?," *International Affairs*, 81, 5 (2005); A.D.M. Svendsen, "Re-fashioning risk: Comparing UK, US and Canadian security and intelligence efforts against terrorism," *Defence Studies*, 10, 3 (September 2010), pp.307-335; A.D.M. Svendsen, "Special Issue on The CIA and US Foreign Relations Since 1947: Reforms, Reflections and Reappraisals," *Intelligence and National Security* 2-3 (April-June 2011) - Section I: "Challenges and Reform," *H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable Reviews*, III, 6 (December 2011), pp.26-43; A. Finlan, *Special Forces, Strategy and the War on Terror* (London: Routledge, 2009); A.D.M. Svendsen, "Sharpening SOF tools, their strategic use and direction: Optimising the command of special operations amid wider contemporary defence transformation and military cuts," *Defence Studies*, 14, 3 (2014), pp.284-309.

⁴⁸ G. Segell, "BOOK REVIEW: International Intelligence Cooperation and Accountability..." *Political Studies Review*, 10, 3 (September 2012), p.411; see also Svendsen, *Understanding the Globalization of Intelligence*, pp.54-55, p.93.

⁴⁹ Svendsen, *The Professionalization of Intelligence Cooperation*, p.20; Svendsen, *Understanding the Globalization of Intelligence*, esp. p.79; J. van Buuren, "Analysing international intelligence cooperation: institutions or intelligence assemblages?" ch.7 in I. Duyvesteyn, B. de Jong and J. van Reijn (eds), *The Future of Intelligence: Challenges in the 21st century* (London: Routledge, 2014); "'Cyber attack war games' to be staged by UK and US," *BBC News* (16 January 2015).

⁵⁰ See, e.g., E. Nakashima, "New agency to sniff out threats in cyberspace," *The Washington Post*, and P. Leary, "New US Cyber Hub Won't 'Collect Intelligence,'" *Defense News* (10 February 2015); T. McCarthy, "CIA to make sweeping structural changes with focus on cyber operations," *The Guardian* (6 March 2015); C. Kavanagh, "A Global Consensus on Cyber Security Is Gaining Momentum," *Defense One* (13 April 2015).

surveillance and monitoring activities. Today, digital and social media, such as Twitter and Facebook are included in the intelligence purview... phenomena such as "Collective Intelligence" (or COLINT) are increasingly harnessed by both private and public sector intelligence and military communities."⁵¹ The use of Twitter by NATO for targeting information during its campaign in Libya during 2011 stands out as a foremost example of harnessing "new" technology for intelligence liaison purposes.⁵²

The more recent (2014-2015) international campaign against Islamic State or ISIS/ISIL has again demonstrated the value of international intelligence liaison, including with a multitude of highly diverse partners with different, albeit suitably overlapping, agendas. This is particularly relevant for many intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) missions conducted primarily for the purposes of precision targeting of adversaries;⁵³ and for many other problems, including the "foreign fighters" or "returnees" issues from conflicts in the Middle East, Afghanistan, Africa, Chechnya and elsewhere.⁵⁴

Intelligence liaison blowback remains a risk, as evidenced by the revelations of Edward Snowden, which exposed intelligence cooperation between many countries and which ignited fierce political criticism in some, with associated debates remaining lively.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Svendsen, *The Professionalization of Intelligence Cooperation*, p.20; see also A.D.M. Svendsen, "Collective Intelligence" entry in G. Moore (ed.), *Encyclopedia of U.S. Intelligence* (EUSI) (New York: Taylor & Francis/CRC Press, 2014); C. Moesgaard, "Private Military and Security Companies – From Mercenaries to Intelligence Providers," *DIIS Working Paper*, 09 (Copenhagen: DIIS, 2013); K.L. Petersen, *Corporate Risk and National Security Redefined* (London: Routledge, 2012); K.L. Petersen, "The corporate security professional: A hybrid agent between corporate and national security," *Security Journal*, 26, 3 (2013), pp.222–235; P.R. Keefe, "Privatized Spying: The Emerging Intelligence Industry," chapter 18 in L.K. Johnson (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of National Security Intelligence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); A.D. Clift, "The Evolution of International Collaboration in the Global Intelligence Era," ch.13 in Johnson (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of National Security Intelligence*; T.E. Nissen, *#TheWeaponizationOfSocialMedia: @Characteristics_of_Contemporary_Conflicts* (Copenhagen, Denmark: Royal Danish Defence College - RDDC/FAK, 2015).

⁵² Svendsen, *The Professionalization of Intelligence Cooperation*, p.21; see also A.D.M. Svendsen, "NATO, Libya operations and intelligence co-operation – a step forward?," *Baltic Security & Defence Review*, 13, 2 (December 2011), pp.51-68; M. Urban, "Inside story of the UK's secret mission to beat Gaddafi," *BBC Newsnight* (19 January 2012); see also W.R. Curtis, "A "Special Relationship": Bridging the NATO Intelligence Gap," *MA Thesis* (Monterey, CA: US Naval Postgraduate School, June 2013).

⁵³ See, for example, "US-led coalition providing tactical support in Tikrit offensive against Isis," *Associated Press* (24 March 2015).

⁵⁴ See, for instance, R. Mason, "Cameron says UK and Turkey working hand in glove to stop Isis fighters," *The Guardian* (9 December 2014); R. Coolsaet, "Will the foreign fighters issue ever end?" *European Geostrategy* (19 April 2015); "Australia and Iran will share intelligence to fight IS," *BBC News* (20 April 2015); see also M. Hosenball, P. Stewart and W. Strobel, "Exclusive - U.S. expands intelligence sharing with Saudis in Yemen operation," *Reuters* (11 April 2015); D. DePetris, "What Did Saudi Arabia Achieve in Yemen?" *Defense One* (28 April 2015); A. Baron, "Everyone Is Losing Yemen's War," *Foreign Policy* (28 April 2015); S. Blank, "European geopolitical dilemmas," *European Geostrategy* (29 April 2015); "OSCE Troika urges advancement in political process aimed at solving crisis in Ukraine," *Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe - Press Release* (28 April 2015).

⁵⁵ See as discussed in Svendsen, "Buffeted not Busted: The UKUSA 'Five Eyes' after Snowden;" see also the cautions raised earlier in 2012, before Snowden's leaks from June 2013, in Svendsen, *Understanding the Globalization of Intelligence*, pp.87-89. For further background, S. Chesterman, "Privacy and Surveillance in the Age of Terror," *Survival*, 52, 5 (2010), pp.31–46, and his book, *One Nation under Surveillance* (Oxford: OUP, 2011); D. Lyon, *Surveillance Studies* (Cambridge: Polity, 2007); S. Landau, *Surveillance or Security?* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011); V. Mayer-Schönberger and K. Cukier, *Big Data: A Revolution That will Transform How We Live, Work and Think* (London: John Murray, 2013) and their "The Rise of Big Data: How It's Changing the Way We Think About the World," *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2013).

Conclusions

In regard to intelligence liaison, several common threads become apparent over the course of time. Intelligence liaison has risen in importance. This has occurred in both quantitative (the volume of its use) and in qualitative (the different forms in which it takes place) terms, with intelligence liaison also becoming more centrally involved in overall political and international affairs.⁵⁶ Intelligence liaison has experienced episodes of – what might be characterized as – disruption and frustration, from which it has been forced to (more or less) successfully adapt. These include, for example, the ‘insider betrayals’, shown especially by the case of Philby, and/or ‘intelligence liaison blowback’, demonstrated particularly by the case of Snowden.

While this article has largely focused on ‘Anglo-American’ and especially UK intelligence liaison and its long history, many others have also engaged in similar activities.⁵⁷ Intelligence liaison remains a vital tool for several different entities around the globe.

Author

Adam D.M. Svendsen, PhD (Warwick, UK) is an intelligence and defense strategist, educator and researcher, and a Consultant at the Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies (CIFS). He has been a Visiting Scholar at Georgetown University, held a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Copenhagen, taught at the University of Nottingham, and worked at Chatham House on the International Security Programme and at the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS), London. He has authored three books: *Intelligence Cooperation and the War on Terror: Anglo-American Security Relations after 9/11* (London: Routledge/Studies in Intelligence Series, 2010 [Pbk 2012]); *Understanding the Globalization of Intelligence* and *The Professionalization of Intelligence Cooperation: Fashioning Method out of Mayhem*, both (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

⁵⁶ Also see as discussed in detail throughout Svendsen, *Understanding the Globalization of Intelligence*; Svendsen, “Strategy and Disproportionality in Contemporary Conflicts,” essays in H. Born, I. Leigh and A. Wills (eds), *International Intelligence Co-operation and Accountability* (London: Routledge/Studies in Intelligence Series, 2011); J. McGruddy, “Multilateral Intelligence Collaboration and International Oversight,” *Journal of Strategic Security* (2013); J. van Buuren, “From Oversight to Undersight: the Internationalization of Intelligence,” *Security and Human Rights* (2014), pp.239–252.

⁵⁷ For a focus beyond merely Anglo-American intelligence and security worlds, see, e.g., A.D.M. Svendsen, “On ‘a continuum with expansion’? Intelligence co-operation in Europe in the early Twenty-first Century,” ch.8 in C. Kaunert and S. Leonard (eds), *European Security, Terrorism, and Intelligence: Tackling New Security Challenges in Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan/Palgrave Studies in European Union Politics Series, 2013); R.J. Aldrich and J. Kasuku, “Escaping from American intelligence: culture, ethnocentrism and the Anglosphere,” *International Affairs*, 88, 5 (September 2012), and P.H.J. Davies and K.C. Gustafson (eds), *Intelligence Elsewhere: Spies and Espionage Outside the Anglosphere* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013); Z. Shiraz, “Drugs and Dirty Wars: intelligence cooperation in the global South,” *Third World Quarterly*, 34, 10 (2013); C. Hillebrand, *Counter-Terrorism Networks in the European Union: Maintaining Democratic Legitimacy after 9/11* (Oxford: OUP, 2012); M. Tierney, “Past, Present, and Future: The Evolution of Canadian Foreign Intelligence in a Globalized World,” *Canadian Military Journal*, 15, 2 (Spring 2015), pp.44-54. For what can be learnt from fiction or “spy-fi” sources, see, e.g., A.D.M. Svendsen, “Painting rather than photography: Exploring spy fiction as a legitimate source concerning UK-US intelligence co-operation,” *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, 7, 1 (March 2009), pp.1-22; F.P. Hitz, *The Great Game: The Myth and Reality of Espionage* (New York: Knopf, 2005); C.R. Moran and R. Johnson, “Of Novels, Intelligence and Policymaking: In the Service of Empire: Imperialism and the British Spy Thriller 1901–1914,” *CIA Studies in Intelligence*, 54, 2 (June 2010), pp.1-22.