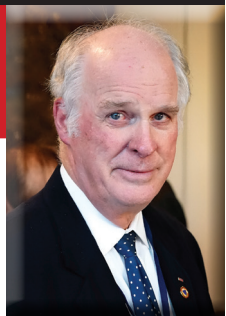




VI. PROFESSIONAL READING

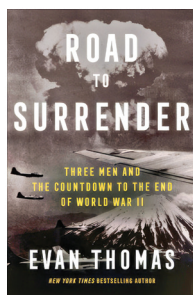
REVIEWS BY
PETER C. OLESON



Road to Surrender: Three Men and the Countdown to the End of World War II

Evan Thomas

New York: Random House, 2023. 315 pages with bibliography, notes and index.



This is an extraordinary book that details the thoughts and actions of three key men trying to end World War II with Japan – US Secretary of War Henry Stimson; General Carl Spaatz, the head of strategic bombing in the Pacific campaign; and Shigenori Togo, the Japanese foreign minister, who

was one of the six members of the Japanese Supreme War Council that controlled the Japanese war effort. All kept memoirs.

After the fall of the Tojo government (October 1941 – 18 July 1944), as a result of the loss of Saipan, a new Supreme War Council consisted of the prime minister, the army and navy ministers, the chiefs of the Imperial Army and Navy, and Togo, also foreign minister in 1941. Togo opposed the attack on Pearl Harbor and longed to end the war Japan was clearly losing. However, Togo was a minority in the hawkish war council that politically could not admit defeat, spiritually fail the emperor, and face the shame of the war's failure.

Thomas had access to the notes and personal diaries of the three, as well as others', and did extensive research as indicated by the book's detailed endnotes.

Allied intelligence was focused on the homeland targets of Japan. MAGIC and ULTRA intercepts gave insight into the plans of the Supreme War Council and of Foreign Minister Togo (which were often at odds to the Council's). COMINT also revealed the continuing disposition of Japanese ground and kamakazi forces on southern Kyushu, the intended allied invasion sites for Operation Downfall. Aerial reconnaissance over

Japan by B-29s and naval aircraft focused on targets for the strategic bombing campaign by the XXI Bomber Command under Major General Curtis Lemay. Combat reports indicated a diminished Japanese resistance to B-29 raids. High value targets were becoming scarce. By mid-summer 1945, B-29s had burned out 60 cities [50].

The Allied Combined Chiefs of Staff in February 1945 adopted a strategic plan to invade Kyushu and intensify the air and sea blockade of Japan, in anticipation of invading the Kanto Plain and Tokyo on Honshu. General MacArthur was named as the commander of Operation Downfall and tasked to develop the necessary operational plans. He urged quickly invading Kyushu by 1 November 1945.

While US Army Chief of Staff George Marshall supported an invasion of the home islands, others did not. Navy and Army Air Force leaders favored continued blockade and bombing. Marshall believed that approach would take too long. MacArthur estimated there would be only 31,000 casualties in the initial assault on Kyushu.

The author notes in the US “[b]y March 1945, war weariness is settling in, certainly among congressmen under pressure from business leaders and their lobbyists chafing at war rationing and regulatory red tape. Stimson’s immediate concern is that Americans will not be willing to make the added sacrifices necessary to finish the fight” [19]. Also, ULTRA was indicating a far greater buildup of Japanese forces in the intended invasion area. This called into question MacArthur’s intelligence estimates on casualties. American casualties had soared in late 1944-early 1945 – the Battle of the Bulge (19,246 killed and 89,101 wounded, captured or missing), Iwo Jima (26,571 killed and wounded), and Okinawa (46,622 total casualties).

Former president Herbert Hoover told Truman, who had been in the Oval Office only a few weeks, that his contacts planning Operation Downfall predicted a half a million Americans killed [55]. Hoover later told Stimson it would cost between half a million and a million men [56]. “Truman is appalled by the American casualties on the embattled island of Okinawa – fifty thousand and counting... Truman knows [from SIGINT] that the Japanese homeland will be defended by fight-to-the-end soldiers holed up in caves, kamakazi suicide planes, and, reportedly, women and children armed with pitchforks. The Battle of Japan will be, as he puts it, ‘Okinawa from one end of Japan to the other’” [55]. Even Marshall became skeptical of the invasion plans [xiv].

On 16 July 1945, with the successful Trinity test of a plutonium bomb at Alamogordo, NM, a new option became possible. On 1 August 1945 – General Spaatz told MacArthur about the A-bomb. MacArthur commented: “This changes warfare” [176].

Thomas details Stimson’s desire to end the war as soon as possible. But he is conflicted by the atomic bomb. Major General Leslie Groves, head of the Manhattan Engineering Project, wanted the XXI Bomber Command to save Kyoto, Hiroshima, and Niigata for the atomic bomb [40]. Stimson vetoed Kyoto repeatedly. In the final weeks of July and August, Thomas reports, “[t]here is no discussion at the higher levels of government about not using the bomb” [20]. Of the US leaders, he states, “[t]hey were actors caught in a dilemma as old as war but never more grotesquely distended: that to save lives it was necessary to take lives—possibly hundreds of thousands of them” [xiii]. Truman told Senator Richard Russell: “My object is to save as many American lives as possible but I also have a humane feeling for the women and children of Japan” [135].

Meanwhile in Japan, on 20 June 1945 the emperor told Foreign Minister Togo “Please terminate the war as quickly as possible.” This is recorded in Togo’s journal of the day [81]. Through MAGIC the US knew of Togo’s outreach to Moscow asking it to negotiate an end to the war via Japanese Ambassador Sato.

On 6 August, the B-29 Enola Gay dropped the first atomic bomb used in warfare on the city of Hiroshima. Called the Pikadon by survivors (flash-boom), immediate casualties were estimated at 70,000 [173]. (Radiation later killed many more. Exact numbers are disputed by different sources.)

On 8 August 1945, Togo met with emperor, after the first A-bomb, who said “We must not miss a chance to terminate the war,” according to Togo’s diary. Togo asks Prime Minister Suzuki to call an immediate Supreme War Council meeting. The military members reply that they are “unavailable.” One states he is busy with “more pressing business” [145-6]. Military members of the Supreme War Council opposed the Allies’ Potsdam declaration [109].

Thomas explains how Japanese leaders were dedicated to Kokutai – the Imperial System. Joseph Grew, who was acting Secretary of State and former ambassador to Japan, knew that “without orders from the emperor, the Japanese diehards [would] never give up” [53]. So, unconditional surrender, as called for at Potsdam and earlier conferences was anathema to Japanese war leaders. On the question of keeping the emperor, Fleet Admiral William D. Leahy, the most

senior US military person by rank and aide to the president commented that keeping the emperor was a “minor matter compared with delaying a victory in the war...” [168]. Stimson told Truman: “The United States will need the emperor ‘to save us from a score of Iwo Jimas and Okinawas all over China and the New Netherlands’...” “The emperor is ‘the only source of authority in Japan under the Japanese theory of the State.’ Only the emperor can persuade Japan’s troops—five million of them, massed in armies scattered all over Asia—to lay down their arms” [168]. The US agreed to retaining the emperor.

On 9 August the US dropped a second A-bomb on Nagasaki, and the USSR entered the war. Immediately, the Red Army invaded Manchuria. Hundreds of thousands of Japanese soldiers surrendered only to be made slave laborers. “More than 100,000 ... will disappear or die” [147]. The invasion should not have been a surprise. The Imperial Army had many tip-offs, but it did not share with others [153].

“On the morning of 9 August, after the United States dropped two atomic bombs and Russia declared war on Japan, the Supreme Council for the Direction of the War... deadlocked on whether to surrender. The vote was... three to three. The more powerful leaders, the ones who ran the army, wanted to keep on fighting. For five more days, Japan teetered on the edge of a coup d’état by the military that would have plunged Japan into chaos and extended the war for many bloody months,” the author writes.

Through MAGIC and ULTRA intercepts the US learned of War Minister General Korechika Amani’s 10 August declaration to all Japanese Army units to fight to the death. “... the distant armies of Imperial Japan – in China, Indonesia, and Southeast Asia—are vowing to fight to the death no matter what the politicians are saying in Tokyo” [191]. “...intelligence signals flashing that Japan is not giving up but digging in’ [193]. It was a bleeding strategy (Shukketsu) intended to make the US want peace [150]. Amani even proposed the idea of national suicide: “Wouldn’t it be beautiful” [158].

On 14 August Emperor Hirohito announced he would broadcast Japan’s surrender to the nation (something never done previously). Coup plotters seized the Imperial Palace, running through the halls looking for the recording the emperor made previously, to be broadcast the next day at noon, announcing Japan’s surrender...” [xii]. It was hidden in the empress’s handmaiden’s safe under books and papers and not found.

Before dawn on 15 August General Amani committed suicide, and coup plot leader Major Hatanaka

shot himself in the head. Upon the noon broadcast the cabinet resigned. Ironically, 843 B-29s were still engaged in raids over Japan as broadcast went out.

Thomas concludes “It is now clear from the memoirs and records of the men who governed Japan, as well as from the [decrypted MAGIC] communications between Foreign Minister Togo and Ambassador to Moscow Sato, that the Japanese government was nowhere close to welcoming” the terms of surrender offered in May by the US or after the Potsdam Conference on 2 August. “The Japanese military, who... actually controlled Japan... were determined to fight an all-out ‘decisive battle’ to bleed the invaders until the Americans sued for peace” [225].

In *Harper’s Magazine* of February 1947 Stimson wrote in response to second-guessing by scientists and revisionist scholars that using the A-bomb was the “least abhorrent choice” to end the war. “The Japanese had moved close to a million men and thousands and thousands of kamakazis of one kind or another... into position in anticipation of an American invasion of Kyushu. The cost was projected to be several hundred thousand Americans killed or wounded.” [223]. Estimates were that up to 250,000 Chinese, Southeast Asians, and Indonesians still under the rule of the Japanese Army were dying per month as the war continued [227].

Road to Surrender is as much a page turner as the best mystery novel. The book contains much human detail and depicts the terrible conundrum faced by the leaders on both sides of the conflict.

Neither Confirm Nor Deny: How the Glomar Mission Shielded the CIA from Transparency

M. Todd Bennett

New York: Columbia University Press, 2023. 374 pages with notes, selected bibliography and index.

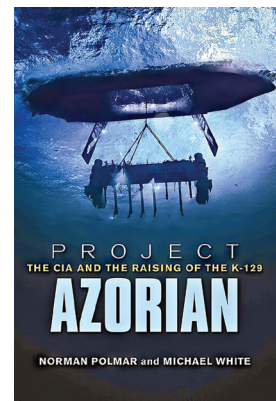
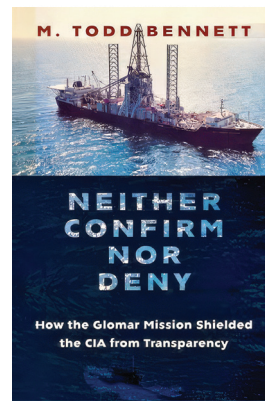
Project Azorian: The CIA and the Raising of the K-129

Norman Polmar and Michael White

Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2010. 239 pages with notes, appendixes, book list, and index.

Catching up with unread books tucked away on my bookshelf I pulled out Polmar and White’s *Project Azorian*, which, even after a half-century, is one of the truly amazing stories of a CIA project. Then I was alerted to Bennett’s new book *Neither Confirm Nor Deny*, which I found fascinating.

First Polmar and White: Polmar, a naval expert and historian, teamed with documentary filmmaker White. *Project Azorian* is a highly detailed account of the clandestine effort to raise the K-129, a Soviet



Golf-class submarine with three nuclear missiles that disappeared in international waters on March 8, 1968 northwest of Hawaii. Having lost communication the Soviet Navy commenced search and rescue operations, but eventually gave up being unsuccessful in locating the K-129. Alerted by the Soviet activity the US Navy examined its Sound Surveillance System (SOSUS) tapes to try and locate where the sub went down. The passive search was aided by the Air Force Technical Applications Center’s (AFTAC) hydrophones in the Pacific that were designed to detect undersea nuclear detonations. With a good idea of the location, the USS *Halibut* (SSN-587) submarine, equipped with underwater sensors, located the debris.

K-129 was an enticing intelligence target. It contained nuclear torpedoes; three SS-N-5, 700 nautical mile range, submarine launched ballistic missiles with 800 kiloton warheads; and codebooks and cryptographic equipment. But lying 16,500 feet underwater recovering any part of the sub was doubtful. Carl Duckett, CIA’s Deputy Director for Science and Technology, said of DCI Richard Helms “He damn near threw me out the window” when he proposed the Azorian program. “...critics assailed the plan that read like a Jules Verne novel with an Ian Fleming twist.” [Bennett, 2, 4]. However, some Navy and CIA engineers thought otherwise, and Helms eventually approved the program despite deep skepticism in the Navy and Department of Defense. The construction of a specialized ship, the *Hughes Glomar Explorer*, commenced in 1971 and was launched in 1972.

Polmar and White’s book is a detailed description of the audacious plan, the development of the *Hughes Glomar Explorer*, the engineering challenges, the security considerations, the cover story of being a deep ocean mining effort, and the attempted recovery operation. The *Glomar Explorer* attracted Soviet attention and two Soviet naval auxiliary vessels kept close watch on Glomar’s operation in the summer of 1974 for over 13 days without suspecting its real purpose.

Polmar and White include a series of appendixes that describe the various Russian and US vessels and other systems in considerable detail. The book is well illustrated.

Bennett's book, *Neither Confirm Nor Deny*, takes an entirely different tack. It is an in-depth tour de force of not only the Azorian project but of the bureaucratic, domestic, and international political environment surrounding the time of the Azorian project. 1974-75 was the time of continued Watergate investigations, the revelation of past CIA illegal domestic surveillance operations, the plans for assassination of foreign leaders, ties to the mob, the Church and Pike Committee investigations in the US Senate and House, and an environment questioning the value of CIA and even its existence in a democratic society. The Hughes *Glomar Explorer* was tied to reclusive and controversial Howard Hughes, owner of Summa Corporation that "owned" the ship, and who was cited as the source of dark money passed to Bebe Rebozo, an intimate of President Nixon, that was used for suspected nefarious political operations. Rebozo and Hughes were subjects of in-depth investigations by law enforcement and the press.

Azorian was a Top Secret special access program within the Jennifer compartmentation system. Bennett details the problems CIA faced with a program involving thousands of people across many companies with a cover story that itself invited inquiries due to the novel and daring fiction of deep-sea mining. While Hughes had a history with CIA, agency security did not trust Robert Maheu, one of Hughes's top aides and maneuvered around Maheu, causing a nasty rift between top executives that resulted in court cases – and security problems. A burglary of one of Hughes's Los Angeles offices, one month before the *Glomar Explorer* was to sail, led to an investigation that itself threatened the cover story and security of the program. Leaks proliferated the longer the program continued. Chuck Colson of Watergate infamy tried to use Azorian as a defense when charged with conducting dirty tricks for Nixon's 1972 reelection campaign.

White House-CIA relations at this time were poor. Nixon tried to use the CIA to cover-up the Watergate break-in, but Richard Helms (DCI 1966-73) refused to cooperate angering Nixon. (Nixon replaced Helms in 1973 with William Colby.) The Senate Watergate Hearings (June 1972-August 1974) played in the background, which focused attention on many of CIA's activities. These occurred while the *Glomar Explorer* was conducting its clandestine operation in the Pacific from June to September 1974.

The partial failure of the Azorian mission led to a debate within the Intelligence Community, the Navy, the NSC's 40 Committee (responsible for approving covert actions and sensitive operations), and the White House whether to try again. Project Matador was the codename for a second effort. Bennett, who as an historian in the State Department had access to many of the classified files, candidly explains the arguments pro and con for trying again. The age of K-129, the dispersal of the fallen debris as imaged by another submarine surveillance mission, the growing security problems, concerns about a possible Soviet reaction to an additional operation (a particular concern of Secretary of State and National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger, who was pursuing a policy of détente), and the added costs all argued against a second try. But the lure of codebooks and cryptographic equipment was strong and reluctance to writing off the sunk costs of approximately \$350,000,000 (despite the costs of the Vietnam War, why not a little more?) won out. (Note: \$350 million in 1972 equals approximately \$2.5 billion in 2023.)

By 1975 with the Church and Pike Committees' revelation of past CIA activities, the secret of Azorian was out. Revelation of the "Family Jewels" to the Congress leaked and the press was relentless in revealing "secrets" and scooping one another. Colby tried hard to suppress reporters' articles about Azorian, hoping for a second Matador mission, but with time and the muckraking revelations of Jack Anderson, Matador was doomed.

Azorian officially remained a classified effort for many years after its exposure. As Bennett explains it played an important role in mitigating some of the criticism of CIA – after all it was a daring and (partially) successful clandestine mission pulled off under the watchful eyes of the unsuspecting Soviets. It also led to the adoption in the FOIA environment of a strong defense against undesirable revelations when CIA would neither confirm nor deny the existence of a program or any materials related thereto. Being "Glo-mared" became a description of this legal technique.

While Bennett cites Polmar and White, he also praises David Sharp's *The CIA's Greatest Covert Operation: Inside the Daring Mission to Recover a Nuclear-Armed Soviet Sub*, Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2012.

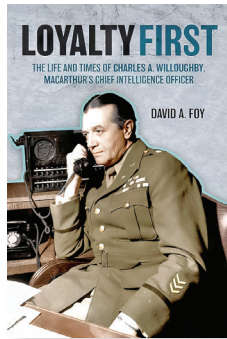
Even after a half-century the tale of Azorian, the Hughes *Glomar Explorer*, and how CIA planned and pulled off such a daring operation remains spellbinding. Both books are worth reading. *Neither Confirm Nor Deny: How the Glomar Mission Shielded the CIA from Transparency* contains new material and explains the

intricacies and difficulties of undertaking such a clandestine program and obtaining the approval and funding necessary.

Loyalty First: The Life and Times of Charles A. Willoughby, MacArthur's Chief Intelligence Officer

David A. Foy

Philadelphia: Casemate, 2023. 278 pages with appendixes, end notes, bibliography, and index.



Loyalty First is a fascinating but disturbing book. Major General Charles A. Willoughby was General Douglas MacArthur's intelligence chief throughout World War II in the Pacific, during the occupation of Japan, and during the Korea War.

MacArthur was head of the Philippine Army before World War II and then named commander of the Southwest Pacific Command after being evacuated from Corregidor in early 1942. He enjoyed a reputation in the Philippines only slightly lower than that of a god" [15]. A supreme egotist, MacArthur "wanted no dissenting voices, no alternative analyses – as far as he was concerned, the business of intelligence was to mesh analysis with what the commander had already decided to do..." [8]. Furthermore, he "was 'constitutionally incapable' of working jointly with almost everybody," according to journalist Douglas Waller, "and... he 'demanded total control of every outfit in his theater'" [20]. He twice unsuccessfully sought the presidential nomination in 1944 and 1948 while in uniform.

Willoughby was born in Heidelberg, Germany in 1892 and immigrated to the US in 1910 joining the Army reserve. Foy details the controversy regarding his heritage and birth name. He served with the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I as Adolph Charles Weidenbach. He was fluent in English, Spanish, French, German, and later Japanese. His comrades noted Willoughby's "authoritarian, arrogant, Prussian nature" and that he was "moody [and] prone to bouts of rage" [1, 162, FN 12, p. 232].

Willoughby had no intelligence background but was a "[k]ey figure in MacArthur's inner circle" [7]. He was described by historian and journalist David Halberstam as "the amplifier of the MacArthur myth." MacArthur named him his G-2 not having another trusted intimate available.

Most historians of MacArthur's campaigns in the Pacific... rate Willoughby very harshly. But he was instrumental in setting up the wide-ranging and complex allied intelligence structure in the southwest Pacific when little existed at the start of the war. Willoughby combined existing individual entities and created the Allied Intelligence Bureau (AIB), an undercover irregular warfare and sabotage activity, known as "MacArthur's OSS"; the Allied Geographical Section; an Order of Battle section; the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section (ATIS); and the US-Australian-British Central Bureau, a SIGINT organization focused on supporting MacArthur [21-4]. Willoughby exercised an iron hand over these organizations.

Willoughby "placed little stock" in COMINT. He limited distribution of SIGINT, much of which was received from Navy cryptologic units, to a select few, excluding the USAAF chief in theater, Major General George Kenney, who later nonetheless used Ultra intelligence to great effect against Japanese convoys and airfields [169].

In analysis Willoughby's record was a "mixed bag." While Willoughby had access to Magic and Ultra COMINT, he "frequently colored his analyses with unsupported opinions, contradictions, and idle speculations" [16]. His estimates in the Southwest Pacific campaign were "often inaccurate and invariably over-optimistic" as Willoughby had a tendency to "mirror image" and conclude the Japanese would do what he would do [151-81]. His inaccurate estimates about Japanese defenders on Biak Island was "partially responsible for heavy American casualties..." [43]. Willoughby's OB estimates during the Luzon campaign were "hopelessly incorrect" [39]. He flip-flopped often.

After the capture of Okinawa his estimates of the number of Japanese defenders on the southern homeland island of Kyushu were far off the mark. "Once the communications intelligence... concerning the [Japanese] defenders was decrypted and analyzed, it became clear that there were some 14 divisions on Kyushu, nearly twice the original estimate..." The number of defenders rose ultimately to a "staggering 600,000." Post-war analysis of Japanese documents showed that there were actually 900,000 defenders, supported by and estimated 6,000 to 7,000 aircraft, many of which were kamakazis [45-6]. CIA historian "Doug MacEachin noted, 'MacArthur's practice was to not allow intelligence to interfere with his aims'" and Willoughby complied [46].

Foy writes that during the occupation of Japan Willoughby "took seriously the mission of intimidating reporters hostile to MacArthur or otherwise

deemed 'subversive' and continued to hammer the theme that all criticisms of the American occupation of post-war Japan were unfounded" [64-5].

According to historian Bruce Reidel, 1950 was a "catastrophic intelligence failure" that cost the lives of thousands of Americans [163]. Foy devotes Chapter 8, "A Mishandling of Intelligence" to the failings of intelligence regarding Korea.

In Korea, Willoughby was the worst imaginable intelligence chief – arrogant and prejudiced – who would ignore solid evidence that did not adhere to his preconceived beliefs. MacArthur and Willoughby largely stayed in Tokyo, not in Korea, when commanding UN and US troops in Korea.

Prior to Kim Il-sung's June 1950 invasion the author details the poor relations between MacArthur's Far East Command (FECOM) and the new CIA, which MacArthur (and Willoughby) viewed as competition [59]. "The bitter petty bureaucratic infighting between Willoughby and the CIA only served to hamper the effectiveness of US intelligence efforts in the Far East" [Foy, citing the editors of a government study on clandestine warfare in Asia, 78]. US Army field commanders occupying South Korea were taken by surprise by the initial North Korean attack due to a lack of explicit warning from FECOM G-2.

After the Inchon landings when US and UN forces were pushing far north of the 38th parallel, the issue of possible Chinese intervention came to the forefront. CIA was more convinced that the Chinese could intervene. But "neither Willoughby nor MacArthur had any use for CIA analysis" [131]. Foy notes that FECOM (in Tokyo) only belatedly received often inaccurate intelligence from its field units in Korea, which resulted in MacArthur "making decisions based on faulty intelligence" [100]. And, as during World War II, SIGINT was not viewed by Willoughby as an important source of intelligence. Foy writes that in "mid- to late-November [1950] signals intelligence – information that both MacArthur and Willoughby were cleared for and presumably would have seen—provided a key indicator of imminent Chinese military actions. A series of PRC civil communications revealed an order for 30,000 maps of Korea to be sent from Shanghai to Chinese forces in Manchuria. Army intelligence analysts calculated that that many maps would supply 30 divisions—just the number that would attack American and UN forces in a matter of days" [135].

FECOM's dissemination of intelligence was poor. Foy details how FECOM G-2's intelligence adversely impacted field units, whose reality did not match intelligence judgments they received. Willoughby's

estimates of Chinese order of battle were consistently "grossly in error," according to Korean War historian Lieutenant Colonel Roy Appleman, consistently underestimating the size of the Chinese intervention [136].

Willoughby had a "tendency, proven repeatedly over time, to minimize his flaws, especially with regard to intelligence analysis" [9]. Foy citing journalist David Halberstam noted "Willoughby [had] the best hindsight of any intelligence officer in the army" [16]. The Foreign Denial and Deception Committee noted that "by 1950, Willoughby had been MacArthur's G-2 for eight years and during that period 'had perfected a gift for interpreting intelligence information in ways that made his boss look infallible'" [166].

Willoughby retired in 1951, several months after MacArthur was replaced by President Truman. In his retirement years he associated with extreme right-wing causes, conspiracy theories, and organizations, including the John Birch Society and giving "testimony" to various "Un-American Activities" committees. Ironically he offered his services to CIA several times, but was politely brushed aside by the Agency's directors.

Loyalty First is a very detailed examination of intelligence judgments during World War II and Korea. The author details the history of the Koreas up to and following World War II. He also provides a detailed history of the PRC's, Soviets' and US's analyses, deliberations and decisions regarding the Republic of Korea.

The book is dense reading and some errors have crept in that are startling. For example, Lieutenant General Robert Eichelberger was a US Army officer, not a Marine Corps general. (This was a repeated error.) There are too many redundancies in this reviewer's opinion. Chapter 8, "A Mishandling of Intelligence," for instance, is overkill repeating in almost unending detail the mistakes Willoughby made.

Nonetheless, *Loyalty First* is an important book about two flawed senior leaders. It highlights the problem of politicization of intelligence by egotistic leaders and provides a useful analysis of the times of World War II and Korea.

Anti-American Terrorism: from Eisenhower to Trump – A Chronicle of the Threat and Response, (Four volumes)

Dennis A. Pluchinsky

London: World Scientific Publishing Europe, Ltd.

This is a massive effort in four volumes tracking anti-American terrorism of all varieties since the Eisen-

hower administration. The first two volumes have been published; two more are in process. They are:

Volume I – The Eisenhower through Carter Administrations, 2020 (617 pages);

Volume II – The Reagan and George H. W. Bush Administrations, 2020 (630 pages);

Volume III – The Clinton and George W. Bush Administrations (forthcoming); and

Volume IV – The Obama and Trump Administrations (forthcoming).

The author, Dennis Pluchinsky, is a retired Department of State intelligence analyst in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security's Threat Analysis Group, who, since 1977, has focused on the issues of terrorism, both international and domestic. He was regarded by many top government officials as the “go to man” to understand the nature, aims, capabilities, and intentions of various terror organizations. Others' reviews of his first two volumes are laudatory, including from Brian Jenkins, RAND Corporation expert; Bruce Hoffman of Georgetown University; and Charlie Allen, former Assistant DCI for Collection and Under Secretary of Homeland Security.

In his foreword Hoffman notes that Americans are the most frequent targets of international terrorists. “The reasons for this... are not hard to discern. As the leader of the free world and a global superpower, the US was often blamed for the inequities, injustices, and economic and political stasis afflicting many other places” [ix]. Terrorism has evolved from airplane hijacking to embassy attacks to assassinations and kidnappings to bombings of gathering places. As each target's security was enhanced, terrorists moved to easier targets. Pluchinsky writes: “No other country in the world has been subjected to the level, lethality, diversity, and geographic scope of international terrorist activity than the United States” [xxxvi]. “Mostly... anti-American terrorism [has been] the by-product of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict {since 1948}, the Cold War, and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism” [xxxviii]. “The US [is] targeted for its political, economic, and cultural composition, its superpower status, its frequent military deployments overseas, and its foreign policies,” adds Pluchinsky [lxxiv].

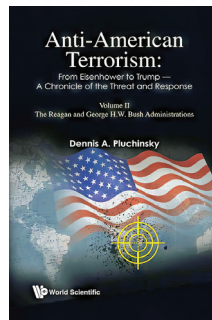
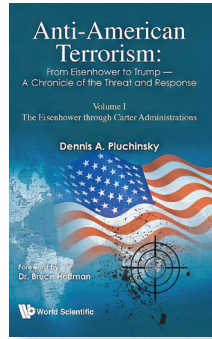
In each volume for each administration, the author begins with an overview of the various situations facing the government, detailing the overseas

threats and the internal threats, and how the government responded in terms of policies, legislation and actions. He addresses every known foreign terrorist group, including small, obscure ones, and state-sponsored terrorists (e.g., Libya's Qaddafi and Khomeini's Iran.) Some are ethnonational groups seeking independence (e.g., the PKK in Turkey, the IRA in Ireland, ETA in Spain, the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, and the Quebec Liberation Front.) “The US at home was confronted internally by predominantly domestic left-wing, single-issue (anti-abortion, animal rights, the environment), and right-wing terrorism” [xl].

Brian Jenkins famously observed that terrorism is theater, which is seeking to influence its audience [Brian Jenkins, “International Terrorism, A New Mode of Conflict,” RAND, 1975]. Pluchinsky would agree.

The author posits that the seeds for later terrorism were sown in the late 1940s and 1950s. These included the establishment of the state of Israel and the initial Arab-Israeli war; the US-UK 1953 coup in Iran; the 1954 US covert action and coup in Guatemala; the growing US involvement in Vietnam; and the 1958 Cuban revolution. In Volume II he states that “[i]n the 1980s, the US faced the most diverse, widespread, lethal, tactically complex overseas terrorist threats in US history” [xxxix]. During the Reagan administration the US faced 43 left-wing terrorist groups in Europe, Latin America, the Philippines, and Japan; six secular Palestinian terrorist groups in the Middle East; three to four terrorist groups in Lebanon, Kuwait, Western Europe, and Egypt; and five major state sponsors of terrorism – Iran, Libya, Syria, Cuba, and Iraq. Major incidents included the bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut, the bombings of Pan Am 103 over Scotland and UTA flight 772 over Niger.

Pluchinsky is not reticent about critiquing US anti-terrorism policies. For instance, he notes that the “high volume” concerning Qaddafi during the Reagan administration “embellished his importance.” And the NSC's operational involvement in counterterrorism operations fostered Oliver North's “unchecked orchestration” activities that eventually ended with the Iran-Contra scandal [xlii]. He notes how different presidents approached the challenges of terrorism differently. George H. W. Bush, for example, relied



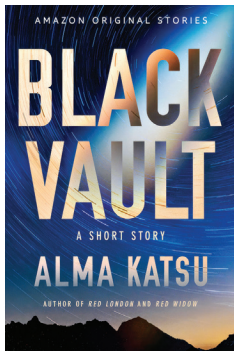
more on international counterterrorism efforts and legal actions that his predecessor.

Pluchinsky's stated goal is to create a "standard reference for future scholars, intelligence analysts, and policymakers on anti-American terrorism at home and abroad" [xvii]. His exploitation of sources is impressive. These are volumes for scholars – dense, full of detail, statistics, and insights. Volumes I and II suggest he is fulfilling his goal.

Black Vault

Alma Katsu

Seattle: Amazon Original Stories, 2023. 81 pages.



Black Vault is fiction – a short story by a former intelligence analyst who is the author of several books, novellas, psychological thrillers, and science fiction. Best known for *The Hunger*, a historical fiction about the American West, she also wrote *Red Widow*, a spy thriller about conflict within the DO's Russia Division.

Her latest is about a CIA operations officer who observes and reports about an unidentified flying object in remote Mongolia. Needless-to-say he is not believed by many and upsets his managerial hierarchy. The story follows the subsequent psychological travails of the officer.

There are lots of interesting elements to Katsu's story, including the struggle between what one observes and subsequent credibility and the power of public disclosure. Her story also provides an interesting examination of the politics within a CIA station and between headquarters divisions. Throw in the penetration of CIA, à la Larry Wu Tai Chin, and Katsu has written an intriguing short story that is hard to put down once one starts it.

Black Vault is available from Amazon in a print or Kindle version or as an audiobook.

The Vienna Trilogy

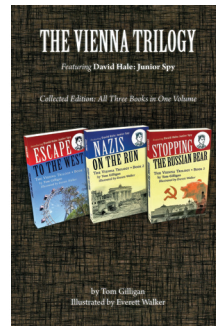
Tom Gilligan

Cape Cod: The Intelligence e-Publishing Company, 2023. 388 pages.

A novel for young readers.

Tom Gilligan's 27 years' experience in the Clansdestine Service helped inspire a fun, thrilling, and educational series of adventures for young readers. The Vienna Trilogy is set in the summer of 1947 in post-war Austria that has been divided between Soviet, American, British, and French zones of occupation.

The trilogy – *Escape to the West*, *Nazi's on the Run*, and *Stopping the Russian Bear* – recount in fascinating detail how 11-year old David Hale assists his father, and an American intelligence agent, known only as the "Visitor," in three gripping adventures.



With his mother and sister on summer vacation in the US, David remains with his father, a doctor involved with treating the many refugees and displaced persons, in Austria. A former US Army intelligence officer, Dr. Matt Hale, continues to assist American intelligence due to his ability as a doctor to cross over the various occupation zones, especially the Russian, with minimal problems. In *Escape to the West*, David, always accompanied by Thor, his German Shepard trained as a wartime sentry dog, becomes involved with his father's efforts to help exfiltrate an important person from the Russian zone.

Nazi's on the Run, the second of the trilogy, recounts how Thor alerts David, who discovers in the castle that his family occupies outside of Vienna, hidden treasures important to Nazis trying to evade post-war investigators. A former high-ranking SS colonel wants to retrieve stolen gold and counterfeit identity papers in order to get to South America.

Stopping the Russian Bear involves recruiting an anti-Soviet Polish officer to return to Warsaw to be a spy for the Americans.

Gilligan has written a book appropriate for young readers. The characters are well drawn. The stories are well constructed and gripping. Each of the trilogies is a little more than 100 pages. The author explains the sophisticated words used and espionage terminology and concepts in footnotes, which is a clever tool for young readers to learn vocabulary and understand how HUMINT works. Gilligan also clearly explains the geo-political situation of 1947 in Europe via conversations between David and his father. This is a good history lesson.

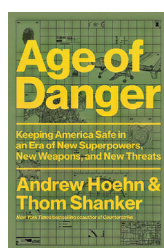
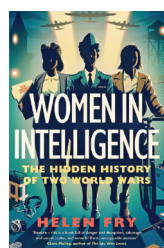
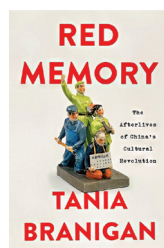
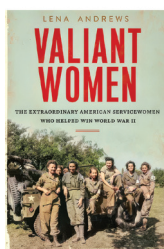
Although the book's cover indicated it is appropriate for 10- to 14-year-olds, this reviewer enjoyed the stories and think they are appropriate for a wider audience.

— Quick List — Intelligence-related Books That Have Received Praise

Peter Oleson

It has become customary for publications at the end of the year to highlight the books that they conclude were the best. This reviewer can only read a few. My reviews appear in both *The Intelligencer* and the *Weekly Intelligence Notes*. Not having done a count or analysis it nonetheless appears that there are more and more books about intelligence available. I have screened *The New York Times'* and *The Washington Post's* and the *Wall Street Journal's* lists of 2023's best books, most of which are related to fiction, but find that the list from *The Cipher Brief* is most relevant for AFIO readers. So, here is a summary of "what is the best of 2023" related to intelligence.

- Lena Andrews. *Valiant Women: The Extraordinary American Servicewomen Who Helped Win World War II*, (non-fiction) is one of several 2023 books focused on the roles and accomplishments of women. (*The Cipher Brief*).
- Gary J. Bass. *Judgment at Tokyo – World War II on Trial and the Making of Modern Asia*. The trials of Japanese wartime leaders were "more complex, drawn-out, and contentious than the Nuremberg proceedings." Bass' book documents a lot of the history of World War II in Asia. (*The Washington Post*).
- I.S. Berry. *The Peacock and the Sparrow* is a novel set during the Arab Spring that "capture[s] the 'political complexity and internal sensitivities' of Bahrain and prose so sharp readers can 'see the streets described in their mind's eye, to

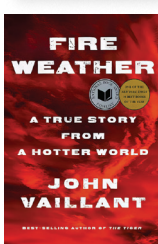
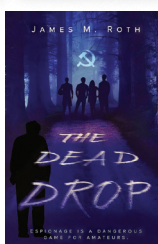
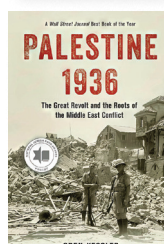
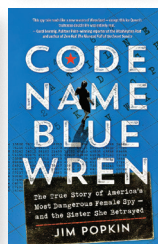
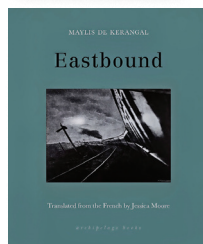
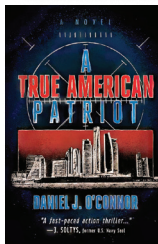
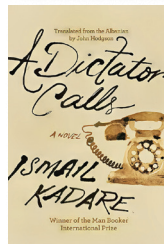
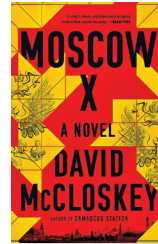
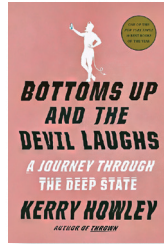
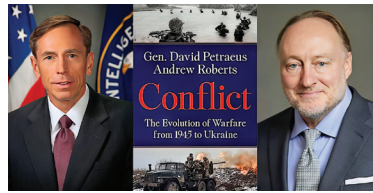


sense the atmosphere, and (even) imagine the smells." (*The Cipher Brief*).

- Tania Branigan. *Red Memory: The Afterlives of China's Cultural Revolution*. "It is impossible to understand China today without understanding the Cultural Revolution," the author, a former *Guardian* newspaper correspondent in China, writes. "Red Memory uncovers forty years of silence through the stories of individuals who lived through the madness." (*Wall Street Journal*).
- Helen Fry. *Women in Intelligence: The Hidden History of Two World Wars*. (Non-fiction.) Historian Fry examines what women undertook and accomplished in the UK and in the underground on the Continent. (*The Cipher Brief*).
- Andrew Hoehn and Thom Shanker. *Age of Danger: Keeping America Safe in an Era of New Superpowers, New Weapons, and New Threats*, (non-fiction) argues that US policy, intelligence and the military structures are inadequate in the face of today's threats. (*The Cipher Brief*).
- Kerry Howley. *Bottoms Up and the Devil Laughs*, an "account of the national security state and the people entangled in it," focusing on Reality Winner, the NSA contractor who leaked classified information to *The Intercept*, was convicted, and sentenced to 63 months in prison. (*The New York Times*).
- Ismail Kadare. *A Dictator Calls*. Written by an Albanian novelist and poet, this tale is about a phone call from Joseph Stalin to Boris Pasternak and the powerplay between politicians and writers. (*Wall Street Journal*).
- Maylis De Kerangal, *Eastbound*, a novel translated from the French, about a young Russian conscript on the Trans-Siberian railroad, who decides to desert, and meets incidentally with a French woman. (*The New York Times*).
- Oren Kessler. *Palestine 1936: The Great Revolt and the Roots of the Middle East Conflict*. Described as an "even-handed narrative of the origins of the Middle East conflict," the 1936-39 revolt by the Arabs against the British mandate, its support of Zionism in

Palestine, and in favor of independence. (*Wall Street Journal*).

- Pete Lapp. *Queen of Cuba* (non-fiction) is about Cuban spy in the Defense Intelligence Agency, Ana Belén Montes, written by one of the FBI agents involved in her discovery and arrest. (*The Cipher Brief*).
- David McCloskey. *Moscow X*, a novel described as having “a terrific plot seasoned with classic tradecraft, new methodologies and compelling characters.” (*The Cipher Brief*).
- Dan O’Connor. *A True American Patriot* is a novel about two who “confront terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and more.” (*The Cipher Brief*).
- David Petraeus and Andrew Roberts. *Conflict: The Evolution of Warfare from 1945 to Ukraine*, (non-fiction) is described as “thought provoking.” (*The Cipher Brief*).
- Jim Popkin. *Code Name Blue Wren: The True Story of America’s Most Dangerous Female Spy – and the Sister She Betrayed*, another non-fiction account of Ana Belén Montes, whose sister was an FBI employee. Her brother and sister-in-law were FBI special agents. (*The Cipher Brief*).
- James Roth. *The Dead Drop*, a novel about “a northern Virginia teenager who stumbles across a dead drop that leads to a complex tale of KGB vs CIA cold war espionage.” (*The Cipher Brief*).
- John Vaillant. *Fire Weather: A True Story from a Hotter World*. While not specifically focused on intelligence, Vaillant’s book is an assessment of the future as a result of the effects of climate change. (*The New York Times*).



- Caldor Walton. *Spies: The Epic Intelligence War Between East and West* (non-fiction) is described as a “fascinating history of cloak and dagger espionage” which “lifts the veil on the multifarious clandestine operations Russia and the West conducted against one another for over a century.” (*The Cipher Brief*).

Milton Cockburn for Australia’s Lowy Institute takes a different tack in reviewing his “espionage top ten” (but doesn’t stop at ten). Not limiting himself to 2023, he cites a recent article in *The Economist* of top spy novels influencing his picks:

- Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*.
- John Le Carré. *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* and *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*.
- Mick Herron. *Slow Horses*.
- Charles McCarry. *The Tears of Autumn*.
- Robert Littell. *The Company*.
- Len Deighton. *Berlin Game*, *Mexico Set*, and *London Match* (a trilogy).
- David Ignatius. *Agents of Influence*.
- Graham Greene. *The Human Factor*, *Our Man in Havana*, or *The Quiet American*.
- David McCloskey. *Damascus Station*.
- Paul Vidich. *An Honorable Man*.

Peter C. Oleson is senior editor of *Intelligencer* and Editor of *The Guide to the Study of Intelligence*. He is a former associate professor of intelligence studies, University of Maryland University College. He has taught about intelligence extensively on the faculties of CIA University and the National Defense Intelligence College. Prior to his time teaching, he was assistant director of DIA, involved in policy, resource, and acquisition matters. He served as senior intelligence policy advisor to Under SecDef for Policy. Was one of eight charter members of Defense Intelligence Senior Executive Service. After leaving government he worked in industry developing defense and intelligence systems.