

## Book Reviews

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## **Book Reviews**

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Edward M. Roche; John Coale; Keely M. Fahoum; Leland Erickson; Mark J. Roberts; and Millard E. Moon, Ed.D., Colonel (ret.)

## Book Reviews

***The Official C.I.A. Manual of Trickery and Deception.* By H. Keith Melton, Robert Wallace and John Mulholland. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2009. ISBN: 978-0-06-172589-0. Bibliography. Notes. Index. Pp. 250. \$24.99**

This interesting book purports to reproduce a special manual for trickery and deception written by one of the world's great magicians, John Mulholland, working under contract to the Central Intelligence Agency. This contract was part of a super-secret program code-named MKULTRA that was authorized in March 1953 by Allen Dulles, DCI. "The research included clandestine acquisition of drugs, clinical testing on and experimentation with humans, some of whom were unaware of said testing, and grant proposals and contracts with hospitals, companies, and individuals" (p. 5). Supposedly "all of the program's reports and operational files on the 'research and development of chemical, biological, and radiological materials capable of employment in clandestine operations to control human behavior' were ordered destroyed by DCI Richard Helms in 1973" (pp. 15–16). But somehow this manual on magic and deception survived, only to be discovered many years later.

The introduction to the Mulholland volume is written by Melton and Wallace. It covers the MKULTRA activities and gives many examples of its products, including a robust description of attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro with "hallucinogenic sprays and cigars," "contaminated boots," "depilatory, poisoned and exploding cigars," "exploding seashells," a "contaminated diving suit," and a "poisoned pen" (pp. 12–13).

Their lengthy introductory chapter contains a mini-history of the art of deception during the Cold War, primarily against the Soviet Union, and is complete with interesting diagrams of items such as a CIA Escape and Evasion Rectal Suppository, Gary Power's silver dollar that had a secret pen inside for committing suicide, the gas tank in a car that was half-filled with a compartment for smuggling persons, and spy coins that have secret compartments for carrying microdots, or cipher books.

It reports that Mulholland was hired in 1956 to think about "the application of the magician's techniques to clandestine operations, such techniques to include surreptitious delivery of materials, deceptive movements and actions to cover normally prohibited activities, influencing choices and perceptions of other persons, various forms of disguise; covert signaling systems, etc." (p. 15).

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The heart of the book is a reproduction of the manual written by Mulholland. It has a section with "general comments" on deception and then follows with instruction on how to drop tablets or powders into the drink of the target person. It also coaches on techniques for "removal of objects," e.g., how to take things without being noticed. There also is an interesting set of observations about women, and how they must act differently.

One of my favorite sections is the overview, which contains some great quotations such as: "successful deception depends so much on attitude of mind" (p. 69) and "it takes practice to tell a convincing lie" (p. 69). So much of the technique of deception depends on practice, and use of very common movements, combined with urgent attention to doing anything at all that anyone will take note of. "A person who seems to be interested in what it is he is doing will not be noticed, but one whose interest is directed toward what others are doing will attract attention" (p. 83). "[H]e should be so normal in manner, and his actions so natural, that nothing about him excites suspicion...[H]e has to be himself—as he is at his calmest moments...be comfortably natural or, at least, to give that appearance" (p. 85). Another gem: "When the mind has been deceived, it is almost impossible to work backward and discover the deception" (p. 88). There is no need to give away all of the secrets of the book, but some of the coverage includes how to drop a pill from a matchbook while appearing to light the target's cigarette, or dropping a pill from the side of a coin. There even is coaching on the "exaggerated expression of dumbness" (p. 103). Powders are put into pencils under the eraser, and liquids are dispensed in a variety of ways, including from a handkerchief. Instruction on how to steal an important piece of paper and within the blink of an eye have it folded six times and stuffed in a pocket without making any noise is another part of the coverage.

What is amazing about Mulholland's manual is not so much the various techniques of transporting things, such as having items hidden inside hollowed out coins, but instead the careful description he gives of the movements needed to use these various instruments. For example, there is a six-step procedure for taking something away from a table right in front of another person's eyes in a way that they will not notice it (pp. 154–155). The manual ends with a section on recognition signals including tying one's shoelaces in a unique way.

There is much more in the book than in this review, and if one is interested in the espionage training of a bygone era, this book is of great historical interest. The authors, Melton and Wallace, are experts in

espionage and, judging from some of the rare and obscure references listed in their notes, they have managed to get access to some very special materials.

The foreword by John McLaughlin, former Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, who also happens to be a magician, provides the overall rationale for the project: "Just as a magician's methods must elude detection in front of a closely attentive audience, so an intelligence officer doing espionage work must elude close surveillance and pass messages with material without detection" (p. xii).

The only criticism I have concerns HarperCollins. It chose to use dreadful paper stock for the book, which as a result looks like it is printed on grade school drawing paper. I would not expect a long shelf life. Nevertheless, in spite of this minor problem, this book is well worth purchasing and reading by anyone interested in this arcane corner of the espionage world.

*Edward M. Roche, Henley-Putnam University*

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***The Counterterrorist Manual: A Practical Guide to Elite International Units.* Leroy Thompson. London, UK: Frontline Books, 2009. ISBN: 978-1-84832-514-2. Photographs. Glossary. Index. 256 pp. £19.99.**

Leroy Thompson's latest book summarizes his previous works (over 30 books and 1,000 articles) in a handy reference guide to worldwide Counterterrorist (CT) forces. This basic textbook provides a history of CT units around the world plus their methods for recruiting, selecting, and training operators and their organization, weapons, missions, and tactics.

The author has been called knowledgeable and respected, and is a noted expert on the subject of counterterrorism, hostage rescue, and VIP protection. His previous books cover combat knives, SWAT, bodyguard protection, specific historical US and UK commando units, counterinsurgency, WWII and Cold War elite force histories, guns, uniforms, badges, and insignias.

This book summarizes his previous books that go into more details about specific units, weapons, and tactics. It collates information, giving a good overview of the subject, and adds to the field by serving as a broad, single-volume summary reference guide to international elite forces. The main argument throughout the book points towards the continuing need for elite forces to combat terrorist activities even in the smallest countries.

The special attraction of this book is its summary of information in one volume, but it lacks details of each area. Although the book covers many topics, it suffers from a lack of depth and detail that would make it a truly comprehensive, analytical compendium of CT units. It spends too many pages on vehicle delivery but only briefly mentions dignitary protection, air marshals, and WMD. Since these areas are outside the direct subject of this book and little information is included, these sections could have been deleted, or reference to the author's previous works could have been provided for more details. The author only references two of his previous books in the suggested reading list.

This book would be of use to beginners in the CT field, for instructional use, and for general orientation to international CT units, but only a reference guide for those seriously interested in the intelligence and CT profession. As such, it will supply the basic needs of those interested in this subject and act as a good reference guide for professional office use, but readers should look to other sources for the details required for professional CT analysis. Intelligence, CT, CI, HLS and protection professionals should consult some of the author's previous writings and books for such

details, even such details as may be found on Wikipedia. By looking up an organization (e.g., GSG-9) or specific equipment (e.g., H&K MP5) on Wikipedia, you'll find details of history, use, and specifications—much more than in this reference book.

The first half of the book describes the history of worldwide CT organizations and their methods for recruiting, selecting, and training operators. The second half of the book is devoted to weapons, equipment, missions, and tactics. It includes a glossary of abbreviations and an index, both useful in reference material.

Chapter 1 outlines the terrorist incidents from the 1972 Munich Olympics terrorist attack through the 1990s. It shows the history of why CT units were created by almost every country in the world to protect citizens from terrorist attacks in the future. Just like any game of cat and mouse, terrorists are always trying new ideas to thwart CT training and preparation. The 9/11 attacks on the US were evidence of new and unanticipated attacks to defeat the potential for CT forces to intercede and prevent the completion of their missions.

Chapter 2 reveals the selection process in general and for a few specific units. It describes the basics of finding, testing, and picking the "best of the best" from existing military, paramilitary, and police forces. The outcome is selecting the most physically fit and highly motivated applicants for the next phase—training.

Chapter 3 details the training regimen for a few specific units, describing the CT operational phases, small unit tactics, modes of delivery (air, sea, and land), and techniques for operations (surveillance, negotiation, intelligence collection), as well as the needed skills for successful operations (communications, weapons expertise, combat techniques).

Chapter 4, the shortest chapter, briefly describes the basic organization of CT units with some specifics on a half dozen or so of the most well known. Although interesting, military organization doesn't seem as important or detailed as other chapters.

Chapter 5 reviews the most frequently used types of weapons, primarily guns, as well as surveillance and entry equipment and delivery vehicles. It does not cover knives and other weapons, but does include almost five pages on optical sights and twelve pages on vehicles.

The last chapter, Chapter 6, covers specific cases (hostage rescue, entry into buildings, aircraft, trains, buses, and ships, dignitary protection,

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training exchanges), but has only a page dealing with Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). It would have been more useful to spend a few pages discussing the importance of elite forces in dealing with WMDs.

Overall, this book is a good historical reference work but only as an overview of CT forces. It is well illustrated, describing the tools, techniques, and procedures of global elite forces—not just the US—and is a very helpful single reference volume for CT units. As a comprehensive reference work on the subject, it is worth having it within easy reach on your bookshelf.

*John Coale, Henley-Putnam University*



***An End to Al-Qaeda: Destroying Bin Laden's Jihad and Restoring America's Honor.* By Malcolm Nance. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2010. ISBN: 978-0-312-59249-3. Notes. Index. 296 pages. \$25.99 Hardcover.**

*An End to Al-Qaeda* presents a thought-provoking discussion about Al-Qaeda (AQ), its leadership, intentions, and attempts to recruit members in the ideological battlefield. It makes recommendations about engaging AQ and its information operations in order to decrease its support and undermine the group's efforts to dominate the debate about the evolution and trajectory of Islam. The book draws on the author's expertise as a counterterrorism (CT) officer and Arabic linguist, and his experience studying AQ in the field, including in combat. Malcolm Nance uses his twenty-eight years of experience in the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia to craft recommendations and guidance for engaging and defeating AQ in the psychological and ideological battle space.

Nance's book presents AQ as an organization seeking to take advantage of the decline of American stature in the arena of world politics, which provides fodder for the group's information operations. According to Nance, AQ and its leader, Usama bin Laden, have the advantage in the ideological battle field, and it is up to America to change that. The book provides a healthy critique of the Bush Administration's efforts to fight the "War on Terror" and proposes steps to counter AQ's "cultish fringe" (p. 55) ideologies and win back the psychological and moral advantage. Nance's book comes at a pivotal point in the development and growth of the field of CT. He argues, quite compellingly, that there is a distinct spectrum within Islam, and perceiving Islam as the enemy does more to fuel ibn Laden's psychological warfare campaign than defeat it. This book offers a refreshing argument that Islam is not the enemy and that the efforts of some elements of the media to demonize it are compromising the attempts of US counterterrorism strategists to reshape and reconstruct America's CT narrative. Although some of Nance's ideas and observations are not new to the Intelligence and CT communities, he does offer a viewpoint supported by decades of service in the field and a working knowledge of the Arabic language, culture, and people.

Nance constructs the main argument for his book by first identifying the problem of turning the tables on AQ in the ideological battle, then defines and discusses the complexity of his thesis in context to the evolution of Islam in a post 9/11 world. Finally, he provides strategies to resolve the issues by proposing methods of fighting in the psychological theatre of war. He offers real-world examples from his experience in the field which help to add to his credibility as an author. *An End to Al-Qaeda* is a fast-

moving, appealing read for those analysts and operators either new to the field of CT or who have been in the field for less than a decade. Nance is right to delineate AQ as unqualified to offer religious guidance and advice, and he offers specific ideas and recommendations to fight the war of ideas. The book grows in its sophistication as the chapters progress and helps the reader to delve below surface arguments of the tired phrase, "winning hearts and minds." Nance invigorates the debate within the CT analytical community as to how much attention and effort should be paid to the use of language and framing. Nance's book will be useful for those CT analysts and operators working in the beginning to intermediate level analysis of AQ because it does not necessarily provide any new academic insights per se, but leads an important and relevant discussion into the inner workings of AQ's psychological operations and the ideological underpinnings of the members' arguments which influence recruitment and sustainment efforts. The book does, however, help to correct the trajectory of some CT analysis which has gotten mired in the emotional and subjective judgments of AQ and which does not help strategists tease out the key problems which must be addressed in order to move forward.

The book does fall short in defining the "Muslim world" as diverse, both in commitment to faith, worship, practice, tradition, and geographic diversity, and how an ideological battle would tackle this diversity challenge. Nance argues the US must break AQ's links to Islam using several strategies. For example, he recommends starting a "social epidemic of rejection" by "revealing and hammering into the public consciousness the ideological plan of the New Islamic Caliphate" (p. 227). However, there is no monolithic Muslim population with which to implement this ideological plan. Muslims live in every corner of the world and have different life experiences and relationships to their religion. From the secular Muslim Turk to the Arab-American Shi'a beauty queen, Muslims vary in their commitment and level of belief, just as members of any organized religion. It is practically impossible to institute a widespread public relations campaign against a state-less organization and network such as AQ without addressing those public grievances that bind the scattered and diverse Muslim population around the world together (in most cases), such as Palestine, human rights, and the freedom for oppositional participation in the political process. If Nance would supplement his argument with the prerequisite foreign policy requirements prior to entering the ideological battle space, his book would be rooted in a much stronger foundation and his recommendations for separating AQ from the larger Muslim population of the world would have more merit. In many parts of the world vulnerable to AQ's messaging, actions speak louder than words. If a massive

information operation is to take place to challenge AQ in the field of information warfare, the major foreign policy issues of concern must be kinetically addressed and not just verbally bantered about.

From a geopolitical perspective, Nance's book avoids discussing the non-ideological opportunities to address America's standing in the world, which is fundamental prior to beginning any ideological campaign efforts. He does not bring forth the necessary and sufficient conditions which must be changed before the target audience for ideological battle would even be ready or open to receive a reformed narrative. These are the issues of good governance; equal and fair political participation for opposition parties in the Arab world (as well as the non-Arab Islamic Republic of Iran); economic growth and opportunity for minorities of Arab descent in Israel; the creation of an independent, sovereign, and contiguous Palestinian state; and human rights in countries such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Iran. Part and parcel of fighting the ideological battle in the Arab and non-Arab Middle East is having a receptive and willing audience; but the perception of the US in many parts of the Arab and non-Arab world has been severely damaged over the last decade. Europe and Asia are increasingly unhappy with US foreign policy and inflexibility on issues such as Gaza, the separation barrier along the West Bank, freedom of speech in Egypt, and women's rights in Saudi Arabia. Nance has excellent ideas for the CT and Intelligence communities on attacking the ideological conflict, but offers few recommendations for readying the field for battle.

*An End to Al-Qaeda* is a good read for those analysts in the CT community still developing their understanding of information operations and understanding the role of religion in the battle between AQ and the rest of the world's Muslims, but the reader must also be aware of the larger ties that bind both Muslims and non-Muslims alike, such as a desire for good governance, a sovereign and contiguous Palestinian state, and free and fair elections throughout the larger Middle East and South Asia. Overall, the book is worth buying; Nance captivates the reader with his experience and personal connection to the Arab world and constructs an interesting strategy for engaging AQ in the ideological battlefield. It would do the reader well, however, to understand the foreign policy prerequisites which must be in place before employing information operations to amplify efforts to restructure the anti-AQ narrative.

*Keely M. Fahoum, Henley-Putnam University*

***God's Terrorists: The Wahhabi Cult and the Hidden Roots of Modern Jihad.* By Charles Allen. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, A Member of the Perseus Books Group, 2006. ISBN-13: 978-0-306-81522-5. Maps. Photographs. Glossary. Notes. Sources cited. Index. Pp xiv, 349. \$16.15.**

"Know your enemy as you know yourself and in a hundred battles you will not be defeated!" That admonition written over two thousand years ago by Sun Tzu is as timeless a truth as can be found amongst the body of work left by all of history's great thinkers on strategy, operations, and tactics. So it holds true with the matter of combating modern 21st century terrorism, and especially so with understanding the motivations of the partisans of Al Qaeda and their fellow jihadists willing to commit the most heinous acts ostensibly in the name of Islam. Historian Charles Allen has provided an in-depth and scholarly look into the very roots of the ideology that drives the modern day jihadists of Al Qaeda and their fellow extremists with this superb and accurately titled book.

Tracing the founding of the Wahhabi cult to a Sunni Muslim named Muhammad Abd al-Wahhab, who in the 1740s authored his *Book of Unity* in which al-Wahhab rejected any innovation, interpreted the Quran in a literalist way while tacitly ignoring a host of Quranic passages that forbade harming the innocent, and committed those who would follow his heretical teachings to the violent destruction of infidels, polytheists, and unbelievers. Al-Wahhab included in his definition of those targeted for destruction Christians, Jews, Shias, Sufis, and even mainstream Sunnis who did not adopt his radical interpretation of the Quran. Al-Wahhab also disregarded the Quran's oft repeated message of mercy, charity, tolerance, and compassion, essentially excising numerous Quranic passages to justify his call for violent, uncompromising jihad.

The author goes on to chronicle the convergence of al-Wahhab and Wahhabism with the fortunes of the Royal House of Saud beginning with al-Wahhab's seeking refuge with Muhammad ibn-Saud in Nedj, having been unceremoniously disowned by his own family as a heretic. Al-Wahhab married a daughter of ibn-Saud, introduced firearms to Saud's warriors, and indoctrinated them in his violent dogma. In their ongoing feud with the Ottoman Turks who then controlled Arabia, the newly Wahhabist warriors of ibn al-Saud resorted to the most violent tactics, including mutilation and killing members of groups targeted by the dogma of Wahhabism. After siding with the British Empire against the Turks in World War I, they ultimately gained control of Arabia for the House of Saud and its chosen dogma of Wahhabism. Evolving in parallel in Northern India was a no less radical school of Islam known as Deobandism. A reaction to

the natural resentment of the indigenous people of the Indian subcontinent to the British Raj, Deobandism was a religious movement that led to violent uprisings against British rule.

The Deobandi movement has solid Wahabbi roots dating back to the 19th Century. It is no less violent or extreme in its dogma, and it is responsible for Pakistan's network of 10,000 *mudrassa* that continue to turn out thousands of young boys who are true believers in extremist interpretations of Islam. Under the reign of dictator General Zia ul-Haq, graduates trained in Deobandi *mudrassa* flocked to fill posts in the Pakistani army, secret service, and civil service bureaucracy. When the former Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, it was Saudi oil money that funded the establishment of a recruitment and support system for the thousands of foreign jihadists, many true believers in Wahhabism, who flocked to wage jihad against the Red Army. It was this witch's cauldron of Saudi-funded Wahhabism, Pakistani-sanctioned Deobandism, and war against the Soviet Union that forged Al Qaeda and its bloody cause of international jihad.

Allen meticulously traces the evolution of the Wahabbist cult and its partisans through the 20th Century including the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood and the eventual influence of Wahabbism on that radical Islamist creation of Sayyid Qutb and his successors: his brother Muhammad Qutb and the Palestinian Sheikh Abdullah Azzam, who later found sanctuary from Egyptian persecution in Saudi Arabia. In the fullness of time, these two radical Islamists would play a crucial role in the education and radicalization of none other than Usama bin Laden when the future head of Al Qaeda enrolled as an undergraduate at King Abdul Aziz University at Jeddah. Ibn Laden would later reportedly be one of the first Saudis to fly to Afghanistan to join the resistance to the Soviet invasion, encouraged by Azzam, who would later follow him. Under Azzam's guidance, ibn Laden honed his skills and his leadership abilities as part of what became the highly sophisticated Maktab al-Khidamat an-Mujahedeen (Office of Services to the Mujahedeen), the logistical support network that assisted over twenty five thousand foreign fighters in joining the fight against the Red Army in Afghanistan, many of them coming from the most radical Islamic organizations such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

Allen concludes this journey through heretical religious extremism by chronicling the course of events in which Usama bin Laden traveled to Afghanistan and reestablished his base of operations, creating a chillingly efficient terrorist organization that would go on to perpetrate the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. Allen makes his case in the final chapter that the Muslim umma is overwhelmingly composed of honest men and women who wish only to live in peace and practice

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their faith, and are no more interested in world domination than Christian evangelicals who preach their religion seeking to "save" the souls of others not initiated in their particular faith. Allen justifiably asserts that extremists such as Usama bin Laden and groups such as the Taliban are an equal threat to the majority of innocent Muslims as they are to the West. It is this dedicated and responsible effort by the author to separate the extremists from the majority—including those of the Deobandi community that has produced its share of honest Muslim leaders as well as having its violently radical elements embodied in the Ahl-i-Hadiths—which renders this book so invaluable in guiding the reader in untangling and understanding the physical and ideological alliances that characterize the Islamic extremist movements.

This book should be essential reading for anyone who is seeking to understand the motivations and dogmas of the modern day jihadists and the vulnerabilities imposed by their intellectually bankrupt ideology and self-aggrandizing agendas. This is especially true for law enforcement, military, and intelligence professionals working to come to grips with the threat posed by this virulent religious cult that has established a bloody record of violent terrorism and human rights violations wherever its adherents hold sway, from the Middle East to Central Asia to the Peshawar Valley. *God's Terrorists* is the essential tool to lay a solid foundation to "Know your enemy as you know yourself..." as Sun Tzu so astutely advised over two millennia ago.

*Leland Erickson, Henley-Putnam University*

***Dangerous But Not Omnipotent: Exploring the Reach and Limitations of Iranian Power in the Middle East.* Frederic Wehrey, David E. Thaler, Nora Bensahel, Kim Cragin, Jerrold D. Green, Dalia Dassa Kaye, Nadia Oweidat, Jennifer Li. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2009. ISBN: 978-0-8330-4554-6. Maps. Figures. Notes. Tables. Pp xxviii, 202. \$40.50.**

*Dangerous But Not Omnipotent: Exploring the Reach and Limitations of Iranian Power in the Middle East* is a RAND Corporation work completed under the auspices of PROJECT AIR FORCE. In keeping with RAND publication standards, the scholarship and research are impeccable, and the conclusions offer practical applications for decision and policymakers grappling with ever-evolving strategic realities. The following discussion encapsulates the salient concepts and ideas regarding Iranian political and social developments as presented by the authors in this work.

The U.S. and Iran have not had diplomatic relations since the Islamic Revolution of 1979. Both countries have been in a stalemate, occasionally advancing feeble initiatives that have gone nowhere. Tensions over the U.S. presence in Iraq and Afghanistan, coupled with a desire to be the pre-eminent power in the Gulf, have resulted in Tehran's current muscle flexing to see how far it can push Washington without provoking open military conflict. As Iran perceives itself to be encircled, isolated, and without any allies in an area it regards as its own neighborhood, its outward behavior and its true intentions may send conflicting signals. Faced with technologically superior U.S. airpower that it can not conventionally meet head-on in its own backyard, Iran's bellicose rhetoric may choreograph a basic desire for recognition and respect, which if not granted, may lead Tehran to engage in asymmetric acts of aggression.

Iran's strategic culture is characterized by a combination of assertiveness (intentions) and caution (capabilities). On the one hand, Tehran craves respect both regionally and globally (intentions), and uses inflammatory language to press its case for this stature. On the other hand, the Iranian leadership also realizes in a *Realpolitik* sense that its true military and political options are limited (capabilities). However, Iran still attempts to advance its agenda in the region through cautious leveraging of influence and behind the scenes use of terrorist groups. Iran's regional strategy relies upon three principal factors: deterrence, support for Islamists and non-state actors, and appeals to Arab public opinion. Deterrence has utility in both the psychological and military realms as long as push doesn't come to shove. Support for Shi'ite and Sunni terrorist groups such as Hizbollah and Hamas carries both political and symbolic value in terms of

Tehran exhibiting its "pan-Islamic credentials" within the Middle East and Muslim world. Flamboyant, direct appeals to Arab public opinion modeled on the style of late Egyptian President Gamal 'Adb al-Nasr have often fallen flat as Tehran perceives it has more influence than it really does.

Because it cannot directly confront the U.S. in a conventional military sense (although it would like to have that capability), Iran has dedicated its time and resources to developing a robust asymmetric capacity and doctrine. Conventional Iranian forces are mired in bureaucratic inertia, partisan infighting, and, due to lack of procurement initiatives, obsolete, poorly maintained equipment. In fact, Tehran's multi-layered and overlapping security apparatus is better positioned for internal security efforts geared towards regime survival than defending the country from external military threats. Iran's asymmetric capabilities are more potent, presenting a more threatening ability that emphasizes deterrence and guerrilla warfare using the model Hizbollah has developed in Lebanon. In addition, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has an arsenal of anti-ship mines, anti-ship cruise missiles, and "swarming" tactics to use against superior naval forces in the geo-strategically important Strait of Hormuz.

The Iranian military strategy focuses on (1) maintaining internal stability and unity through use of military, intelligence, law enforcement, and paramilitary forces; (2) employing exaggeration, ambiguity, and obfuscation to deter aggression from the U.S. and its regional allies; (3) in-depth homeland defense to counter an invasion; and (4) using its armed forces to extend its influence through intimidation, dissuasion, and coercion in order to gain regional and global prestige.

Regarding Iran's interplay with terrorist, extremist, and dissident movements, Tehran perceives itself as more influential than it really is. The Islamic Republic has supported and financed activities of Hizbollah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and Hamas in efforts to compensate for its conventional inferiority. However, in the event of a conflict with the U.S., support from these groups is by no means a given, suggesting that Iran exerts influence over these allies, but not control. During the early years of the Islamic Republic, Tehran sought to export "Islamic Revolution" to other countries. After watching the excesses of the Iranian Revolution with horror, Muslim countries turned away from the Iranian model, seeking a more moderate approach to emulate.

The Arab world's perception of Iran does not necessarily match Tehran's. Iran's direct appeals to the "Arab street" undermine some Arab govern-



ments while also bypassing established diplomatic protocols. Gulf States also mistrust Tehran's intentions towards non-Iranian Shi'ite populations. Arab states have a dual view of the Iranian nuclear program. On the one hand, they fear Tehran's regional ambitions. On the other hand, they endorse it as a critique of western "double standards." They also hope that the U.S. will not view any Arab criticism of Iran's program as tacit approval for a strike.

The book closes with a series of policy recommendations for the U.S. Acknowledging that past efforts and a Cold War style containment policy have failed, the authors recommend a new set of paradigms. One of the recommendations is for the U.S. to bolster international sanctions and financial pressure as a means of dissuading Iran's nuclear ambitions while at the same time avoiding punitive measures that have little meaning or support. Another option advocates bi-lateral discussions to forge common ties in areas of mutual concern such as the ongoing contingencies in Iraq and Afghanistan, narcotics trafficking, disaster relief, refugees, and humanitarian crises. Notably absent was a recommendation for substantive discussions regarding terrorism. The last suggestion was to have a multilateral regional security framework that includes Iran yet is sensitive to Arab concerns.

*Dangerous But Not Omnipotent: Exploring the Reach and Limitations of Iranian Power in the Middle East* is a valuable guide to better understand Washington's strategic options vis-à-vis Tehran. It has merit for national security strategists, Middle East specialists, policymakers, and decision makers involved with long-term solutions to Gulf security paradigms. For Iran watchers and specialists, it is a must-have for the library.

*Mark J. Roberts, Transportation Security Administration*

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***They Dared Return: The Untold Story of Jewish Spies Behind the Lines in Nazi Germany.* By Patrick K. O'Donnell, Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2009. ISBN: 978-0-306-81800-4. Photos, Appendices, Notes, Index, Pp. 240. \$26.00**

This historical account of the work accomplished by a few of the agents of the Office of Strategic Services in World War II is sure to intrigue all readers interested in military history and especially World War II history. Patrick K. O'Donnell has done a masterful job of recounting events which had a vast impact, especially in Austria, in the closing days of the Nazi Third Reich. Beyond the simple recounting of events there are lessons that do not change for operatives over time, but sometimes do need to be reinforced.

Patrick K. O'Donnell is an established military historian who has authored five previous books. Among them are *Beyond Valor* (winner of the William E. Colby Award), and the acclaimed account of the Battle of Fallujah, *We Were One*. O'Donnell has long been interested in World War II and has interviewed a large number of WWII veterans. Some eight years prior to the publication of *They Dared Return*, he met Fredrick Mayer. After extensive interviews with Mayer and his best friend and fellow OSS veteran, Hans Wynberg, O'Donnell decided to tell the story of these men and others.

The book recounts the incredible courage and heroism of the "Jewish Five" as Mayer and his friends are referred to in the book. These men were Jewish refugees from the early days of the Nazi regime in Germany who had escaped and come to the United States for a new life. When the U.S. entered WWII each of them had enlisted to fight for their "adopted" country. Because of their backgrounds and language skills, they were recruited for the OSS to serve as spies behind the lines. The drama was increased because the OSS teams included "volunteer" German soldiers. These were "former" Prisoners of War who had deserted and surrendered, or been captured by Allied forces in battle.

The accounts of the early OSS efforts to train the Jewish recruits and vet the POWs for anti-Nazi sentiments are quite interesting. OSS Agent Mayer could have died before his first mission when the OSS placed him in a POW camp for three days to see if he could pass as a German soldier. Mayer passed the test and identified a captured German officer named Franz Weber who would be instrumental in his future mission as one of the anti-Nazi volunteers for the OSS.

O'Donnell decided he could not do justice to all the missions of the Jewish Five in one book. He chose to concentrate this work on Fredrick Mayer and Operation Greenup. The other agents and their missions fit into the account as they touch upon Operation Greenup, and O'Donnell recounts that each operation deserves to have its story told in a separate book. He did include original mission reports in Appendices A through F, which provide some insights into the activities of all the teams.

Many people are inclined to believe that all German citizens, except the Jewish ones, in World War II were supporters of Adolph Hitler and the Third Reich. It is clear from the accounts of the Jewish Five that a lot of support for their activities was received not only from citizens, but even from some elected officials and some of the criminal police or Kriminalpolizei. Of course by the point Operation Greenup was able to achieve the greatest success, even some ardent Nazis with a pragmatic outlook were willing to try to cut deals for a chance at lenient treatment when the war ended. Mayer (and some others) was able to take great advantage of this mindset and even after capture and torture he achieved great results by using his wits. Through the assistance of the imaginative lies of one of the "volunteer" POWs, Hermann Matull, Mayer managed to turn his plight as a captured spy into a stunning success. The resulting events saved lives that would have otherwise been lost in battles which would not have changed the eventual outcome of the war.

Matull, who has vanished into the mists of history, was a German deserter/con man/black marketeer, whose ability to spin stories would be a huge advantage for any intelligence operative. He was well prepared for his mission back into Germany and the OSS took tremendous pains to equip him with documents and uniforms designed to pass close scrutiny. His downfall and capture resulted from a minor oversight; Matull used American cigarettes and matches in Germany. Another spy, Paul Krock, was carrying forged German documents stamped with a round stamp. A keen-eyed German NCO knew from his own service in the area represented that the stamp should have been square. These small errors betrayed all the elaborate preparations for the spies to move about freely. To compound the grievous situation, OSS Headquarters failed to recognize Matull was transmitting under duress even when he inserted extra words in his messages as he had been trained to do in order to signal a major problem. It is almost unbelievable that he was able to talk his way out of execution and set the stage for Mayer to arrange the surrender of Innsbruck.

Some may wonder what relevance this historical tribute could have to the general field of espionage today. Certainly all of us have been conditioned

through the years to believe we should "learn from our experiences" and "not make the same mistake twice." Unfortunately, while many individuals internalize these concepts and profit from the lessons of life, too often governments and other organizations seem doomed to repeat mistakes of the past. History is valuable as a learning tool on a broad scale. The brief examples of the failure to pay sufficient attention to small details such as those which led to the capture of Matull and Krock are lessons which can help better prepare agents for future missions.

In an even broader sense, the most important lessons of *They Dared Return* may be in some questions today's practitioner might consider, rather than explicit examples such as the failure to attend to the smallest detail or the failure to recognize signs of a problem with an agent in distress. One lesson that springs to mind is the question of whether an agency, or individual, is really "thinking outside the box." It is unclear who originated the idea of recruiting Jewish personnel for these missions, but the properly motivated and courageous men were located and volunteered. The "thinking outside the box" aspect of organizing the teams occurred when someone conceived of the idea of also recruiting "deserter-volunteers" from among the available captured enemy soldiers and vetting them to establish they could be entrusted with the sensitive task of going back into Germany with the Jewish spies.

There is an even more strategic question one must consider in reading an account of the efforts of these OSS agents. That question is whether today's espionage efforts have a place for human intelligence. Have we come to rely on modern technology at the expense of the effective utilization of human assets? If the current technology had been available more than 65 years ago, would these dangerous missions have been sanctioned? Much more important—when reading the account of what these men accomplished, one must ask if the exceptional results could have possibly been achieved without the investment in human assets on the ground? Obviously the networking, negotiations, and the exploitation of enemy personnel weaknesses on the ground could not have been achieved without face-to-face contact with the OSS agents.

*They Dared Return* will appeal to the discerning reader as a historical record of significant World War II actions, serving as a tribute to the heroism and dedication of OSS agents, former enemy soldiers, and some individuals who remained within Nazi Germany during the war. The book also has useful lessons and can motivate insightful questions, the answers to which may impact our future direction in espionage activities.

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