

"Mel Goodman has spent the last few decades telling us what's gone wrong with American intelligence and the American military...he is also telling us how to save ourselves."

—Seymour M. Hersh, *The New Yorker*

WHISTLEBLOWER AT THE CIA



AN INSIDER'S ACCOUNT OF THE POLITICS OF INTELLIGENCE

MELVIN A. GOODMAN

CITY LIGHTS BOOKS

WHISTLEBLOWER AT THE CIA

A PATH OF DISSENT

Melvin A. Goodman



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To my mentors who were models of courage and integrity: the late Professor Amin Banani, professor emeritus at UCLA; the late professors Owen Lattimore and Robert Slusser of Johns Hopkins University; the late ambassador Robert White, who heroically exposed the crimes of the Reagan administration in Central America; the late Professor Alvin Z. Rubinstein of the University of Pennsylvania; Professor Robert Ferrell of Indiana University; and once again my wife, Carolyn McGiffert Ekedahl, who made sure that the crimes of the George W. Bush administration and the CIA could not be forgotten.

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INTRODUCTION

THE PATH TO DISSENT: A WHISTLEBLOWER AT THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

“The reasonable man adapts himself to the world. The unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man.”

—George Bernard Shaw

This is the story of an unreasonable man at the Central Intelligence Agency. There will be insights about the CIA and the forces of top-down corruption within the intelligence process, some settling of old scores within the Agency, and introspection about a 42-year career spent serving my country in the military and intelligence communities during the height of the Cold War. I joined the agency in the 1960s, a decade of radical change and upheaval in American culture. My closest friends questioned the decision of a self-confessed progressive to join one of the most secretive agencies in the government when the U.S. war against Vietnam was becoming increasingly ugly and divisive. Ironically, I found a more spirited and intelligent debate over the war in CIA corridors than I experienced in graduate school at Indiana University where I participated in the teach-in movement against the war.

There has been a great decline in the stature and influence

of the CIA over the past two decades. The CIA's failure to anticipate the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the collapse of the Warsaw Pact in 1990, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, which ended the Cold War that fostered the CIA, deeply damaged the credibility of the entire intelligence community. The manipulation of intelligence for political ends—politicization—was responsible for these failures, and two decades later this process of corruption helped the Bush administration make the catastrophic decision to invade and occupy Iraq without any evidence of a threat or provocation. The insistence of Vice President Dick Cheney to conjure phony intelligence in order to go to war against Iraq in 2003 was particularly criminal. With the end of the CIA's anti-communism mission, the Agency had to come up with other missions; the ethical and operational failures in these missions further damaged its reputation. The CIA's role in the Terror Wars has included extrajudicial killings, assassinations, secret prisons, torture and abuse, and extraordinary renditions that have violated the U.S. Constitution and international law.

The CIA's decline over several decades was marked by mediocre leadership, particularly by directors such as William Casey, Robert Gates, Porter Goss, and George Tenet, who tailored intelligence to satisfy the neoconservative biases of Presidents Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush. Tenet and Goss as well as Michael Hayden and John Brennan endorsed barbaric interrogation methods, and Brennan tried to block the Senate Intelligence Committee's investigation of torture in secret prisons. CIA directors who tried to prevent manipulation of the intelligence process, such as Richard Helms and William Colby, were either exiled to Iran as ambassador or simply fired, respectively. Meanwhile, the CIA refuses to recognize the harm of politicization and hasn't introduced bureaucratic barriers that protect intelligence analysts from coercion.

There have been too few people of conscience willing to risk their careers in order to call attention to the turpitude that oc-

curs in the CIA headquarters building in the tranquil suburbs of Virginia. I am proud of the fact that I was one of the dissidents, having testified before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence in 1991 in an unsuccessful effort to stop the confirmation of Robert Gates as director of central intelligence and having written profusely on the dangers of politicization—the systematic manipulation, distortion, and falsification of intelligence to serve ulterior motives outside the Agency’s mission.¹

Why would someone who spent more than four decades in the United States of America’s national security system become a dissident or a contrarian? I entered the United States Army as a teenager with the reluctant permission of my parents, and served as a cryptographer at the Joint United States Military Mission in Greece in the 1950s. If any single experience kindled my passion for a career in international relations and led me to the CIA, it was serving in the U.S. Army in Athens. It was an eventful two-year period from 1956 to 1958, marked by the Hungarian Revolution and the Soviet invasion; the British-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt; the launching of Sputnik; and the U.S. invasion of Lebanon, which threatened an unwanted extension of my tour of duty. I was enthralled by my work coding and decoding sensitive messages about these historic flash points while they were situations in progress; my father, a telegrapher with the Pennsylvania Railroad for 50 years, was proud and bemused.

I was fortunate to hold intelligence positions that provided unusual access to the U.S. foreign policy process. The CIA and the National War College provided an excellent vantage point for observing the national security system in the nation’s capital. I witnessed one of the great turning points for U.S. national security with the collapse of the Soviet Union, and observed events that members of my generation never expected to witness. I was an intelligence advisor to the U.S. delegation to the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) in Vienna, where intense negotiations led to the conclusion of SALT I and the Anti-Ballistic

Missile (ABM) Treaty in 1972. I was in the audience at the National War College in 2001 when President George W. Bush announced that the United States would abrogate the ABM Treaty, destroying the keystone of strategic deterrence.

For 24 years, I served as an intelligence analyst at the CIA and the Department of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research. When I left the intelligence community in 1990, I crossed the river to join the Department of Defense as a professor of international security at the National War College. For several decades, I held sensitive security clearances that gave me access to clandestine reports from the CIA; cables from foreign service officers; military attaché reports from the Department of Defense; satellite photography from the National Reconnaissance Office; and signals and communications intelligence from the National Security Agency (NSA). I was privy to the most sensitive political and intelligence issues of the Cold War, and served on task forces on virtually every crisis with the Soviet Union for nearly a quarter of a century. It was incredibly challenging and exciting.

I was polygraphed four times by the CIA, and always encountered difficulty in passing these tests because of the amateurism of polygraph operators and the bizarre and unreliable nature of the technology. The most notorious CIA mole, Aldrich Ames, had no difficulty passing the polygraph. At some point during these tests, an operator would leave the room, demonstrating some impatience, and then return as much as an hour later to report that there was one area of concern that blocked passage of the examination. He would invariably ask if I "would take a stab in determining what area that may have been." This is probably one of the hoariest devices of the polygraph process, and, having been warned by senior colleagues, I never rose to their bait. I may have seemed fishy to the security troglodytes, but I had nothing to hide and no intention of getting snagged on their hook.

Although I served more than four decades in the secret shadows of the national security system, this was hardly an exclusive

domain. The bloated U.S. intelligence infrastructure produces millions of classified documents every year and certifies several million civilians, service members, and contractors to receive confidential, secret, and top-secret documents. The Department of State even adds such categories as Limdis, Exdis, and Nodis to their sensitive cables, which translates to limited distribution, exclusive distribution, and no distribution, respectively. The CIA uses red and blue borders to create the same level of caution for its clandestine reports.

In many cases, the added layers of classification aren't designed to protect sensitive matters that would jeopardize national security. More often, security caveats are designed to avoid embarrassment, making sure that no one learns, for example, that the CIA once proposed creating a pornographic film starring Bing Crosby as part of a scheme intended to embarrass an Indonesian head of state. Nevertheless, if I had used personal email during my tenure at CIA, as Hillary Clinton did as secretary of state, I would currently be out on bail . . . or worse.

Unfortunately, the American people seem to have become fully inured to the government's aggressive and self-aggrandizing pursuit of power, privilege, and prerogatives. The U.S. national security establishment has established layers of secrecy and a grid of constant surveillance, while the citizenry has become increasingly obedient and compliant. There is little protest or public outcry when the United States massacres civilians abroad or when it inadvertently bombs a wedding procession or a hospital in Afghanistan. There was little public outrage following the disclosures that reasons for going to war in Iraq were cooked up, that U.S. soldiers committed perverse and sadistic crimes at Abu Ghraib; that CIA officials used torture and abuse; that tapes providing evidence of CIA torture were intentionally destroyed; and that secret U.S. prisons and extraordinary renditions violated international norms and regulations. Not even the disclosures of Edward Snowden and Chelsea Manning, which fully docu-

mented the excesses and improprieties of the U.S. government and military, shocked the American people into demanding that their government comply with the law.

As Andrew Bacevich warns, the revelations of Manning and Snowden have “confronted Washington with something far more worrisome” than “al-Qaeda, Iran’s nuclear program, and the rise of China.”² Bacevich argues that their leaks undermine the authority that the White House has amassed during the Terror Wars. Unless Americans insist that diplomacy, dialogue, and substantive debate precede acts of military aggression, it will remain easy for the United States to deploy military coercion and violence in response to crises.

If the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Somalia, Libya, and Yemen could not serve as a catalyst for a massive American protest movement, then it is unreasonable to expect that the disclosures from Snowden and Manning could do so. On the one hand, Americans are quick to ignore or forget the criminality and false premises of the U.S. wars waged against Iraq and Vietnam; on the other hand, the conventional wisdom of the mainstream media is typically supportive of the government’s position on national security. Meanwhile, the authors of the Justice Department’s torture memoranda, John Yoo and Jay Bybee, hold significant positions at the University of California’s law school in Berkeley and the federal appeals court in California, respectively.

The CIA has now long pursued a double standard in order to protect its reputation. It allows its employees to defend policies such as human torture while trying to censor those authors who are critical of such policies. The agency endorsed the publication of a memoir by a clandestine operative who destroyed the torture tapes and denied that torture and abuse took place.³ It subverts democracy when those who have access to official secrets are allowed to violate laws with impunity and without accountability, and to publish “official history” that obfuscates illegalities without facing scrutiny or criticism.

Several years ago, a major documentary film, *The Gatekeepers*, arrived from Israel. The film, starring former Israeli spymasters as whistleblowers, challenged Israel's ruthless tactics against Palestinians. *The Gatekeepers* had far-ranging impact because it featured whistleblowers from the intelligence establishment—the keepers of the secrets—who were willing to speak out against Israel.

Imagine a comparable film in the United States that featured former directors of the CIA who exposed CIA involvement in a military coup in Chile in the 1970s; support for the Contras in Nicaragua in the 1980s; manipulation of intelligence that exaggerated the Soviet threat prior to the breakup of the Soviet Union; willingness to provide phony intelligence to the White House to justify a catastrophic invasion of Iraq in 2003; and the details of secret prisons, torture and abuse, and extraordinary renditions to Vice President Dick Cheney's "Dark Side."

WHISTLEBLOWERS. DISSIDENTS. CONTRARIANS.

The terms are used synonymously by pundits and the public, and I've been all three at one time or another in order to expose improprieties and illegalities in the secret government, and to inform the American public of policies that compromise the freedom and security of U.S. citizens and weaken U.S. standing in the global community.

I have never liked the terms contrarian or dissident. I've always believed that my criticism should be conventional wisdom. The term whistleblower is more complex because it often raises questions of patriotism or sedition. Chelsea Manning received commutation from her 35-year prison sentence for revealing so-called secrets that documented the terror and violence of the baseless U.S. war in Iraq. Members of the Bush administration who launched the invasion of Iraq in 2003 are considered honorable members of our society, although their acts involved the corruption of intelligence; caused the death of thousands of U.S.

soldiers and foreign civilians; terrorized civilian populations; perpetrated the criminal use of torture and abuse; sanctioned use of secret prisons and extraordinary rendition; and caused the destabilization of the region that has set the stage for strategic advances by Al Qaeda and ISIS.

Edward Snowden, if he had remained in the United States, would have faced an even longer prison sentence because he revealed the massive NSA surveillance program that was illegal and immoral, and that violated the Fourth Amendment protection against illegal seizures and searches. Manning and Snowden admit to breaking U.S. laws, but their actions were never as serious as the law-breaking, including massive violations of privacy, that they exposed.

The debate over whether Snowden was a traitor is fatuous. As a result of Snowden's revelations, we learned that the National Security Agency logged domestic phone calls and emails for years, recorded the metadata of correspondence between Americans, and, in some cases, exploited the content of emails. The case against Private Manning was similarly fatuous. Manning provided evidence of the U.S. cover-up of torture by our Iraqi allies; a U.S. Army helicopter opening fire on a group of civilians, including two Reuters journalists; and the use of an air strike to cover up the execution of civilians. Some of these acts were war crimes.

There is no more compelling evidence of the unconscionable behavior of U.S. personnel in Iraq than the callous dialogue between the crew members of the helicopter regarding the civilian deaths and particularly the firing on those Iraqis who came to recover the dead bodies of Iraqi civilians. Manning's documents exposed this behavior, but her efforts were ridiculed by former secretary of defense Robert Gates, who described it as examining war by "looking through a straw."

To make matters worse, American journalists have criticized their colleagues (Julian Assange of WikiLeaks and Glenn Greenwald of *The Guardian*) who brought the Snowden-Manning reve-

lations to the attention of the public. David Gregory, then host of the venerable *Meet the Press* on NBC, asked Greenwald “to the extent that you have aided and abetted Snowden . . . why shouldn’t you . . . be charged with a crime?”⁴ Jeffrey Toobin, a lawyer who labors for CNN and *The New Yorker*, called Snowden a “grandiose narcissist who belongs in prison” and referred to Greenwald’s partner, David Miranda, who was detained by British authorities for nine hours under anti-terror laws, the equivalent of a “drug mule.”⁵

The king of calumny is Michael Grunwald, a senior correspondent for *Time*, who wrote on Twitter that he couldn’t “wait to write a defense of the drone strike that takes out Julian Assange.” The *New York Times* also targeted Assange, although the paper cooperated with WikiLeaks in 2010 in publishing reams of information from Private Manning’s revelations. Of course, if *Time* or the *New York Times* had broken these stories, they would have built new shelves to hold their Pulitzer Prizes. Their hypocrisy was exposed by David Carr of the *New York Times*, who expressed shock at finding Assange and Greenwald “under attack, not just from a government bent on keeping its secrets, but from friendly fire by fellow journalists.”⁶

I didn’t reveal abuses as great as those revealed by Manning and Snowden or Daniel Ellsberg, but I do claim status as a whistleblower because of my revelations before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence during confirmation hearings for Bob Gates, who was nominated by President George H.W. Bush in 1991 to be director of central intelligence. According to U.S. law, the term “whistleblower” applies to anyone who “reasonably believes” he or she is disclosing a violation of law or gross mismanagement, gross waste, or abuse of authority. My testimony documented for the first time the intentional distortion of intelligence by CIA director William Casey and Deputy Director Gates in order to serve the agenda of Ronald Reagan and his administration.

Bob Gates was an old friend, but the friendship ended when

he routinely distorted intelligence throughout the 1980s as deputy director for intelligence and deputy director of the CIA. In destroying the political culture of the CIA, he created a toxic and corrupt environment at the Agency, and the Senate Intelligence Committee's report on CIA detention and torture reminds us that the Agency hasn't recovered.

Being a contrarian was easy and natural for me. In fact, no one should think about entering the intelligence profession without good contrarian instincts. Such instincts would include an innate skepticism, the doubting of conventional wisdom and a willingness to challenge authority, which translates to an ability to tell truth to power. These contrarian instincts are essential to the success of any intelligence organization. As Rogers and Hammerstein would have it, it was "doing what comes naturally!"

My book *The Failure of Intelligence: The Decline and Fall of the CIA* was the first insider account from an intelligence analyst regarding the skewed and politicized assessments of the CIA's Directorate of Intelligence—the Agency's analytic arm. I also exposed the strategic failure of covert actions that were never intended to be a part of President Harry Truman's CIA. I wrote the book for many reasons, including the need to describe the inability of journalists to take into account, let alone understand, the dangers of politicization and the actions of CIA directors such as Casey, Gates, and more recently Goss and Tenet. The political pliancy of these directors fully compromised the intelligence mission of the CIA, and it was political pliancy that made directors such as Gates and Tenet so attractive to Presidents Reagan, Bush I, and Bush II.

For the past quarter century, my testimony and writings have exposed the failure to honor President Truman's purpose in creating a CIA to provide policymakers with accurate, unbiased accounts of international developments, and have highlighted the CIA's readiness to cater to the White House. This view is not original with me; in fact, it was President Truman who first acknowledged that the CIA he created in 1947 had gotten off the

tracks under Presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy in the 1950s and early 1960s.

In December 1963, less than a month after the assassination of President Kennedy, Truman wrote an op-ed for the *Washington Post* to document the wrongs of the CIA. He concluded that his efforts to “create the quiet intelligence arm of the Presidency” had been subverted by a “sinister” and “mysterious” agency that was conducting far too many clandestine activities in peacetime. I lectured at the Truman Library in the summer of 2014, and found a note in Truman’s hand that stated the CIA was not designed to “initiate policy or to act as a spy organization. That was never the intention when it was organized.”

In *The Failure of Intelligence*, I documented the CIA’s resistance to reform and the corruption in both the analytical and operational directorates. I made a case for starting over at the CIA, not dissimilar from the case made by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan 25 years ago as a member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Not every agency or department of government can be reformed, and it is possible that the intricate web of habits, procedures, and culture places the CIA in the non-reformable category. Once the political culture of an institution such as the CIA has been broken, it is extremely difficult—if not impossible—to rebuild or repair it.

Serious organizations, including both houses of Congress, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the 20th Century Fund, have made realistic and substantive proposals for changing the agency. But here we are in the 21st century with a CIA that develops phony intelligence arguments for launching wars, employing torture and abuse, operating secret prisons, making erroneous renditions, and censoring details of its operations. Federal courts are permitting the CIA to block the public from seeing intelligence documents dealing with the invasion of Cuba more than 50 years ago, and the former chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Dianne Feinstein, has produced a seminal

document on CIA abuses that the White House and the CIA will not declassify, and the Department of Justice won't read. The fact that the report is a partisan document representing only Democratic members of the committee is troublesome.

Reviewers of *The Failure of Intelligence* acknowledged that the book exposed the militarization and manipulation of intelligence that has taken place in the U.S. intelligence community since the Cold War ended in 1991.⁷ Seymour Hersh credited me with trying to “right a dangerous wrong,” which is the definition of whistleblowing. Burton Hersh, the author of *The Old Boys: The American Elite and the Origins of the CIA*, noted that my “corridor battles” with Casey and Gates were taking place long before I testified to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence about the soft-pedaling of evidence that the Soviet Union was falling apart in order to promote the Reagan administration's bloated defense spending. Gates can be forgiven by some, but not by me, for exaggerating the Soviet threat when in reality the system was heading toward collapse; Gates should never be forgiven for insisting that his subordinates in the analytic cadre of the CIA be similarly wrong.

The negative connotations of the word “whistleblower” are worrisome. Until consumer advocate Ralph Nader popularized it in the 1970s, the term had a negative meaning. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the idiomatic “blowing the whistle” emerged in the American vernacular in the early 20th century to describe a boxing referee ending a bout or a football official stopping play to announce a penalty.⁸ In a 1909 story by Sewell Ford, the earthy protagonist Shorty McCabe cuts off the garrulous Sadie Sullivan by saying, “Blow the whistle on that, can't you?” By the 1930s, “blowing the whistle” on someone could imply the dramatic revelation of something illicit, and in certain walks of life that meant getting painted as a “rat” or a “snitch.” In 1936, a New York sports-writer referred to someone who had exposed the fakery of professional wrestling as a “whistleblower, which is unforgivable.”⁹

Nader rescued the term in the 1970s, acknowledging that the term whistleblower was not appreciated, but asserting that it was not a synonym for “fink or stool pigeon, a squealer or an informer, who rats on his employer.” Ironically, when Nader raised the issue he was speaking to the annual convention of the Association of Computing Machinery, warning that the collection of huge “data banks” might prevent people from “speaking out and blowing the whistle against the system.” By exposing the National Security Agency’s large-scale surveillance of the American people, that’s what Edward Snowden has done, and continues to do.

Whistleblowing begs the question of loyalty to government and country. Whistleblowers must decide whether they owe loyalty to the government agency or military service they represent or to the U.S. Constitution they are sworn to honor. Leaks of classified information in the field of national security are particularly complicated, because laws protect such information. Whistleblowers may be naïve about the consequences of their actions, particularly the risk of lifting the veil on secrecy. Nevertheless, they deserve recognition as dissenters or contrarians who want to bring some semblance of truth to the American people.

Legitimate whistleblowing within the government typically follows a breakdown in the moral compass of some department or agency. In my case, it was the intentional and systematic manipulation of intelligence within the CIA; in the case of Daniel Ellsberg, it was an unnecessary war; in the case of Thomas Drake, it was a constitutional breakdown at the National Security Agency; and in the case of Chelsea Manning, it involved war crimes being committed by the United States. A decade after my exposure of chronic corruption at the CIA, the deliberate and systematic falsification of intelligence to coerce the nation to launch an unprovoked war demonstrated that the problem had metastasized. A decade after that, we learned about the CIA’s role in the Terror Wars, which involved secret prisons, torture, and the targeted killing of people only suspected of crimes.

In 2014, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence under the chairmanship of Senator Feinstein produced the 6,300-page report on CIA torture that revealed that even innocent individuals had been held in secret prisons and tortured. The Senate report was validated by a review ordered by then CIA director Leon Panetta. The Senate report and the Panetta Review recorded the sadistic interrogation of more than 100 al Qaeda members and suspects under the euphemism “enhanced interrogation techniques.” The report and review confirmed that no significant intelligence was produced by torture, and that the CIA lied to the White House and the Congress about the true nature of the interrogations and the intelligence that was (or, in this case, was not) obtained. Former CIA officials (including Directors Tenet, Goss, and Hayden) and CIA apologists, including journalists, maintained that torture gets results and that the interrogations were valuable. The immorality of the CIA’s use of violence, humiliation, and coercion was never a factor for these individuals.

CIA director John Brennan was critical of torture and abuse in 2009, when he was serving on President Obama’s staff, but he referred to interrogators as “patriots” when he became director. As director, he went to unusual lengths to block the release of the report, lying to the committee chair and even threatening a constitutional crisis over the separation of powers by sanctioning the hacking of Senate computers and the emails of Senate staffers.

When former CIA director William Colby was faced with evidence of CIA crimes during the Vietnam War, he released the dispositive documents to the Senate. Brennan was neither courageous enough nor independent enough to do this. Instead, Brennan permitted the CIA to conduct electronic searches of Senate computer programs in order to learn what documents the Senate staffers had obtained, even hacking into the emails of key committee staffers. The CIA ran this program like any covert operation aimed at an adversary, but the target was the Senate In-

telligence Committee of the United States of America and there could be no “plausible denial.”

In an unusual attack, Senator Feinstein charged the CIA with secretly withdrawing hundreds of documents from the Senate staff’s archives, including the authoritative Panetta Review that corroborated the charges in the Senate report. The CIA falsely claimed that the White House had ordered the withdrawal of the documents, which led to a CIA apology. Senator Feinstein called for additional CIA apologies, but what was needed was the release of the full report and the Panetta Review. The most tantalizing aspect of Feinstein’s remarks was her view that the Panetta Review may have been placed in the Senate’s documents by a CIA whistleblower.

As soon as the Republicans took over control of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence as a result of their election victory in November 2014, they reclassified the Panetta Review and ordered it returned to the CIA. The chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Richard Burr (R-NC), even blocked the confirmation of a former staffer of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Alissa Starzak, as general counsel for the United States Army. Burr’s reason for blocking the confirmation? Starzak was the lead investigator in the writing of the torture report. The deceit never stops.

At least 200 CIA officers who took part in illegal activities relating to the Terror Wars continue to work at the Counterterrorism Center, which probably explains why the Obama administration refused to seek accountability. Any serious accountability would discover that a small group of CIA officials, including lawyers, were acting as both judge and jury in deciding who was guilty of terrorism and who would be detained and tortured. The CIA is deeply damaged, but no one appears to want to fix it or even knows how, including the congressional intelligence committees charged with oversight.

CITY LIGHTS

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In view of the catastrophic losses in terms of death and destruction, it is appalling that so few whistleblowers have emerged during the Terror Wars. It takes an unusual personality to challenge the government, in part due to the lack of protection and the likelihood of retribution. One of the reasons why so few are “doing what comes naturally” is the lack of trust in the system. People of conscience contemplating whistleblowing fear retaliation and punishment for reporting even illegalities. The fear is real and documented; it was particularly obvious during the scandal at the Department of Veterans Affairs in 2014 over the cover-up of terrible abuses. The series of abuses at the Secret Service from 2011 to 2014 revealed that there were agents who would not step forward to report security concerns because they didn’t trust the system or their supervisors. At the CIA, I was aware of numerous individuals who wouldn’t go to the Office of the Inspector General, let alone the Congress, and believed that it would be a career-ending move to do so.

There is no protection for whistleblowers in the intelligence community, and intelligence officers face the possible loss of a security clearance for going public regarding abuses. Any individual with a security clearance who goes to the media is subject to loss of security clearance, which is the same as being fired. The system for oversight, moreover, is broken in the Congress and at the CIA.

Federal employees fear that they can not disclose violations of law without reprisal.¹⁰ There has been a lack of accountability at the Department of Veteran’s Affairs, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Department of Health and Human Services. The Obama administration used the Espionage Act of 1917 to pursue whistleblowers and prevented legitimate oversight by not naming inspectors general to national security agencies. The State Department lacked

without prior written permission.

an inspector general during Clinton's stewardship; the CIA was without an inspector general for nearly two years in President Barack Obama's first term until an extremely weak appointment was made; the Pentagon wouldn't permit the inspector general to act independently. The CIA lacked a statutory inspector general (one appointed by the president) during most of Obama's second term as well.

The worst abuses took place during times of warfare, and since September 11, 2001, the U.S. has been in a constant state of war. Countless civilians have been killed by U.S. operations and drone attacks in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and beyond. In April 2015, a disconsolate President Obama had to tell the American people that a U.S. strike in the Afghan-Pakistan border region killed a U.S. aid worker held hostage. In October 2015 the U.S. bombed a Doctors Without Borders hospital in the city of Kunduz, Afghanistan, killing 22 people, mostly doctors and staff.

Meanwhile, America's vast national security apparatus continues to grow like Topsy. The USA PATRIOT Act permits wholesale use of national security letters from the FBI to compel financial officers, librarians, and physicians to turn over vast amounts of data about American citizens without a court order. The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) allows intelligence agencies to eavesdrop on communications between Americans and people overseas without a probable-cause warrant. FISA investigations require an order from the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, which meets in secret, but from 1979 to 2013 it rejected only 11 applications out of more than 30,000 requests from federal agencies. They are subject to no review.

The efforts of Thomas Drake to expose corruption and deceit at the National Security Agency, where he was a senior executive, marked the most outrageous pursuit of a whistleblower. Drake took his story of government waste to the *Baltimore Sun* only after failing to interest the inspectors general at the NSA

and the Pentagon as well as the Senate and House Intelligence Committees. Drake exhausted most of his retirement savings and had to take a second mortgage on his house to fight the federal government in court. As a result, he faced 10 felony charges involving mishandling classified information and obstruction of justice, which a judge wisely dismissed.

Drake has been a guest lecturer at my classes at Johns Hopkins University, where he has mesmerized audiences with his experiences with an out-of-control federal government. During the search of Drake's house, one embarrassed FBI agent even whispered to Drake, "Who in the world did you piss off?" The government's treatment of Drake was disgraceful; it may explain why Snowden left the country before telling the world about the NSA's vast grid of surveillance operations.

Like Drake, Thomas Tamm, an attorney with the Justice Department, went to James Risen and Eric Lichtblau of the *New York Times* only after striking out with the Pentagon's inspector general and the U.S. Congressional Intelligence Committees. Tamm returned home one day to find 12 cars parked all along his street and 18 federal agents (some in body armor) banging on the door and yelling at his wife, who was in her bathrobe.

My own efforts in the early 1990s to expose corruption of intelligence reporting by William J. Casey and Robert M. Gates were far more modest. In testifying before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence in the fall of 1991, and then mounting a random but persistent public campaign in books and editorials, I called attention to the misuse of power and secrecy at our most elite intelligence organization. I didn't face prosecution and ruin, but, like Daniel Ellsberg and others, I experienced the isolation of whistleblowing and the frustration of being ridiculed and marginalized in the political arena and the mainstream media. Like Drake, I encountered no serious efforts to understand my motivations for becoming a whistleblower, and instead faced efforts to dismiss my expertise and experience as a senior CIA veteran.

Whistleblowers go through an exhausting period of self-examination before taking on a path of dissent that involves secret and sensitive materials, but they underestimate the impact of taking on the national security state. Again, I cannot really compare my actions to those of Ellsberg, Drake, Manning, or Snowden, but taking on a presidential nomination in front of a Senate Intelligence Committee, whose chairman had unwisely “guaranteed” confirmation to the White House, could have been construed as a fool’s errand.

Snowden argued that he wanted to start a debate on privacy; he certainly has achieved that goal. Snowden’s documents raised the central issue of whether the National Security Agency undermines our democracy and violates our right to privacy. The debate over whether Snowden is a hero or a traitor continues to be a distraction from this discussion. Manning’s documents should have led to a major debate on the Iraq War in terms of how we went to war and how we fought the war, but the American public was insufficiently responsive.

The fact that I was a professor at the National War College and therefore an employee of the Department of Defense added to my problems. My boss at the college, Major General Walter Stadler, summoned me to his office to suggest that I not testify before the intelligence committee, and added that there were lawyers at the Pentagon who could get me “out of this.” When I reminded him that such a proposal to someone who had received a subpoena from the Congress was a violation of federal law, he backed off. Nevertheless, he hoped that I would not use my notoriety to “jump on a white horse” to lead a campaign against the Bush White House.

Senator Warren Rudman (R-NH) told his colleagues on the intelligence committee that he would “take care of Goodman because he’s a government official.” Rudman’s threats never panned out to more than petty whining. After the confirmation hearings were over, he wrote a personal letter to the commandant

of the National War College to bark about my failure to provide an honorarium to a speaker, a desperate, empty gesture from a senator who wrongly presumed my duties at the college included cutting checks.

Despite widespread abuse of both government and corporate power, commercial media often ignore the civic motives of people who expose high-level wrongdoing. Instead, media often marginalize people who dare to challenge authority. For Snowden, the media carried titillating stories about a high school dropout and his girlfriend, a pole dancer. Manning was disparaged as a cross-dresser, which had nothing to do with her reasons for revealing state secrets. The White House circulated malicious rumors about me in 1991, but I was alerted by reporters from *Time* magazine and the *Washington Post*. The deputy director for intelligence at the time, John Helgerson, who later became an inspector general, refused to corroborate these tales. There is no better way to dilute the debate about our national security state than to lie about whistleblowers.

There are rational motivations for whistleblowing, but it is easier for journalists to use accusations from official sources than to dig for greater meaning. The media has been particularly derelict in examining the worst side of politics, particularly the conduct of public affairs for private or personal advantage. After all, the main task of the press should be to hold those in power accountable for their actions, and to expose those who violate the public trust. Investigative journalism is central to democracy for precisely this reason, but corporate media are too often a compliant extension of power, not its independent auditor. The rise and fall of Gary Webb's career and personal life following his investigation of the CIA connections with narcotics trafficking is a good example. Years after his "Dark Alliance" story rocked the CIA, Webb was found killed by two gunshot wounds to his head. Despite this, his death was officially declared to be a suicide.

People and organizations face similar attacks and destabiliza-

tion when they blow the whistle in the corporate sector. General Motors (GM) spied on Ralph Nader and hired women to lure him into compromising situations after Nader revealed lethal safety flaws in GM cars. Nader's organization, Essential Information, produced a report on how this criminal activity against whistleblowers continues to this day as corporations continue to target individuals and public interest organizations, including groups devoted to food safety, consumer rights, pesticide reform, nursing home reform, gun control, social justice, the environment, anti-war efforts, animal rights, and arms control."¹¹ According to the report, corporations regularly infiltrate and violate the privacy of individuals and nonprofits that dare to step up and investigate possible corporate crime.

There is a lesson from these examples of whistleblowing. If you are unwilling to accept the possible consequences, then you should keep your head down and do as you are told. There is a cost to revealing corruption at the NSA or the CIA, just as there is a cost to exposing high-level corporate crime. Officials within the United States government will claim that the release of so-called sensitive information will harm national security, even when the unveiling of such information points to serious improprieties. In actual fact, whistleblowing could help the government. My own experience regarding the exposure of high-level corruption should have led the CIA to recognize the problem and to make sure that there was no more tailoring of intelligence to satisfy the wishes of those in power. Nevertheless, a decade after my testimony, a corrupt National Intelligence Estimate and an unclassified white paper on non-existent Iraqi weapons of mass destruction were prepared in order to justify the U.S. invasion of Iraq that resulted in thousands of American soldiers and countless Iraqi people being killed, and the regional destabilization that has been an invaluable gift to the territorial advances of Al Qaeda and ISIS.

Several documentaries on whistleblowing have helped us to understand the importance of the Manning-Snowden revelations.

Robert Greenwald's *The War on Whistleblowers* and Alex Gibney's *We Steal Secrets: The Story of WikiLeaks* provided an excellent framework for debating the legality and morality of our national security state and the culture of secrecy created in the wake of 9/11. *Citizenfour* won an Oscar in 2015 for its compelling examination of Snowden's motivations, which the press overlooked. I took part in Greenwald's earlier documentary, *Uncovered*, which exposed the Bush administration's lies about weapons of mass destruction and the failures of the media.

President Obama has contributed to the need for whistleblowers by weakening the traditional institution for oversight in the national security process, the CIA's Office of Inspector General. Inspectors general are not popular within the federal government, but they are essential for keeping government corruption in check. The Obama administration focused from the outset on weakening the Office of Inspector General at the CIA by taking more than a year and a half to replace an outstanding inspector general, John Helgerson, whose staff had exposed a host of illicit activities, including torture, abuse, and improprieties linked to extraordinary renditions. When the White House eventually appointed an inspector general, it was a weak one, and in 2015, the Office of Inspector General was moved outside of the headquarters building, making it difficult for the office to conduct genuine oversight. This documents the nation's drift away from an open and accountable democracy and toward the kind of authoritarian society that George Orwell warned about.

Since the Vietnam War, we have witnessed a system of congressional acquiescence and judicial tolerance. Congress has acquiesced in the questionable actions of both the Bush and Obama administrations since 2001, permitting foreign policy to be the sole preserve of the executive branch and not the shared responsibility of the president and the Congress. Instead of serving as rigorous watchdogs, congressional intelligence committees have become advocates for the CIA. The Supreme Court only in-

tervenes on foreign policy matters to endorse the policies and powers of the president. This deferential attitude has led to an absence of judicial scrutiny of illegalities, including warrantless eavesdropping and the destruction of the CIA's torture tapes. The destroyer of the 92 videotapes, Jose Rodriguez, ignored a White House order not to destroy the tapes and published a book sanctioned by the CIA that maligns the Office of Inspector General for its supposed "holier-than-thou attitude and the prosecutorial ways they routinely treated fellow CIA employees."

In addition to the failure of Congress and the courts to provide necessary oversight of national security, the media have been complacent about their investigative watchdog role in a democracy. The media are an essential partner in the whistleblowing process, but they typically ignore the reprisals taken against the people who risk all to challenge the authority of state and corporate power. Often, media disdain the information provided by whistleblowers that is critical of the establishment—preferring, instead, to side with official versions of events for the perks that doing so affords them.

There has been a great deal of vindication for the whistleblowers, however. Pulitzer Prizes were given to journalists (Barton Gellman, Glenn Greenwald, and Laura Poitras) from the newspapers (*Washington Post* and *The Guardian US*) that published Snowden's revelations. Forty years ago, Daniel Ellsberg's efforts led the Pulitzer's board to give its public service award to the *New York Times*. Like Ellsberg, Snowden has been portrayed as a traitor; the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Guardian US* have been vilified by congress members and even some journalists as enabling espionage and harming U.S. national security.

Representative Peter T. King (R-NY), chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee's subcommittee on counterterrorism and intelligence, termed the Pulitzer Prize "disgraceful" and charged that "enabling a traitor like Snowden is unjustifiable."¹² King stated that news organizations should be

prosecuted for violations under the Espionage Act of 1917, which makes it illegal to disclose classified material that aids a foreign enemy. It took the nation several years to realize that the Pentagon Papers represented no threat to national security and that it was important to expose the official chicanery that led to the horrors of the Vietnam War. We are a long way from realizing that an intrusive national surveillance grid does far more harm to U.S. national security than Snowden's leaks do.

As a result of the imbalance in the process of foreign policy decision-making, we have come full circle from President Woodrow Wilson, who wanted to make the "world safe for democracy," to Presidents George W. Bush and Obama, who find the world too dangerous to permit honoring constitutional democracy. The excesses of the Vietnam War, Watergate, Iran-Contra, and the Terror Wars have contributed to the creation of a national security state and a culture of secrecy. Whistleblowers can help all of us decide whether the ends justify the means regarding these excesses.

Meanwhile, secrecy itself has fostered ignorance in the United States. The overuse of secrecy limits necessary debate on foreign policy and deprives citizens of information on which to make policy and political judgments. Only a counter-culture of openness and a respect for the balance of power can reverse the damage. As long as Congress defers to the president in the conduct of foreign policy; the courts intervene to prevent any challenge to the power of the president in making foreign policy; and the media defer to authorized sources, we will need courageous whistleblowers.

The Senate's response to disclosures regarding the culture of secrecy in the United States has been to resort to greater secrecy. In 2012, the Senate Intelligence Committee approved misguided legislation that would further limit news coverage of national security issues. The provisions, part of the intelligence authorization bill for fiscal 2013, were drafted in secret without

public hearings; they were designed to deny Americans access to information essential to national debate on critical issues such as the extent of government spying activities and the use of torture. Under the measure, only the director, deputy directors, and designated public affairs officials of intelligence agencies would be permitted to provide background information on intelligence activities to the media. Briefings on sensitive topics by lower-level or career officials would be prohibited, shutting off routine news gathering that provides insight into policy. These measures weaken democracy and strengthen the trend toward authoritarianism in the United States.

* * *

At no point in my congressional testimony in 1991, or in my publications and speeches since then, have I believed that I was anything but patriotic in revealing political corruption at the CIA. Only time will tell if the American people conclude that the actions of such whistleblowers as Drake, Snowden, and Manning were patriotic efforts to awaken a sleeping nation to the extent of the criminal misuse of state power at home and abroad. National security whistleblowers are typically vindicated, but it often takes public opinion many years to catch up.

Far too often the secrecy of the national security state has been used to conceal miscalculations and malfeasance. The CIA tailored intelligence in the 1980s to justify enormous U.S. weapons spending in peacetime. Two decades later, the CIA falsified intelligence to justify the Iraq invasion, which cost more than 4,500 American lives, trillions of dollars, and the radical destabilization of the entire region. The CIA violated constitutional and international law when it engaged in torture and abuse and operated secret prisons. Excessive secrecy within the CIA and the absence of oversight permitted these crimes.

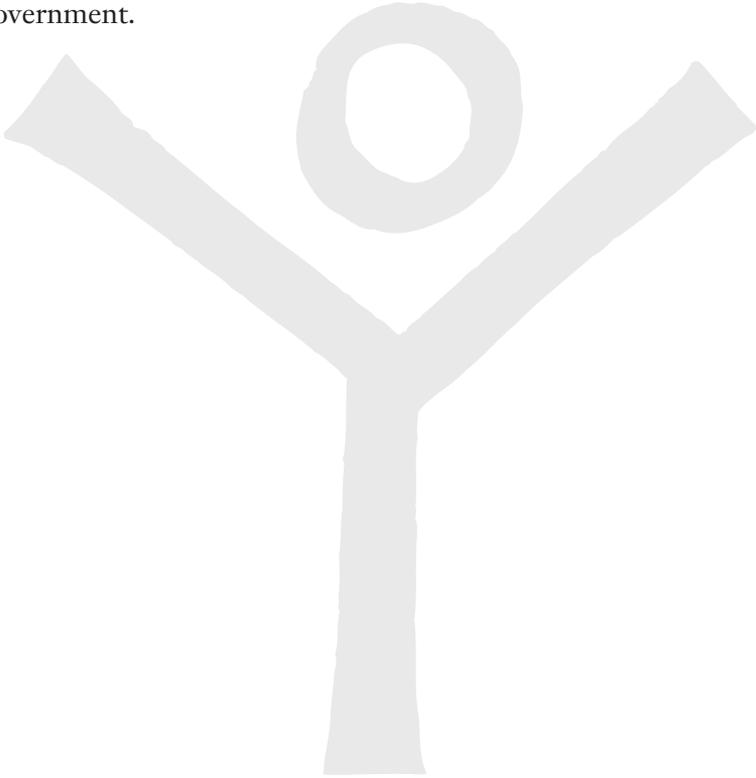
Dissidence in the intelligence community should not be

considered controversial, let alone subversive. It is not criticism that is cynical, but the absence of criticism among public servants that undermines the integrity of any organization, particularly a secrecy-bound community like that of U.S. intelligence workers and officials. In looking back, I am thankful for my mentors at Johns Hopkins University and Indiana University, who encouraged critical inquiry in pursuit of truth. The CIA itself (as well as Johns Hopkins) prides itself on the biblical wisdom that “You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free,” inscribed in the lobby of the CIA’s headquarters and on my college ring.

The intelligence failures regarding the Soviet Union and Iraq were marked by the absence of sufficient critical inquiry, which the academic community might have provided, as is its traditional role. Indeed, there should be no fundamental contradictions in the worlds of liberal education and intelligence, even though education depends on openness and universal access and intelligence requires secrecy and the “need to know.” But strong critical skills and integrity are required in both worlds. I tried to break down the insular culture that dominates the CIA, taking advantage of every opportunity to bring educators into the intelligence process.

Ultimately, however, it is the American people, not the academic elite, who must demand that the systemic failures of the U.S. intelligence community be addressed by public officials, politicians, and presidents. The intelligence community, particularly the CIA, has accumulated far more power than the Founding Fathers would have permitted or President Harry Truman ever intended. The statutes creating intelligence agencies, particularly Truman’s CIA and the National Security Act, were far too vague, and the oversight process of the U.S. Congress is dysfunctional. The steady expansion of domestic and foreign intelligence in an era of permanent war demands that whistleblowers expose the criminal excesses and abuses that too often take place in the name of national security. The first obligation of any American, par-

particularly a member of the intelligence community, is to defend and protect the Constitution of the United States. The lies and distortions that have become commonplace in the first several months of the Trump administration indicate that intelligence analysts must speak truth to themselves in order to deliver truth to power. There has never been a greater need for contrarian thinking and even dissent in the departments and agencies of government.



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