

Foreword

Espionage is most deftly defined as the theft of secrets. In contrast, counterintelligence is a grab bag of responsibilities ranging from keeping secrets beyond the grasp of hostile spies, the curious passerby, and even journalists, to the study of foreign intelligence agencies and individuals most likely to be involved in espionage.

Counterespionage is another, and surely more sensitive, highest-level element of counterintelligence. It involves the use of captured or detected foreign agents to deceive and mislead their sponsors. The best-known example of contemporary counterespionage is the Allied use of captured German spies operating under Allied control to report the “intelligence” that helped keep Hitler convinced that the actual invasion landings on the Normandy beaches in World War II were but a feint to cover the “real” landings many miles to the north of the actual invasion.

As a captain and battalion intelligence officer in the U.S. Second Infantry Division, William R. Johnson fought his way across the Normandy beaches on June 6, 1944. By May 1945, he was in newly liberated Pilsen, Czechoslovakia.

After the war and a spell of postgraduate study and teaching, Bill asked an old friend with whom he had helped edit and publish *Furioso* at Yale—a much-respected undergraduate literary magazine that had attracted T. S. Eliot’s attention—if there might be a job at the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

“Hell, yes,” Jim Angleton said. At the time, Angleton was chief of CIA’s counterintelligence staff.

Bill’s first assignments—in Europe—gave him a front-row seat and role in some of the most successful CIA operations of the early Cold War period. When Heinz Felfe, a ranking officer

in the newly established West German intelligence service, first fell under suspicion, Bill, an ardent skier and alpinist, donned his lederhosen and on his own initiative scouted the isolated Bavarian chalet that Felfe claimed to have bought with funds supplied by an alleged aunt in the United States.

Sure enough, there was the chalet, a tidy new construction, complete with a large color TV set. At the time, color TV was still an expensive luxury for any civil servant in Germany. The notion that a middle-level civil service officer could build a posh weekend getaway, and furnish it with such a costly item, was one of the convincing bits of evidence that led to the arrest and conviction of Felfe and a confederate.

After a dozen years in the vital European counterintelligence field, Bill's next posting took him back to Washington and a senior assignment managing CIA's Far Eastern counterintelligence operations from 1960 until his transfer to Saigon in 1973. This was an important breakthrough. Many of the senior CIA personnel involved with counterintelligence had got their start in World War II as members of X-2, the counterintelligence branch of General William Donovan's Office of Strategic Services (OSS). X-2 personnel worked closely—often hand in hand—with the experienced counterintelligence staff of their British colleagues in Europe and the Near East. The work involved apprehending German agents and directing their subsequent role in the deception of the Nazi intelligence services. X-2 played a much lesser role in the Pacific theater of operations.

During World War II, General Douglas MacArthur had refused to allow any significant OSS activity in the area under his command. The isolated exceptions to this *ukase* were largely restricted to occasional paramilitary activity behind Japanese lines, with little need for the counterespionage support that marked the strategic operations in Europe and the Near East. Counterintelligence also figured much less prominently in the OSS's Far Eastern activity than in Europe. Bill Johnson's 1960

assignment to CIA's Far Eastern division introduced a new level of CIA experience for that region. He remained in this position until 1973, when he was assigned to a senior command post in Saigon. He remained in Saigon until the evacuation of the U.S. Embassy and CIA station in 1975.

An incidental fact: Various allegations have been floated alleging that CIA abandoned much of its classified file material when evacuating Saigon. In truth, the only CIA documents that were not destroyed were some of those left in the liaison offices of the South Vietnamese intelligence services.

For some time after his retirement, Bill and his wife, Patricia, also a retired CIA veteran, remained in close social contact with their many Vietnamese friends in the Washington area. After moving to Colorado, Bill created a series of lectures on intelligence in government that is an important element of the University of Colorado's Conference on World Affairs.

Thwarting Enemies at Home and Abroad is a unique study and handbook on counterintelligence and counterespionage. It is well recognized as such and thus has been used in many university-level courses in the United States and abroad.

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*Mole: The True Story of the First
Russian Spy to Become an
American Counterspy*