

# CIA and the Craft of Intelligence

By John Marks

The reviewer, a former foreign service officer, is co-author of "The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence," and an associate of the Center for National Security Studies.

In his 20-year career at the CIA, Ray Cline specialized in intelligence work—as opposed to covert operations. Intelligence simply means information, and the 1947 National Security Act set up the CIA as the central agency for the coordination and evaluation of all foreign information available anywhere in the United States government. The idea was to prevent another Pearl Harbor—a sneak attack that might have been blocked if secret

## Book World

**SECRETS, SPIES AND SCHOLARS: Blueprint of the Essential CIA.** By Ray S. Cline

(Acropolis, 294 pp. \$10)

data indicating Japanese war plans had not been bottled up in the military intelligence labyrinth.

Or at least, that was the idea as it was explained to Congress and the public. The insiders—including Cline—realized that another function of the new agency would be to cause events to happen around the world,

with the help of secret money propaganda and violence. The 1947 law, however, made no mention of these now controversial covert action programs—which Cline thinks should not be seen as "dirty tricks" but as secret assistance to America's friends abroad.

Cline has written a partly autobiographical, partly descriptive history of the CIA called "Secrets, Spies and Scholars." Not surprisingly he deals mainly with the agency's intelligence function and minimizes the importance of covert operations. In his long government service, which stretched

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from the wartime OSS through the CIA to a tour as head of State Department intelligence, Cline played a major role in shaping the system by which our leaders receive estimates of what is going on in foreign places. He bemoans the low state to which the estimate process has fallen during the Kissinger era.

Cline believes, as do even the most vehement critics of the CIA, that the government should have the best possible information on such subjects as Soviet missile capabilities, Chinese nuclear testing, and world food problems. For four years he headed the CIA's Intelligence Directorate, which tries to make sense out of the mountains of raw data collected by the many government intelligence agencies. This kind of analytic work is sim-

ilar to academic research—with the differences that the analysts have access to classified information and that their areas of study are guided by U.S. foreign policy interests.

In company with retired CIA scholars like Sherman Kent and Abbott Smith, Cline represents the tradition of intellectual honesty in intelligence. Unfortunately, as Cline points out, our policy-makers have often been unwilling to accept information that conflicted with their biases and, in the case of Henry Kissinger, have tried to control the flow of intelligence "to keep it from embarrassing the White House."

It is unusual for a CIA intelligence expert to move over to what the analysts call "the other side of the house," or the Clandestine Services. Ray Cline, however, was both intrigued by undercover work and ambitious to

climb to the very top of an agency that has been dominated by covert operators from its earliest days. So in 1958, after a short course in clandestine "tradecraft," Cline became the CIA's head of operations on Taiwan. About this experience and his later tour as Agency station chief in Bonn, he tells very little. His book is not one of those "pseudo-exposes" of the CIA that he declares are "mainly worthless." Rather, it is a call for a more rigorous and efficient intelligence process which should be separated

# on the CIA and the Craft of Intelligence

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from the Clandestine Services, and given a new set of initials that would no longer be "confused" and tarnished with spook work.

To me—the co-author of one of those "pseudo-exposes" as well as a former State Department aide to Cline—the book would be much more interesting if it did not skim over his clandestine experiences. Cline was an observer of and occasional participant in some of the most important secret decisions of our time, but he adds almost nothing new to the historical

record. Such caution is probably to be expected from an intelligence professional who has been mentioned as a possible Carter administration CIA director yet, it makes for an incomplete book.

For example, Cline writes that "it is hard for me to understand" how John McConne could have headed the CIA for nearly two years before finding out the agency was trying to assassinate Fidel Castro. It is difficult for the rest of us to understand, too, but Cline, as a top deputy to McConne, presumably could have provided some insight.

Similarly, Cline states that longtime CIA Director Allen Dulles had a "flaw in excessive enthusiasm for clandestine operations for their own sake." That surely would be an interesting subject to expand on. Did Dulles love of spookery lead to un-

necessary covert funding of political, labor unions, and newspapers? All Cline will say is that Dulles "flaw" was far outweighed in his mind by the late director's "positive achievements in creating a dynamic, productive central intelligence system."

Cline is a hard-liner on foreign policy matters, and I can appreciate his reluctance to expose secret "sources and methods." Nevertheless, the reading public deserves something better than to be told "it was not illogical to use the Mafia to murder Castro since the mob's 'former Havana gambling empire gave them some contracts to work with and since a gangland killing would be unlikely to be attributed to the U.S. Government."

It is not unreasonable to ask for considerably more explanation of that sort of "illogic."